

**Graduate student (MS) position:
Value of urban natural areas for biodiversity and human well-being**

We seek a graduate student to join a collaborative research project with Colorado State University, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and the City of Fort Collins. This project integrates citizen science with ecology and social science to understand the value of urban natural areas for people and wildlife.

Location:

Fort Collins, Colorado

Start date:

January 17, 2017

Job Description:

This study will take place in partnership with the City of Fort Collins' innovative Nature in the City initiative (<http://www.fcgov.com/natureinthecity/>), which envisions "a connected open space network accessible to the entire community that provides a variety of experiences for people and functional habitats for plants and wildlife." In collaboration with faculty and research scientists at Colorado State University (CSU), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and environmental planners at the City of Fort Collins, this study will combine citizen science with social and ecological research to examine the value of urban natural areas for biodiversity and human well-being. This project is designed to support rapidly growing communities in making evidence-based conservation and development decisions.

The graduate student will be responsible for coordinating an ongoing citizen science project and conducting complementary social and ecological studies. To date, the project has focused on birds and butterflies; however, including additional taxonomic groups will also be possible. The graduate student will be co-advised by Dr. Liba Pejchar (CSU) and Dr. Sarah Reed (WCS). S/he will work collaboratively with the PIs on study design and implementation, will take the lead on data analysis and writing, and will also have access to social and ecological data collected in prior years of the study. Funding is pending, and it will include salary (~\$1,800/month) and tuition for the 2-year duration of the student's degree program, with 1-2 semesters as a graduate teaching assistant.

Qualifications:

We invite applications from prospective graduate students, with an anticipated start date of January 2017. Highly-qualified applicants will have an undergraduate degree with an excellent GPA (>3.3) in Ecology, Conservation Biology, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, or a closely-related field. Competitive applicants should have demonstrated interest and experience in urban ecosystems and interdisciplinary approaches to conservation problem-solving. Excellent communication skills are required, including the ability to converse with a diversity of citizens, manage volunteers, and coordinate with land managers and private landowners. Experience conducting point counts, butterfly surveys, vegetation measurements, and social surveys is also desirable, but not required. All applicants must have a strong work ethic, be organized, have the ability to work independently and with others, and be able to meet the physical requirements of the position (rising early, carrying equipment, hiking across uneven terrain). A valid driver's license and good driving record are required. Please see the admission requirements of CSU's [Graduate Degree Program in Ecology](#) for more details.

To Apply:

Please send the following as a single, merged pdf document: 1) 1-2 page cover letter describing your qualifications, relevant experience, and career goals; 2) 2-3 page résumé or CV; and 3) a list of three professional references and their contact information. The name of the file should contain the first and last name of the applicant. Please send applications via email to: MSUrbanNaturalAreas@gmail.com. Review of applications will begin on October 14th and will continue until a suitable candidate is identified.

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