

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Sprague's pipit monitoring and drone technician (1)

FLSA Status: Exempt

Reports to: Jacy Bernath-Plaisted, Avian Ecologist

Location: Western North Dakota

Salary: ~2000-2300/mo DOE + housing

Duration: ~2.5 months (seasonal)

Start date: May 1st, 2019 (approximate)

About the Organization:

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies conserves birds and their habitats through an integrated approach of science, education and stewardship. Our work extends from the Rockies to the Great Plains, Mexico and beyond. Our mission is advanced through sound science, achieved through empowering people, realized through stewardship and sustained through cross-border collaborations. We monitor and identify population trends, research habitat needs, engage landowners and managers in wildlife and habitat stewardship, and inspire audiences of all ages to be better stewards of the land. Together, we are improving native bird populations, the land, and the lives of people. Learn more about our work and programs at our website:

www.birdconservancy.org

Project overview

Grassland songbird populations, including migratory species breeding in the mixed-grass prairies of the northern Great Plains, are among the most rapidly declining guilds in North America. This project seeks to determine basic demographic rates of grassland-nesting songbirds on their breeding grounds. Now in our final year, we will focus solely on the adult survival of Sprague's pipit via capture and radio telemetry marking during the 2019 season. Check out our blog to learn about this study area and our past work in it: <https://birdconservancy.org/a-bairds-life/>

Job duties and responsibilities

The technician will participate in research activities, along with another avian technician, including target netting, transmitter attachment, and daily telemetry tracking of adult Sprague's pipit (30%), vegetation surveys (20%), data entry and proofing (10%), and other duties as needed (10%). **In addition to these duties, the technician will collect remote sensing imagery 1-2 times a month using a fixed wing-drone, and may spend additional time trouble-shooting and maintaining drone, associated software, and imagery data (30%).** Work will be conducted often starting before dawn, 6 days a week, often in extreme conditions (relentless wind, extreme heat and cold swings, mosquitoes). The technician will also need to carefully follow protocols, and interact positively with leaseholders, locals, and possibly agency employees. Technician must be capable of driving on rough roads and dealing with mud, as well as working around cattle and navigating barbed-wire fencing.

Desired qualifications

The applicant should have strong experience conducting avian fieldwork **and some experience using drones (either hobbyist or professional). Preference will be given to applicants holding an FAA Part 107 Drone license. If you do not hold one, but are willing to obtain one prior to the season, Bird Conservancy will cover the cost.** All applicants must be physically capable of hiking several miles a day carrying a 40 lb pack, able to use basic gear like gps units and compasses, capable of maintaining a positive disposition in extreme conditions, possess or be able to obtain basic first aid certification, and be legally able to work in the United States.

To apply: Send a cover letter, resume, and 3 references in a single PDF, with position title indicated in subject line, to Jacy Bernath-Plaisted, jacy.bernath-plaisted@birdconservancy.org.