Position: Postdoctoral Research Associate

DEPARTMENT: Moss Landing Marine Laboratories

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Project Director

POSTING DATE: January 26, 2021

CLOSING DATE: Open until filled, review of applications will begin March 1, 2021

SALARY RANGE: $25.48 – $27.40 per hour

EXEMPT STATUS: Non-Exempt (hourly), Benefited

GENERAL NATURE OF POSITION

Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML) administers the Master’s of Science in the Marine Science Program for California State Universities in northern and central California, and is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in both education and research. An outfitted marine operations department, active research diving program and state of the art equipment allow for cutting edge research in a wide variety of disciplines including: marine ecology; the biology of marine plants, invertebrates, fishes, turtles, birds and mammals; oceanography and marine geology; chemistry and biogeochemistry. MLML is known for a hands-on, field-oriented approach which places our students, faculty, researchers and staff at the frontiers of marine science worldwide where discoveries are being made. The Vertebrate Ecology Laboratory at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories studies the physiology, behavior and ecology of marine mammals, birds and turtles.

The postdoctoral scholar will work under the direction of Associate Professor Birgitte McDonald on a National Science Foundation funded project. This project combines a suite of technological and analytical tools to gain essential knowledge on Emperor Penguin foraging energetics, ecology, and habitat use during critical periods in their life history. Specifically, we will investigate the foraging energetics, ecology, and habitat use of Emperor Penguins at Cape Crozier, the 2nd most southern colony, during late chick-rearing. Energy management is particularly crucial during late chick-rearing as parents need to feed both themselves and their rapidly growing offspring, while being constrained to regions near the colony. This is a collaborative project working with researchers at NIWA in New Zealand.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Work with the PI and graduate students to conduct research investigating the foraging ecology, energetics, and habitat use of Emperor Penguins. Under the guidance of the mentor, the postdoc will collect and analyze data, and write manuscripts.
2. Work with PI to coordinate the field work. This includes conducting an inventory, ordering of field and lab supplies, testing data loggers, and packing and shipping gear.
3. Assist the PI with the development of a new Biologging Course.
4. Assist with training of graduate and undergraduate students involved in project.
5. Act as a mentor to graduate students in the Vertebrate Ecology Lab.
6. Participate in career development activities such as workshops at conferences and courses offered at SJSU.
7. Responsibilities may evolve to ensure the postdoctoral scholar continues to develop professional skills.

INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS
1. Reports to the project director.
2. The incumbent will work collaboratively with professors and graduate students from Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, primarily, and other researchers involved with this collaborative effort.

QUALIFICATIONS
1. Education
   • Ph.D. in biology or related discipline is required
2. Experience
   • Minimum three years of experience working with seabirds or marine mammals. Must be capable of animal capture, blood and tissue sampling, and data logger attachment. (required)
   • Minimum one year of experience working with large data sets, ideally with a specialization in animal movement. (required)
   • Full proficiency in use of computer equipment and software, including Microsoft Office, and programming in R or MATLAB. (required)
   • Experience mentoring students in the field and lab. (desired)
3. Knowledge, Skills, Abilities required
   • Extensive knowledge of biology.
   • Skilled in techniques necessary to process and analyze large data sets using R or MatLab.
   • Excellent writing skills; grammar, spelling and punctuation.
   • Ability to use initiative and sound independent judgment within established guidelines.
   • Ability to organize work, set priorities and meet critical deadlines with little supervision.
   • Ability to work effectively and maintain cooperative working relationships with others.
4. Physical Requirement
   • Must be able to sit or stand to operate a PC, including mouse and keyboard.
   • Must be able to walk or sit for continuous periods throughout the day, with appropriate rest periods taken.
   • Must be able to drive an automatic transmission truck.
   • Must be able to lift 60 lbs.
   • Must be able to hike up to four miles daily carrying heavy backpacks (30-40 lb).
   • Must be able to get medical and dental clearance to work in a remote field camp in Antarctica.
   • Must be able to conduct field work in cold conditions.
5. Complexity of Duties
   • Job duties are complex and include and involve analyzing and modeling the results, writing up and presenting findings, working with a diverse team of researchers.
SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
None.

NOTE: This position description intends to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this job. It is not intended to include all duties and responsibilities. The order in which duties and responsibilities are listed is not significant.

BENEFITS:
The comprehensive benefit package includes:

a) Ten company subsidized CalPERS health insurance plans to choose from (employee contributions differ according to plan and level of coverage)
b) Employer paid dental and vision for both employee and eligible dependents
c) Life, AD&D, LTD with supplemental coverage opportunities
d) 13 paid federal & state holidays
e) Retirement Plan: 403 (b) employee contribution plan component and a 403 (b) employer contribution component, which vests immediately
f) Vacation hours accruals and separate sick hours accumulations.
g) Employee discounts
h) Paid training and conferences

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
To apply for this position, an applicant must submit a formal application for employment, as well as a resume, cover letter and a brief statement (1-2 pages) of research experience and interest. The applicant may do this via e-mail. The formal employment application is located on the Research Foundation website on the Forms page. Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, all candidates must submit their application materials via the foundation-jobs@sjsu.edu email address. Please be sure to include the HR job code of: PostdocRA MLML on the formal employment application.

A background check (including a criminal records check) must be completed satisfactorily before any candidate can be offered a position with the SJSURF. Failure to satisfactorily complete the background check may affect the application status of applicants or continued employment of current SJSURF employees who apply for the position.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION
The San José State Research Foundation (SJSURF) is committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation for individuals with physical or mental disabilities in the employment, recruitment, examination, hiring and interviewing processes. If you are a job seeker with a physical or mental disability and require a reasonable accommodation to search, apply, or interview for a job opening or otherwise need a reasonable accommodation during the application and hiring process, please contact us at foundation-jobs@sjsu.edu. In the email message, please indicate your full name, phone number and the type of assistance required. You must not reveal the underlying medical reason for your needed reasonable accommodation or otherwise disclose confidential medical information.
ABOUT THE SJSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION
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SJSURF is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, religion, marital status, registered domestic partner status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sex, genetic information, sexual orientation, military and veteran status or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. It also prohibits unlawful discrimination based on the perception that anyone has any of those characteristics, or is associated with a person who has or is perceived as having any of those characteristics.