The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands is seeking a Collections Assistant - CDS Herbarium

Position: Collections Assistant (Herbarium)
Location: Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos - Ecuador
Job type: Full-time employment
Application deadline: June 15, 2024
Supervised by: Chief Curator of Natural History Collections of the CDF and Curator of the CDS Herbarium
Supervises: Volunteers and interns
Duration: 12 months (Renewable)

Introduction
The CDS Herbarium is one of the four Natural History Collections held by the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS). It comprises a central section of vascular plants, auxiliary collections (pollen, woods, fruits, and seeds), and non-vascular plants, fungi, lichens, and algae. The CDS herbarium constitutes the most important repository of the flora and fungi of the Galapagos worldwide, with around 48,000 specimens used to generate scientific knowledge. The specimens and information contained in the collection are essential for research projects that:

1. Contribute to understanding the baseline biodiversity,
2. Work with species prioritized for conservation and
3. Generate information on ecological interactions and species distribution in the archipelago.

Position Objective
The CDS Herbarium Collection Assistant will manage, curate specimens, and handle the CDS Herbarium Collections database of the Charles Darwin Foundation. Together with the leading curator of the herbarium, they will carry out activities related to specimen curation, taxonomic identification, reports, and scientific publications. They will also be responsible for executing the Action Plan for conserving and preserving all botanical collections. They will also be responsible for receiving local, national, and international guests and researchers.

Required Profile
- Bachelor's Degree in Biology or related areas, with a specialization in Botany and experience in Taxonomy. An M.Sc. degree in botany related is a plus.
- Minimum two years of experience handling herbarium specimens.
- Experience with technical writing, data analyses, and preparing scientific publications.
• Ability to use taxonomic keys and other resources to identify taxonomic groups (vascular and non-vascular plants).
• Experience in database management, information systems, and botanical catalogs.
• Experience handling equipment such as microscopes and stereoscopes; and experience with scientific photography, including micro and macro photography systems.
• Proficiency in English and Spanish languages (oral and written).
• Technical skills for collecting specimens and field vegetation studies.
• Leadership and task organization skills, with experience supervising volunteers or students and coordinating activities.
• Ability to work independently in a dynamic environment with numerous opportunities, unforeseen events, and challenges characterized by limited logistical resources and geographical isolation.

Activities and Responsibilities
1) Identification and classification of vascular plant specimens using taxonomic keys and flora.
2) Entering new specimens into the collection and updating information using the online interface of the collections’ database.
3) Mounting botanical samples from all taxonomic groups of the botanical collection for long-term preservation.
4) Digitizing specimens using HerbScan (a specialized scanner for digitizing herbarium samples) and photography/stereoscopy equipment.
5) Maintenance and curation of the herbarium’s main and auxiliary collections, such as the pollen, woods, seeds, and fruit collections, using preventive methods for long-term conservation.
6) Participation in field trips, inventories, and monitoring of flowering and fruiting, with sampling efforts to enrich the collection and acquire data for scientific research.
7) Collaborations should be established with botanical taxonomic experts from other herbaria worldwide to promote studies on taxonomic groups little known to the Galapagos.
8) Preparation of annual reports of the herbarium necessary for the renewal of the yearly operating license.
9) Training and supervising volunteers and students working in the collection; ensuring compliance with protocols established for using natural history collections.
10) Support the curators in preparing research proposals to seek funds necessary for maintaining and preserving the botanical collection.
11) Preparation of scientific publications related to the herbarium collection with the curators or associated scientists.
12) Coordination and assistance to scientists, donors, and local or international VIP groups visiting the herbarium collection.
13) Ensure preventive management of pests that could affect the herbarium collection by conducting annual preventive curation, monitoring, identification, and control of pests.
14) Work with the curators in elaborating the Action Plan for conserving the collections, which includes defining key species for research.

**Employment Conditions**

The Chief Curator of Natural History Collections of the CDF and the Curator of the CDS Herbarium will supervise the collections assistant. The selected candidate will be based at the Charles Darwin Scientific Station Office on Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos archipelago, Ecuador. The working hours of the CDF are from 07:45 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 17:15. Due to the nature of the position (fieldwork, unexpected activities), the hired person must be flexible.

The collections assistant of the CDS Herbarium will faithfully comply with the rules, regulations, and procedure manuals of the CDF, in addition to observing and strictly complying with the rules and regulations of the GNPD.

The salary will be set according to the candidate’s qualifications. Benefits include private medical insurance and 30 calendar days of paid leave (annual).

**How to Apply**

Those interested in this position should send the following information via email to (pro.seleccion@fcdarwin.org.ec):

- Updated resume (CV).
- Letter of interest describing their competencies according to the requirements for this position.
- List of three professional contacts that could be willing to write recommendation letters (if requested).

Please send all necessary documents in a single PDF file. If you require additional information, please contact us with the same email.