

HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION VOL/BE PROGRAM

Announcement

Local and national volunteers for the project: “Conservation of Terrestrial Birds in the Galápagos Islands”

Application deadline: November 14, 2025

Start date: January 5, 2026

Duration: minimum 2 months, maximum 6 months

Introduction

The Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) and the Galápagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) have been developing a research plan on the ecology and status of Galápagos land birds and identifying factors that affect their conservation since 2014. The objectives are: i) to provide information on the population status of small land birds and determine population changes, ii) to monitor health status with baseline data, iii) to develop and implement management techniques to conserve populations of land birds at risk such as the vermilion flycatcher or tree finches, and iv) to involve the Galapagueño community and visitors in the monitoring and observation of land birds.

The project works closely with national and international scientific institutions, as well as with the Philornis Project, the Mangrove Finch Project, and the Galápagos Highlands Restoration Project, all of which contribute to the management and conservation of Galápagos ecosystems. Selected individuals will assist with the research and activities identified in the Terrestrial Bird Conservation Project and will be supervised by the lead researchers. The activities will provide training in bird studies and will include field and laboratory activities, data entry, activities with students and local institutions, collaboration with scientists in long-term programs, park rangers, and the Galápagos community.

Volunteer conditions

The Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) will provide the necessary equipment and materials for the development of the project, as well as logistical support for field trips to other islands. Technical advice will also be provided by the CDF scientific team, in accordance with institutional policies and procedures.

The volunteer will be under the supervision of the project’s lead scientist and will comply with the schedule assigned by the CDF.

It will be mandatory to respect the CDF's Internal Regulations, Procedures Manual, and strictly comply with the regulations of the Galápagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) during field activities.

Required profile

- Ecuadorian biology student or related fields, with preference given to students from Galápagos with a high interest in birds, or local person with a passion for conserving Galápagos birds.
- Previous experience in avian ecology, participation in bird projects, or fieldwork experience is preferred.
- Skills in handling mist nets, bird calls, and blood sampling are desirable.
- Ability to work in remote locations and camps under difficult conditions, sometimes without internet or with poor connection.
- Good physical condition for long walks and ability to carry backpacks with field equipment over long distances.
- Languages: Spanish; basic English desired.
- Willingness to carry out on irregular schedules.
- Excellent ability to work in groups and with people of different nationalities and cultures.

Responsibilities

Assist in projects (normally, one selected person will support one of the mentioned projects):

Implement techniques to control the avian vampire fly, *Philornis downsi*.

- Search and monitor finch nests in arid and humid zones, and update the database after monitoring.
- Help implement different techniques to control the infestation rate of *Philornis downsi* in bird nests (both in the laboratory and in the field).

Recovery of the vermilion flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus nanus*) in Santa Cruz and/or Isabela.

- Reproductive and ecological monitoring.
- Foraging observations.
- Support in management to reduce the impact of *Philornis downsi* in nests.
- Database updates after monitoring.

Recovery of the mangrove finch (*Camarhynchus heliobates*) in Isabela.

- Reproductive and ecological monitoring.

- Support in experiments to reduce the impact of *Philornis downsi* in nests.
- Long field trips (up to 2 months).

The activities take place in hot areas, rocky terrain, vegetation with thorns, isolated conditions, and rainy weather. Physically active and motivated individuals are required to walk several kilometers per day.

Conditions

For national volunteers, the project provides a round-trip flight to Galápagos and shared accommodation at the CDF. Local and national volunteers will receive a food allowance.

Benefits for the volunteer:

- Uniform provided.
- Accident insurance.
- Financial assistance.
- For nationals: round-trip flight.
- For nationals: shared accommodation.

How to apply?

Interested individuals must complete the online form available at the following link: <https://forms.office.com/r/jf7Y7gAJfm>, attaching the required documentation according to the detailed instructions.

Applicants are reminded that it is mandatory to comply with the guidelines for completing the form, the established deadlines, and the required formats for attachments.

Only applications that fully meet all established criteria regarding profile, format, documentation, and content will be considered.