



The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands is seeking to hire **Junior Researcher**

Position title:	Junior Researcher
Employment type:	Full-time
Application deadline:	August 15, 2026
Start date:	September 1, 2026
Duration:	1 year, renewable annually based on performance

Introduction

The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands (CDF) is recruiting a Junior Researcher to join our “Control of the Avian Vampire Fly, *Philornis downsi*” research team and strengthen research on its biology in order to increase laboratory production of this invasive fly and support the development and implementation of control techniques.

We are seeking a motivated professional committed to the conservation of Galapagos biodiversity and ecosystems. The activities carried out by the Junior Researcher will generate high-quality scientific results that will help improve knowledge of the biology and reproduction of *P. downsi* and, consequently, its captive rearing.

Position Objective

As part of the “Control of the Avian Vampire Fly, *Philornis downsi*” project, the Junior Researcher will support research on the biology, physiology, and ecology of *P. downsi* by carrying out activities that ensure the continuous production and maintenance of individuals in the laboratory. The information generated will contribute to the development of innovative strategies to control this invasive species and, consequently, to the conservation of Galapagos land birds affected by this fly, particularly those in the highest extinction-risk categories.

The ideal candidate will have a strong background in laboratory work and in data processing, analysis, and management. This position will involve conducting experiments aimed at increasing captive production rates of *P. downsi*, which may include studies of the *P. downsi* microbiome and the influence of diets, environmental factors, and



semiochemicals.

As part of the team, the researcher will also contribute to other project activities, including maintaining captive fly colonies, collecting flies in the field, collecting blood to feed the larvae, preparing samples for export, and conducting behavioral studies of *P. downsi*.

Responsibilities

The selected candidate will maintain close and active interaction with the researchers of the “Control of the Avian Vampire Fly, *Philornis downsi*” project. The selected candidate will also work closely with other team members and key project partners, including NGOs, companies, and government entities. In addition, the successful candidate may participate in collaborative initiatives with local, national, and international institutions and will work with the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) and other strategic partners.

The main responsibilities of the position are:

Office work:

1. Conduct literature reviews and exchange ideas with the *Philornis* team and collaborating scientists to identify and prioritize experiments involving *P. downsi*;
2. Promptly digitize data generated by the project and enter them into the corresponding databases, ensuring their integrity, organization, and currency;
3. Analyze the data generated using Excel and statistical software (such as R);
4. Prepare technical reports on experiments and other activities conducted, and contribute to the production of peer-reviewed scientific publications and outreach materials;
5. Develop, implement, and evaluate protocols for rearing *P. downsi*;
6. Carry out administrative processes, such as procuring materials and equipment, in accordance with CDF policies and procedures;



Laboratory and fieldwork:

1. Conduct experiments in one or more of the following areas: microbiology, artificial diets, chemical communication (pheromones), and environmental conditions (such as light), aimed at increasing knowledge of the biology and reproductive behavior of *P. downsi* under laboratory conditions and increasing fly production;
2. Dissect flies to assess their reproductive status;
3. Assist with the maintenance, feeding, and processing of colonies at the different life stages (egg, larva, pupa, and adult) of *P. downsi*, and collect baseline information for maintaining *P. downsi* pupae and adults;
4. Ensure that the laboratory is orderly and clean;
5. Ensure the proper maintenance of project equipment and instruments and participate in inventories;

Fieldwork:

1. Assist with trials to understand *P. downsi* behavior in the field (including monitoring *P. downsi* and its activity in nests) and in the laboratory (including behavioral studies and olfactometry);
2. Collaborate with visiting researchers and members of the *Philornis* working group to conduct laboratory and field trials in Galapagos and prepare samples for export;
3. Collect *P. downsi* from bird nests for laboratory trials and shipment to external collaborators;
4. Assist with collecting food for the immature and adult stages of *P. downsi*;

Training/capacity building:

1. Participate in the training of volunteers and students who collaborate or take part in the project;
2. Collaborate with CDF education, communications, and fundraising programs, as needed, to disseminate project progress and results and enhance the visibility of the project's work;



Teamwork:

1. Actively contribute to a positive working environment and participate in required inductions or training on safeguards and other Human Resources matters;
2. Comply with the Code of Conduct and the principles of integrity, ethics, and professional behavior;
3. Comply with applicable Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) provisions;
4. Maintain a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, abuse, and gender-based violence, while promoting equal opportunities and inclusion;
5. Understand and apply the relevant procedures, including the Grievance Redress Mechanism and other instruments of the Program's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS), as well as project-specific instruments applicable to the activities carried out;
6. Perform assigned activities in accordance with the CDF strategic plan;
7. Actively collaborate with the Galapagos National Park Directorate and other strategic partners, facilitating their participation in the project when necessary.

Minimum Profile

Qualifications and Experience

- University degree in Biology or a related field;
- At least 1–2 years of demonstrable experience in entomology laboratory research projects, preferably in insect microbiology, insect rearing (including the development of artificial diets), or insect behavior studies;
- Certificates of training or education in data management and administration, data analysis and synthesis, or data analysis tools;
- Ability to organize and manage time efficiently when carrying out administrative processes;
- Demonstrated ability to write technical reports and scientific notes;
- Intermediate proficiency in spoken and written English (B1);
- Strong willingness to undertake laboratory work and field trips, including work outside regular hours or on weekends, according to the needs of the research project;
- Willingness to perform activities involving animal blood;



Desired Qualifications

- Proficiency in statistical software (R, etc.)

The ideal candidate is expected to meet most, though not necessarily all, of the criteria listed above.

If you believe you have unique skills that are well suited to the position and are highly motivated, we encourage you to apply even if you do not fully meet all the requirements.

Employment Conditions

Permanent Galapagos residents are encouraged to apply for this position.

- Contract type: Employment contract governed by current Ecuadorian legislation and the internal policies of the Charles Darwin Foundation.
- Position type: **Technical staff – Junior Researcher** level.
- Working hours: Full-time, in accordance with the work schedule established by the Charles Darwin Foundation.
- Work location: Charles Darwin Research Station, Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos, Ecuador.
- Compensation: Monthly salary of **USD 1,500.00**.
- Contract duration: Employment contract with the possibility of annual renewal based on demonstrated performance and the availability of project funding.
- Mobility and fieldwork: Availability to participate in fieldwork and activities outside the Station, within Galapagos and, when required, in other locations related to the Program, in accordance with institutional planning.
- Regulatory compliance: The selected candidate must comply with the Charles Darwin Foundation's internal rules, biosafety protocols, and regulations applicable to scientific work in Galapagos, including the provisions of the Galapagos National Park.
- Benefits: Statutory benefits and those established under the Charles Darwin Foundation's internal policies.



Why Join the Charles Darwin Foundation

- Become part of a **mission-driven, globally respected organization** dedicated to preserving one of the planet's most iconic ecosystems;
- Contribute to building capacity in invasive-species control for conservation in a scientifically rigorous environment;
- Gain hands-on laboratory and field experience by participating in projects with a direct impact on the management and protection of Galapagos ecosystems;
- Build professional experience in a globally unique setting while collaborating with multidisciplinary teams and strategic partners;
- Help advance vital research and conservation in the Galapagos Islands, with regional and global impact.

Restrictions

Please note that the Provincial Government of the Galapagos Islands prohibits the introduction of domestic pets (companion animals) into the Galapagos Islands.

Interested in Applying?

Interested candidates must use the following link to submit their application and the required documentation:

<https://tinyurl.com/Formulario-PDownsi>

- A cover letter detailing relevant experience (maximum 2 pages).
- Updated CV.
- Contact information for three professional references (names, email addresses, and telephone numbers).

Application deadline: [August 15, 2026](#).

The Charles Darwin Foundation is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees.