



The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands is recruiting a Junior Shark Researcher

Role:	Junior Shark Researcher
Type of work:	Full-time employment
Deadline for application:	November 10 th , 2026
Starting date:	January 11 th , 2027
Duration:	1 year, with annual renewal based on performance

Introduction

The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands (CDF) is recruiting a Junior Scientist to join our shark research team and strengthen the ongoing long-term research on shark population ecology and conservation conducted by the CDF, with a special focus on the scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*).

We are seeking a motivated professional committed to the conservation of sharks and marine ecosystems of the Galapagos Marine Reserve (GMR) and wider Eastern Tropical Pacific. The activities conducted by the Junior Researcher will generate high-quality scientific outcomes that will assist improving knowledge about shark populations in the Ecuadorian Exclusive Economic Zones (EEEZ), including the Galapagos Islands.

Position Objective

As part of the Sharks Ecology and Conservation Program, the Junior Researcher will contribute to advance on key project activities such as the long-term monitoring of shark populations within the GMR, movement ecology studies on key shark species in relation to Marine Protected Areas in the region and their interaction with fishing fleets, with a special focus on the scalloped hammerhead shark (*Sphyrna lewini*).

As part of a team, the researcher will conduct marine fieldwork to undertake standardized underwater surveys and conduct shark tagging and biological sampling using various techniques. The position will also be responsible for processing, managing, curating and analyzing datasets (e.g., stereo-video, satellite telemetry, biological data, etc.), coordinating administrative processes, assisting with fieldwork logistics and equipment maintenance, and producing technical documents and peer-review scientific publications.

Activities

The selected candidate will maintain a close and active interaction with the Principal Investigators and project scientist of the Shark Ecology and Conservation Program. The selected person will also



collaborate in close relationship with other team members and close partners of the project, including NGOs, industry and government. Additionally, the selected candidate may co-develop collaborative initiatives with local, national and international institutions, and will work alongside the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD) and with other strategic partners.

The main responsibilities of the position are:

- Actively contribute to the research on the ecology, populations dynamics, fisheries science and conservation of sharks in the GMR, EEEZ and wider Eastern Tropical Pacific, by processing, analyzing and publishing project data.
- Manage the video processing and analysis produced by the project (BRUVS, DOVs and others). This will include (but will not be limited to) processing videos, entering data, managing and updating databases.
- Co-manage internal administrative process such as procurement of goods and services, management of project volunteers and students, to ensure adequate project management.
- Help coordinate and undertake fieldwork. This will include co-organizing logistics (supplies, science and safety gear, etc.), ensuring all safety protocols and administrative requirements are followed before, during and after the trips.
- Conduct surveys of sharks and pelagic fishes using underwater tools and techniques such as BRUVS, DOVS (using SCUBA), to collect shark relative abundance and spatial data.
- As part of a team, be actively involved on shark tagging activities, ensuring the well-being of animals and high standards of safety in the operation.
- Undertake and supervise the collection and storage of biological samples for various studies.
- Ensure the adequate maintenance and servicing of field gear and project's equipment before, during and after field work.
- Co-supervise the work of assistant staff, volunteers and students involved in the project.
- Collaborate on the production of high-quality scientific peer-reviewed publications, reports and outreach material.
- Collaborate on the design, elaboration and execution of events as part of the education/outreach activities related to the project.
- Actively collaborate with the Galapagos National Park and other strategic partners, facilitating their participation in the project, when necessary.



Required Profile

The ideal candidate will have a strong background data processing, analysis and management as well as in conducting fieldwork. This role will involve conducting videos analysis from underwater visual census using Diver-Operated Video cameras (DOV) and Baited Remoted Underwater Video Systems (BRUVS).

Qualifications and experience

- BSc and/or MSc in marine biology, conservation, fisheries science, or a related field. Candidates already registered as researchers by SENESCYT-Ecuador will be given preference.
- Good organizational and time management skills with administrative process.
- Capacity and experience to undertake field work during long periods of time in basic conditions and remote areas.
- Proven experience with shark research fieldwork, including experience with SCUBA underwater surveys using DOVs, shark handling and tagging.
- Advance use of statistical software (R, Python, etc)
- Rescue diver certification, with good scientific SCUBA diving skills (minimum of 100 scientific dives).
- Freediving experience (certification is an advantage).
- Good verbal and written communication skills in Spanish and English
- Previous experience to write technical reports and scientific publications.

Desirable qualifications

- Experience managing and analyzing DOVs and BRUVS data and datasets, including calibration.
- Knowledge of ArcGIS/QGIS software.

The ideal candidate will ideally meet most, though not necessarily all, of the aforementioned criteria. If you believe you possess unique skills that align well with the role and are highly motivated, we encourage you to apply, even if you do not meet every requirement.

Employment Conditions

The Junior *Shark Researcher* will be based at the Charles Darwin Research Station in Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz, Galapagos Islands, Ecuador.

The Researcher will faithfully fulfill the norms, regulations, and manuals of procedures of the CDF; in addition, he/she will observe and follow strictly the standards and regulations set by the GNPD. Among the practices of this: follow authorized trails, do not remove sand, stones, or elements of nature, and DO NOT introduce any foreign element into the ecosystem, such as food, plants, and pets.

The working schedule for the CDF is from 07:45-12:30 and 14:00 - 17:15. Due to the nature of the position (fieldwork, unexpected activities), the hired person must be flexible. The position



may require field expeditions and work during late evenings or weekends.

The Human Resources department at CDF will oversee all residency papers related to the hiring process but will require the candidate's assistance to obtain the necessary legal documents. For foreigners, a work visa must be applied for and issued by the Ecuadorian government. CDF will also oversee the processing the Galapagos residence permit for the selected candidate.

Why join the Charles Darwin Foundation

- Be part of a globally respected, mission-driven organization dedicated to preserving one of the planet's most iconic ecosystems.
- Contribute to capacity building in invasive species control applied to conservation, in a scientific environment with rigorous technical standards.
- Work hands-on in the field, participating in projects with a direct impact on the management and protection of Galapagos ecosystems.
- Develop professional experience in a globally unique setting, collaborating with multidisciplinary teams and strategic partners.
- Help advance vital research and conservation in the Galapagos Islands, with regional and global impact.

How to apply?

Interested candidates should use the following link to submit their application and the required documentation: <https://forms.gle/ybf1y11KoWiL4mAEA>

- A cover letter detailing relevant experience (maximum 2 pages).
- An updated CV.
- Contact details for three professional references (names, email addresses and contact numbers).

Application deadline: November 10th, 2026.

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