

Announcement Volunteer for the Herbarium (CDS)

Application Deadline: Until the vacancy is filled.

Starting date: As soon as possible.

Duration: Initially for a 3-month period with the possibility of extending the placement upon review of volunteer work performance and project needs.

The CDS Herbarium, is one of the four Natural History Collections at the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS). The primary function of the Herbarium is to preserve plant specimens. The species and the information that the Herbarium contains are fundamental for research projects that:

1. Contribute to the knowledge of the baseline of biodiversity,
2. Work with priority species for conservation and
3. Generate information about ecological interactions and plant distribution in the archipelago, highlighting the role of invasive species.

The Herbarium (CDS) hosts and preserves more than 46,000 specimens, making it the largest collection in the world of specimens from the Galápagos. It consists of a biodiversity library of the flora of the Galapagos archipelago and a growing bank of taxonomic information. Within this botanical collection, vascular plants are the most numerous, but non-vascular plants are also preserved, such as fungi, bryophytes, lichens, mosses and algae. We have three auxiliary collections: The pollen collection, which contains hundreds of microscopic preparations of pollen grains, the seed collection and a specialized collection of wood. These are unique scientific collections in the Galapagos Archipelago and Ecuador.

Required Profile:

- Applicants must have a strong scientific interest in botany, natural history collections, and biodiversity conservation of the Galapagos.
- Bachelor's degree in Biology / Botany (or closely related field) is preferable.
- Preferable previous knowledge of plant taxonomy and the use of taxonomic keys, previous experience of work with plants and/or natural history collections.
- Experience in computer skills in MS Office (Excel), Photoshop and online databases.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and competence in English and preferably Spanish too.
- A highly motivated, proactive and punctual, with an ability to organize their workload.

Responsibilities include:

- Assisting in the maintenance of the main (vascular plant) and ancillary collections (pollen, seeds, fruits and wood).
- Working towards the Herbarium Digitization Project, scanning botanical specimens using HerbScan and Photoshop to include in our virtual herbarium.
- Contributing to the maintenance of plant specimens in the Herbarium database, making use of our online database and managing databases in MS Excel.
- Assisting in the curation and maintenance of the main collections (vascular plants) and ancillary (seeds, pollen, fruits and wood).

- The mounting and archival of plant specimens and their parts.
- Taking part in fieldwork trips to collect new specimens and/or assist the Galápagos Verde 2050 (GV2050) project, which aims to restore native and endemic species.
- Contributing towards the curatory and preservation activities of the Herbarium, which includes taking daily temperature and humidity records and keeping a control of ambient conditions in the collections.
- Assisting our Integrated Pest Management program (IPM) to prevent insects from entering the collection and working on ways to improve our IPM.
- Assisting in any other task of the CDF Natural History Collections or the GV2050 project, when deemed required by the Herbarium Curator or Assistant Taxonomist.

Conditions

The CDS herbarium volunteer reports directly to the Herbarium Assistant or to the Herbarium Curator, Coordinator of the Natural History Collections (CDF). The selected candidate will be based in the CDS herbarium in the island of Santa Cruz, Galapagos, Ecuador. Volunteering with the CDF does not imply a continuing relationship with the volunteer beyond the expected duration of the mission.

The volunteer is expected to work a minimum of 40 hours per week, from 7:45-12:30 and 14:00-17:15. The working schedule may change according to project activities such as field trips and/or pandemic-related changes in office hours. Vacation and/or additional time away from the station may be requested in advance by the volunteer but will be subject to the approval of the project coordinator.

The CDF will negotiate the entry permits to Ecuador, but the volunteer is expected to cooperate in their country of residence with the appropriate Ecuadorian embassy that grants the visa. The CDF will not process a visa beyond the duration planned for the volunteering mission.

How to apply

Applicants are asked to send all documents in one single PDF-file, which includes the CDF application forms and the required documents. Please send the application to the following e-mail address:

vol@fcdarwin.org.ec.

The application forms are available on our website at www.darwinfoundation.org: Vacancies > Volunteers. If you have any questions, please contact the Volunteers and Scholars Program or request the application form at: vol@fcdarwin.org.ec.

We look forward to receiving your application!