

Volunteer for the project: CONTROL OF THE INVASIVE PARASITIC FLY PHILORNIS DOWNSI

Application deadline: Until the vacancy is filled

Start date: Immediately

Duration: 3 months (with the possibility of extending)

Introduction

The Charles Darwin Research Station and collaborating scientists are researching techniques to reduce population numbers of an invasive parasitic fly, *Philornis downsi*, which is seriously affecting the survival of Galápagos landbirds. However, despite considerable research efforts and experiments in the laboratory and in the field, there are still substantial gaps in the understanding of the biology and ecology of *P. downsi*, which has impeded the development of methods for its control.

Priority research questions were identified in 2012 at an international workshop organized by the Directorate of the Galapagos National Park (GNPD) and CDF. The participants of the workshop concluded that the development of effective management tools will depend on the joint and coordinated effort between experts from different parts of the world who work in different areas of insect biology, control and management, and ornithology. The research activities and their priorities are outlined in a strategic research plan (*Philornis downsi* Action Plan) that was developed by the specialists during the workshop. This plan is updated every two years. CDF is leading research projects on the ecology and biology of *Philornis downsi* and, in addition, is working with collaborators to find effective control methods to reduce *P. downsi* numbers. For more information, see: <http://www.darwinfoundation.org/es/investigacion/especies-invasoras/controlando-philornis-downsi/>

The main focus of this volunteer position is to collaborate on studies being carried out on the biology of the parasitic fly, *Philornis downsi* and to help in the development of control methods to reduce its impact on critically endangered birds of the Galapagos Islands.

Profile

- BSc or equivalent in biology or related fields
- Experience in entomology preferable, in particular knowledge of insect biology or insect breeding.
- Knowledge of Excel.
- Demonstrated experience working in a team
- Responsible and proactive.
- Availability to work outside normal working hours
- Experience working in the field under difficult conditions

Responsibilities

- Collaborate on studies on the biology and rearing of *P. downsi* in the laboratory, including research on larval and adult feeding requirements.
- Collaborate on trials to test control methods for *P. downsi* (placement and collection of traps, separation of samples, among others)

- Collect *P. downsi* from bird nests and traps for laboratory trials and for sending them to external collaborators.
- Help on other projects related to *P. downsi* when necessary and when time permits.

Volunteering conditions

The Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) will provide the necessary equipment and materials to develop all project tasks, including field work activities if required. The CDF will also provide to the selected candidate with technical advice and support, according to the policies and procedures of the institution.

The selected candidate will be under the supervision of the scientists responsible for the project and will comply with the daily working schedule indicated by the CDF.

The volunteer will faithfully comply with the rules of the Internal Regulations and the CDF Procedure's Manual, as well as perform its field work strictly following the rules and regulations of the GNPD.

Application process

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).

Please refer to this page for information about other requirements and application instructions: <http://www.darwinfoundation.org.ec/>