The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands is recruiting a Shark Research Field Technician

**Role:** Shark Research Field Technician

**Local:** Galápagos, Ecuador

**Type of work:** Full-time employment

**Deadline for application:** February 25th, 2024

**Duration:** Four years, with the possibility of renewal based on performance

**Introduction**

The Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands (CDF) is recruiting a Shark Research Field Technician to join our shark research team and strengthen the ongoing long-term research on shark population ecology and conservation conducted by the CDF. The selected candidate will integrate the core technical team of a five-year project ("Habla Tiburón" project), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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

**Position Objective**

The Shark Research Field Technician will join a new project that aims to improve the long-term viability of shark and ray populations in Ecuadorian waters by: 1) strengthening participatory governance of the fisheries responsible for the highest shark catches; 2) strengthening monitoring, control and enforcement capabilities of stakeholders to combat IUU fishing in the Ecuadorian sea; and 3) collaborate with fishing sectors to implement best fishing practices to reduce by-catch and fishing mortality of sharks and rays in Ecuador.

The ideal candidate will have a strong background in executing shark research fieldwork, coupled with expertise in technology integration, data processing and management. This role will involve conducting marine fieldwork to undertake standardized surveys using various methods such as underwater visual census using Diver-Operated Video cameras (DOV), Baited Remoted Underwater Video Systems (BRUVS), Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicles (ROVs). As part of a team, the technician will also conduct shark tagging...
operations and biological sampling using various techniques. The position will also be responsible for processing, managing and curating large datasets (e.g., video and telemetry and biological data), maintaining the project’s equipment, and managing various technology-driven projects aimed at enhancing our understanding of shark behavior, ecology, and conservation.

Required Profile

Activities

The selected candidate will maintain a close and active interaction with the Principal Investigators of the Shark Ecology Project. 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 (GNDP) and with other strategic partners.

The main responsibilities of the position are:

- Actively contribute to the research on the ecology, populations dynamics and conservation of sharks in Ecuador and wider Eastern Tropical Pacific, by contributing to the development of scientific sampling methods and experimental design to collect the data necessary for the project.

- Coordinate and undertake marine fieldwork. This will include 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, UAVs and ROVs to collect data on shark relative abundance and spatial data.

- Contribute to the video processing and analysis produced by the project. This will include (but will not be limited to) processing videos, entering data, managing and updating databases.

- As part of a team, capture, manipulate and tag sharks, 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.

- Collaborate on the production of high-quality maps integrating spatial, biological and fisheries data for the production of scientific peer-reviewed publications, reports and outreach.
material.

- Collaborate with the design, elaboration and execution of events part of the education/outreach activities related to the project.
- Assist on the supervision of volunteers, interns and collaborators during fieldwork activities and data processing stages.
- Support the project’s administrative processes as required.
- Actively collaborate with the Galapagos National Park and other strategic partners, facilitating their participation in the project, when necessary.

Qualifications and experience

- Technical qualification in marine biology, conservation, electronics/technology, or a related field.
- Capacity and experience to coordinate and undertake field work during long periods of time in basic conditions and remote areas.
- Proven experience with shark research fieldwork, including experience with underwater surveys using SCUBA, shark manipulation and tagging.
- Experience operating DOVs, BRUVs, UAVs and ROVs, including maintenance and repair.
- Rescue diver certification, with excellent scientific SCUBA diving skills (minimum of 100 scientific dives).
- Freediving experience (certification is an advantage).
- Capacity and experience to enter data (Excel) and analyze datasets.
- Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) pilot certification.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English and Spanish.
- Knowledge in computer systems.
- Experience with maintenance of electronics, dive gear and remote-control devices.

Desirable qualifications

- Knowledge of ArcGIS/QGIS software.
- Previous experience to write technical reports and scientific publications.
- Web Page and Graphic Design.

Employment Conditions

The Shark Research Field Technician 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.

How to apply?
Interested persons should send the following information by e-mail to pro.seleccion@fcdarwin.org.ec

- Updated CV
- One-page letter of interest describing his/her competencies meeting or exceeding the minimum requirements for this position
- The names and emails of two professional references. Letters will only be requested if a candidate advances to an initial interview round.

Kindly send all the application material as one PDF document. If more details are needed, please, do not hesitate to contact us at the e-mail address provided above.