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 Plant Collection (CDS) is one of the four Natural History Collections at the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS). The primary function of the Collection is to preserve the type specimens, that is to say those that are used for the description of a new species. 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, principally pertaining to introduced species.

The Herbarium (CDS) preserves more than 45,000 specimens, making it the largest collection in the world of specimens from the Galápagos archipelago. 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 in plants and / or natural history collections.
• Experience in photography, computer skills in MS Office, Photoshop and online databases.
• Excellent interpersonal skills and competence in Spanish and preferably English too.
• Highly motivated, proactive, punctual person who can work and organize independently.

Responsibilities include:

• Assist in the maintenance of the main and ancillary collections (pollen, seeds, fruits and wood).
• Contribute to the digitization (scanning) of botanical samples using HerbScan and Photoshop.
• Contribute to the maintenance of vascular plant specimens in the Herbarium database, making use of our online database and managing databases in MS Excel.
• Support in the curation and maintenance of the main collections (vascular plants) and auxiliary (seeds, pollen, fruits and timber).
• Support the curatory and preservation activities of the Herbarium, which includes taking daily temperature and humidity records in the collections and keeping a control of atmospheric conditions.
• Support in the integrated pest management process to prevent insects from entering the collection.
• Assist in any other activity of the CDF Natural History Collections, when deemed required.

Conditions
The volunteer of the CDS reports directly to the Management of the Natural History Collections (CDF). The selected candidate will be based in the CDS 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 can change according to the project activities 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 are looking forward to receiving your application!