

Announcement

Volunteer for the Seamounts Research Project

Application deadline: Until the vacancy is filled

Start date: Immediately

Duration: 3months period with the possibility of extending subject the approval of the project coordinator

Introduction

The Seamounts Research Project began in 2015 following three international oceanographic research expeditions on highly specialized vessels that took place in collaboration with CDF and the Galapagos National Park Directorate. Using submersibles and Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs), these expeditions enabled the first systematic collection of samples and baseline information on several seamounts between depths of -3200 to - 100 m. Currently the seamounts team is working towards analyzing these data and completing the first large-scale characterization the physical and biological characteristics of these undescribed ecosystems.

The Seamount Research Project team is currently looking for a volunteer with a marine science background to join us at the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) in Galapagos. The ideal candidate has a strong interest in deep-sea/mesophotic/benthic ecology and taxonomy, is passionate about science communication and flying/piloting ROVs (or similar technologies, e.g. drones or robots). We are looking for someone with strong organizational skills, who is tech savvy, takes initiative to trouble shoot problems and is not afraid to ask questions. They need to be independent workers, but also enjoy working as part of a team. The selected candidate will be supervised by the project's lead scientist, and may be expected to support the training other incoming volunteers.

While this is an unpaid position, it is a unique opportunity to be part of the first deep-sea baseline study of seamounts in the GMR, to work with a team of international scientists, and experience life on an island community inside one of the biggest and most unique marine reserves on the planet. Additionally, they will be the chance to potentially become a co-author on scientific manuscripts and to collaborate with other projects at the research station that need assistance.

Profile

- BSc in marine biology or related field. Graduate degree is an asset.
- Knowledge and experience in taxonomy of marine organisms, experience with deep-sea/mesophotic fauna is an advantage.
- Advanced knowledge of Microsoft Office, especially using Excel, as well as statistical software such as R, for handling of large databases.
- Advanced fluency in Spanish is a key asset, the ideal candidate will to able to communicate both in writing and orally in both English and Spanish as we are a bilingual institution.
- Proactive team player, able to integrate into a multidisciplinary team in an isolated environment and able to work a busy office.
- Ability to take initiative and manage time to complete delegated tasks efficiently with minimal supervision.

Responsibilities

- Analyze ROV and submersible images and videos, which will involve the identification of fish, macroinvertebrates and habitats
- Develop inventories for deep-sea species recorded following the GBIF/OBIS protocols
- Assist in the maintenance of the deep-sea specimen sample collection and coordination of exporting samples to our collaborating taxonomists.
- Support the projects outreach and communication campaigns with developing educational materials, blog writing and giving presentations
- Assist the development of field methodologies and maintenance protocols using small ROVs
- Assist in data analysis and visualization, and in the writing of technical reports and scientific manuscripts
- Support other marine research activities of the department as required by the project coordinator.

Volunteering conditions

The volunteer of the Seamounts Project works under the direct supervision of the project coordinator. The selected candidate will be based at the CDRS on the island of Santa Cruz, in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador. Volunteering at CDF does not imply an ongoing 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 07:30am to 12:00pm and from 13:30pm to 17:00pm. Due to certain project activities, such as field trips, this schedule may be altered. The volunteer can request an extension in advance, but it will be subject to the approval of the project coordinator.

The volunteer is responsible for their own travel expenses to and from the Galapagos Islands, living expenses and accommodation during their time here. A room in the Volunteers Dorms on the CDF campus can be arranged if there is availability. The volunteer must purchase their own accident and health insurance for travel to and from the Galapagos and for the duration of their work in the Islands.

The CDF will assist in processing entry permits into to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. This will require however the collaboration of the volunteers' country of residence to coordinate with the Ecuadorian embassy, which grants the necessary visas. The CDF cannot process a visa longer than the expected duration of the mission.

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.