Volunteer Lepidoptera Research Assistant in Peru

The Alliance for a Sustainable Amazon (ASA), a research-focused non-profit organization working in the southeastern Peruvian Amazon, is pleased to announce the position of Field Research Assistant in Lepidoptera beginning in January, 2019. The successful applicant will be based at the ASA’s field site in Peru’s Madre de Dios Department.

POSITION: Lepidoptera Research Assistant

LOCATION: Finca Las Piedras, Madre de Dios, Peru

POSITION DURATION: 6 months

SCHEDULE: 5 days/week, flexibility in scheduling required

START DATE: January 7, 2019

APPLICATION DEADLINE: November 15, 2018

JOB DESCRIPTION

Lepidoptera Research Assistants (LRAs) work closely with ASA faculty and staff to facilitate ongoing biological research and monitoring projects at Finca Las Piedras, the ASA’s field site and base of operations in Peru’s Madre de Dios Department. LRAs are part of the public face of the ASA’s programs in Peru, and are part of a dynamic team of researchers, conservation and development professionals, and students from around the world. In addition to assigned tasks, LRAs are encouraged to develop individual projects within their areas of interest and that overlap with the ASA’s priority research areas.

This is a residency position, meaning that the successful applicant will live on site, full time. LRAs receive the equivalent of two days off per week, although given the nature of field research and ongoing projects at the field site, time off will be scheduled to ensure that a staff member is always available on site daily to perform essential tasks.
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The LRA will contribute primarily to several ongoing, long term projects focused on Lepidoptera diversity and biology at the field site. Current projects include a survey of the butterfly and moth fauna of Finca Las Piedras and adjacent areas, as well as a rearing study that aims to document the host plants for several focal groups of Lepidoptera.

Example tasks & duties

- Daily care of rearing study, including recording data for immature Lepidoptera, finding & changing host plants, vouchering specimens, etc.
- Searching for new host plant records along trails and in forest plots
- General maintenance and upkeep of butterfly rearing facility & flight cage
- General maintenance and upkeep of host plant shade house
- Survey (i.e., collecting) of the Lepidoptera of the field site & adjacent areas
- Data collection & management

REQUIREMENTS

- 6 month commitment required (January – June, 2019)
- Minimum bachelor’s degree in natural or environmental sciences or related field
- Knowledge of and experience in entomology and/or field Lepidoptera research
- At least basic Spanish (preferred)
- Experience working/living abroad, especially in the tropics (preferred)
- Enthusiasm and strong work ethic
- Flexibility in schedule and work environment
- Maturity/must live with and work well with others in close setting
- Excellent physical condition
- Traveler’s insurance (proof required upon acceptance)
- CPR/first aid certification (proof required upon acceptance)
TRAINING

Upon arrival at Finca Las Piedras, LRAs undergo an intensive, one-week training period. Research Assistants are given an overview of current Lepidoptera-related projects, as well as the methodologies used. LRAs will also be trained informally throughout the duration of their term at Finca Las Piedras.

COMPENSATION

This is an unpaid position. However, all room and board is provided on-site at Finca Las Piedras, 7 days per week, for the duration of the appointment. Work-related local transportation, including pickup from the Puerto Maldonado airport (PEM) or bus terminal, is covered. LRAs are responsible for their international flight to Peru (if applicable), including airfare, taxes, airport fees, flight insurance, etc., and domestic air or land travel to Puerto Maldonado.

HOW TO APPLY

The following are required to apply for this position:

1. A cover letter of interest
2. Current CV/resume with contact information for two references
3. Most recent unofficial university transcript

Completed applications should include each of the three required items, and should be submitted as a single PDF document, in the order listed above, by the application deadline (November 15, 2018). Document title should read: “last name”_“LRA application”.pdf

Send completed applications to: info@sustainableamazon.org with “Lepidoptera Assistant application” in the subject line.

Geoff Gallice, Ph.D.
President

Alliance for a Sustainable Amazon

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