



Weston Family Conservation Science Fellowship

PhD or MSc Position: Breeding Ecology and Conservation of Grassland Songbirds

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is the country's leading private land conservation organization. Since 1962, NCC has helped to conserve 14 million hectares of land across Canada. Research by Weston Family Conservation Science (WFCS) Fellows will support conservation of important natural areas and biological diversity across Canada.



Project Summary

The objective of this project is to establish a long-term study on the ecology of grassland songbirds in the Waterton Park Front Area (just outside of Waterton National Park), Alberta. The student will examine how different grazing regimes or other management actions influence breeding productivity and survival and examine how conditions during other periods of the year affect songbird health. Fieldwork, which will occur from ~ May to July each year, will involve capture and handling of birds, nest finding and monitoring, as well as interacting with a variety of stakeholders. The student will be working with Dr. Nicola Koper (University of Manitoba) and Dr. Ryan Norris (NCC Weston Family Senior Scientist, University of Guelph). They will be based at the University of Manitoba, [Natural Resources & Environmental Management program](#).

Fellowship Details

The Fellowship will begin in September 2020 and consist of up to four years of support with a minimum \$15,000 annual stipend. The student will be eligible to apply for a Mitacs Accelerate Fellowship to match the base stipend for a total of \$30,000 of support annually. Fellows will also receive \$5,000 annually to cover costs associated with an annual Fellows meeting and for select training/development opportunities. The Fellowship funds are not intended for research costs; these costs, including field accommodation, will be covered separately.

As a part of the Mitacs Accelerate Fellowship, the student will spend a portion of their time interning with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. They will have the opportunity to gain experience with activities such as conservation planning, GIS, property stewardship, science communication, or community outreach.

If a Fellow receives another fellowship or scholarship (e.g. NSERC), NCC will only contribute stipend up to a total of \$30,000 annually, but the student will still be considered a WFCS Fellow and participate fully in the program.

Fellowship Requirements

A Bachelor's or Master's degree in science or a related field is required. Successful applicants will have a strong, demonstrated interest and knowledge of ecology and conservation. Preference will be given to applicants with experience in banding/ringing/aging passerines, and with additional relevant field experience. Fellowships are open to international students, but preference will be given to Canadian applicants. Applicants must meet the graduate admissions criteria for the University of Manitoba and applicants with a minimum A- average are strongly preferred. A valid driver's license is required.

How to Apply

We are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive program. Individuals from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. If you are interested in the Fellowship, please forward your CV, contact information for three references, unofficial transcripts, and a detailed cover letter indicating "Grassland Songbird Fellowship" in the subject line to samantha.knight@natureconservancy.ca by February 3, 2020. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.