

David L Nieland

Subject: Seasonal Position - Botanical Research Assistant in prairies of Missouri

Official Domain: Grassland Systems Field Station, Clinton, Missouri

Title: Botanical Research Assistant

Pay Rate: \$10.83/hr

Dates: May 11, 2016 – September 2, 2016

Hours: 40 hrs/week

Number of positions: 2

Supervisor: Dr. Elizabeth Middleton, Grassland Botanist, Missouri Department of Conservation

Summary: The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Grassland Systems Field Station is recruiting 2 Botanical Research Assistants to assist in vegetation data collection in the tallgrass prairies of West-Central and Southwest Missouri. Assistants will work along with the grassland botanist and the botany crew leader to identify prairie plant species and record vegetation data for a long-term study investigating the effects of patch burn grazing on remnant prairie plant communities. This position offers an opportunity to further develop botanical identification skills, gain a better understanding of prairie ecosystems, and interact with professionals in the natural resources field.

Duties: Project tasks include assessing species presence/absence of 50 species, strict adherence to protocols with no supervision, assist in the identification of 200+ prairie plants to species, estimating plant coverage, searching for rare species tracked in the Heritage Database, and driving an MDC truck with trailer. Assistants will be responsible for independently collecting presence/absence data as well as working with the grassland botanist or the botany crew leader to collect plant community diversity data. Other duties include collecting and mounting plant specimens and assisting in herbarium maintenance as time allows.

Qualifications: A Bachelor's Degree in Botany, Ecology, or related field with completion of a plant taxonomy, field botany, or similar course is preferred. Experience with vegetative sampling and field research is highly desired. Assistants must have interest in learning about tallgrass prairie plant communities. Botanical training will be provided, but basic taxonomic knowledge is a prerequisite for the position. Research Assistants must be detail-oriented, self-motivated, enthusiastic, and possess a strong work ethic and excellent organizational skills. Assistants must work effectively with minimal supervision and as part of a research team. Assistants must be able to hike 1 to 4 miles a day on uneven terrain, cheerfully endure heat and high humidity, and orient plots with the use of a compass. Assistants will be required to work long hours outdoors with work often beginning at 6 am, and they will be expected to endure harsh field conditions (heat, humidity, ticks, chiggers, spiders, briars, and uneven terrain). Assistants must be able to travel statewide including frequent overnight stays.

Assistants must have a valid driver's license and be comfortable driving 4-wheel drive trucks, hauling ATVs on trailers, and backing trailers. A field vehicle is provided. MDC-sponsored housing is available at a minimal cost. The housing is in short distance to the Clinton office and is shared by other field station hourly staff. The successful candidate must submit to a drug screen following the offer of employment.

Application:

Please send the following materials to Elizabeth Middleton (Elizabeth.Middleton@mdc.mo.gov). Please put "Botanical Research Assistant" in the subject line of your email.

- 1) electronic cover letter,
- 2) detailed CV,
- 3) college transcripts (unofficial is ok, but must be able to obtain official transcript on request), and
- 4) phone and email contact information for at least 2 professional references, including a recent employer.

For more information, contact:
Elizabeth Middleton
Missouri Dept of Conservation
Grassland Botanist

Phone (preferred): 660-885-6981 x 230
Email: elizabeth.middleton@mdc.mo.gov

Deadline: 5:00 PM February 5, 2016