

David L Nieland

Subject: Henslow's Sparrow Point-Count Technician (1) Needed

Title: Henslow's Sparrow Point-Count Technician (1)

Location: Flint Hills, Kansas

Organizations: Kansas State University and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Salary: \$1,600–2,000/month

Application Deadline: 15 March 2016

Term: 1 April–31 July 2016

Description:

Kansas State University and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service are seeking one seasonal research technicians to join a project investigating breeding habitat associations of an enigmatic, highly mobile, and declining grassland specialist—the Henslow's Sparrow—throughout the Flint Hills and neighboring ecoregions of eastern Kansas. The Flint Hills contain ~80% of North America's remaining tallgrass prairie and represent a critical landscape for the long-term viability of grassland birds in the Great Plains. The results of this study will help to improve our understanding of critical thresholds associated with species responses to habitat loss and fragmentation and to guide conservation efforts aimed at protecting natural resources under pressure from agricultural development and intensified rangeland management practices.

Applicants can view photos taken in the Flint Hills and this job announcement here:

<http://www.markherse.com/hesjobannouncement/>

This position provides an excellent opportunity to gain valuable field experience while working in a beautiful tallgrass prairie landscape with a species recognized as a bird of National Conservation Concern. The field season will run from 1 April to 31 July 2016. We will pay technicians \$1,600–2,000 per month, provide project vehicles, and cover accommodation costs while traveling. If needed, we can provide temporary housing at Konza Prairie Biological Station near Manhattan, Kansas.

Technician duties are as follows: (1) conduct daily point-count surveys for Henslow's Sparrows and several other grassland species from roadside transects in a study area encompassing the entire eastern one-third of Kansas; (2) drive long distances and navigate remote areas while working long and irregular hours that include weekends; (3) sleep at campsites, field stations, and/or motels for a significant portion of the field season; (4) enter and manage data; and (5) assist the project leader as needed.

Qualifications:

We are seeking highly skilled birders with experience conducting point-count surveys and a demonstrated ability to identify grassland birds by sight and sound. The primary objective of our field work is to detect the presence of Henslow's Sparrows which are exceptionally cryptic with a short, insect-like song; therefore, the applicant must have excellent hearing and vision, attention to detail, and an ability to identify grassland bird species by sight and sound. Qualified applicants must (1) be independently motivated and capable of waking several hours before sunrise daily without direct supervision; (2) have excellent organization and written and verbal communication skills; (3) maintain a safe and positive attitude; and (4) be comfortable tent camping, driving and maintaining 4WD trucks, and navigating remote areas in the dark with a GPS, compass, and maps.

Successful applicants will have a strong work ethic, a desire to be involved in avian ecology and grassland management research, and a valid U.S. driver's license with a clean driving record. We will give preference to excellent birders, as well as applicants who have completed or are working towards a Bachelor of Science in Biology, Wildlife Ecology, or other related field.

To apply:

Please submit a cover letter, CV, and contact information for 3 references in one file with your name and 'Research Technician' in the title and subject line to mrherse@ksu.edu (Mark Herse). Applications may be submitted until 15 March. However, we will review applications as they are received, so applicants are encouraged to apply early.

Mark Herse, Graduate Research Assistant, 116 Ackert, Division of Biology, K-State, Manhattan, KS 66506

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