



ECOSTUDIES INSTITUTE

A nonprofit scientific organization

P.O. Box 1614, Olympia, WA 98507

ecostudies@ecoinst.org

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Avian Technician
Reports to: Avian Project Manager
Location: Grayland and Long Beach, Washington
Type: Full-time: hourly, non-exempt.
Period: Seasonal. 8 April 2026 to 28 August 2026
Benefits: Sick, vacation, holiday PTO, retirement*.
Hourly Rate: \$19.61 - \$23.40

Application deadline: 13 February 2025. **Applications are reviewed as received.**

**Retirement: All positions: employees can make personal contributions to retirement after 3 months, Ecostudies provides match after 6mo*

OVERVIEW SUMMARY

Ecostudies Institute (ESI) is hiring a seasonal avian field technician position to work on the Washington coast conducting streaked horned lark demographic monitoring. Major responsibilities will include nest searching, population surveys, resighting color-banded birds, mapping territories, and locating and monitoring outcomes of streaked horned lark nests, color-banding chicks, and supporting trapping of adults to retrieve GPS tags, as well as supporting demographic monitoring efforts for snowy plovers. Work will occur on two sites on Washington State Park and US National Wildlife Refuge Lands. This position will work highly independently with remote supervision from our headquarters in Olympia, WA (~2hrs away), and may also work closely with our snowy plover technician and staff of partner organizations (WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service). This position will require extensive driving between sites and on the beach, coordination with regional partners and land managers, incidental public outreach to beachgoers regarding species conservation, and maintaining a positive attitude while working long days hiking 5+ miles in windy coastal dunes.

Successful applicants should have a keen interest in avian research and conservation, at least two seasons of avian fieldwork (prior coastal work preferred), demonstrate excellent communication skills, be able to work independently and in a team setting, and be comfortable working and driving on sand while remaining aware of tidal and weather conditions. Positions entail early mornings and long days with extensive walking and driving (sites are ~2hrs apart from each other, rental vehicle provided). Technicians are expected to meticulously collect and manage detailed data, be self-motivated, and communicate effectively with remote supervisors and partners.

ABOUT ECOSTUDIES

Ecostudies Institute is a 501(c)(3) scientific non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of native species and their ecosystems. We achieve our mission through effective partnerships, sound scientific research, strategic land management and ecological restoration. At the core of our mission is a cooperative conservation model that strives to realize improved conservation outcomes by developing shared goals and vision through partnerships. These partnerships, in turn, encourage information transfer, advances in cutting edge restoration techniques, and the development of integrated range-wide conservation approaches. The organization is headquartered in Olympia, Washington with additional staff based in other locations in Washington and Oregon. Ecostudies currently employs over 40 permanent and seasonal staff.

HIRING EQUITY STATEMENTS

ESI values and seeks diversity and equity within the organization, and we encourage applications from all groups of people. We recognize that the strength of the organization is in our people, and we believe that every employee has the right to work in surroundings that are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Ecostudies does not and will not discriminate in employment and personnel practices, and our commitment to equal employment opportunity applies to every aspect of the employment relationship.

It is well-documented that Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), queer and transgender folks, women, and other marginalized groups often do not apply for jobs unless they feel they meet every qualification listed in the job description. We are most interested in finding the right candidate for the job and our organization. We encourage all passionate and interested candidates to apply and think broadly about your background and qualifications that could be transferable for the position. We are committed to working against the structural biases that continue to keep marginalized people excluded from the conservation, restoration, and wildland fire/prescribed fire fields, and to making sure our hiring practices are not reproducing those biases.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Resight color-banded streaked horned larks and snowy plovers using binoculars and spotting scopes.
- Map territories and locate and monitor outcomes of cryptic ground nests of streaked horned larks and snowy plovers on beach and coastal dune habitats.
- Conduct population and predator surveys following standardized protocols.
- Identify common coastal vegetation species, particularly those used as nest host plants.
- Maintain detailed field notebooks including detailed observations and daily activity logs.
- Daily data entry and regular QA/QC in Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access databases.
- Operate and maintain equipment such as binoculars, spotting scopes, handheld GPS, and two-way radios.
- Use mobile apps for data collection including ESRI Survey123 and FieldMaps.
- Create georeferenced maps of nests in ArcGIS Pro for site managers and other personnel.
- Hike 5-10+ miles daily on the beach and adjacent dunes in all weather conditions, beginning before sunrise.
- Drive 5-10+ miles daily on the beach, following safe beach-driving protocols (4WD vehicle for beach driving provided).
- Color-band streaked horned lark chicks.
- Mist-net and color-band adult streaked horned larks; deploy and retrieve archival GPS tags.
- Interact professionally with other ESI and partner organization staff, as well as beachgoing members of the public, and be able to communicate the value and benefit of streaked horned lark and snowy plover conservation and recovery.
- Work collaboratively with other ESI programs, resource agencies, consultants, and other conservation organizations.
- Complete administrative duties including tracking work hours, submitting timesheets, and recording reimbursable mileage.
- Other related duties as assigned to assist in meeting ESI's conservation goals.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Completion of or progress towards BA/BS/AS/Technical or vocational degree in science/natural resources-related field or at least three years natural resources or avian-related field experience.
- Ability to identify coastal Washington birds by sight and sound or quickly learn.
- Ability to hear high-frequency song of the streaked horned lark AND full-spectrum color vision to accurately record color-band resights.

- At least two seasons of experience with avian field techniques, including some mist-netting and banding.
- Experience working with or knowledge of natural systems; ability to recognize plant and animal species as required.
- Ability to follow provided protocols and instructions from colleagues.
- Ability to manage time and diverse activities under deadlines while delivering quality results.
- Ability to work independently with limited supervision and demonstrate a strong initiative in completing tasks while maintaining frequent communication with project leads.
- Ability to perform physical work, sometimes under adverse conditions or in inclement weather.
- Working knowledge of common software applications on computers and mobile devices (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, web browsers, Google products).
- Must have and maintain a valid state driver's license and safe driving record.
- Must have access to a working personal vehicle that can be used to drive to and from work locations daily (personal use of vehicle will be reimbursed at the federal mileage rate).

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Two or more seasons of songbird or other small bird banding experience.
- Previous chick/nestling banding experience.
- Prior experience monitoring nests and broods of shorebirds or ground-nesting grassland birds.
- Experience locating ground nests using behavioral cues; monitoring nests and determining nest fates.
- Familiarity with ESRI products such as ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Online, Survey123, and FieldMaps.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Regularly works outdoors, walking 5+ miles per day across beach and coastal dunes in the summer in areas of high wind and occasional inclement weather, often across uneven ground, carrying a spotting scope (~90%); occasionally works indoors in an office setting (~10%).
- Required to operate a company vehicle.
- Occasionally works in conditions involving recent use of herbicides, prescribed fire, or wildfire.
- Frequently works independently and as part of a team.
- Remotely supervised but expected to maintain frequent communication with project leads and partner staff.
- Possibility for evening and weekend responsibilities which may include overnight travel.
- Occasionally lifts, positions, or otherwise moves objects weighing up to 50lbs.

HOW TO APPLY:

Qualified applicants should submit a letter of interest, resume, and contact information for three professional references in **one combined document**. In your letter, please indicate which positions you are interested in and include approximate availability to start. Individuals who are unsure if they meet all requirements are still encouraged to apply.

Email applications to Stephanie Augustine (avian@ecoinst.org) with the position you are applying to in the subject line. All applications will be acknowledged.

Ecostudies Institute is an Equal Opportunity employer. Personnel are chosen on the basis of suitability without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status or sexual orientation, in accordance with federal and state law.

Conservation science, partnership, and practice

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The above statements are intended to describe the general nature of the work being performed by people assigned to this work. This is not an exhaustive list of all duties and responsibilities. Ecostudies Institute management reserves the right to amend and change responsibilities to meet business and organizational needs as necessary.

This position description does not constitute an employment agreement between the Ecostudies Institute and the employee and is subject to change by Ecostudies Institute as the needs of the Ecostudies Institute and requirements of the job change.