PhD student in Biology with specialization in Ecology

Ref SLU ua 2020.2.5.1-3330

Seabirds, forage fish and novel research technologies

The Department of Aquatic Resources at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) is looking to recruit a PhD candidate to work with seabirds and forage fish.

Project description:
Seabirds are top-predators in marine ecosystems that often feed on forage fish, and thereby compete with industrial fisheries. Ecosystem-based management requires that top-predators’ prey requirements are accounted for, but there are today no generally accepted guidelines for how much and where prey needs to be available to suffice for the conservation of seabirds. This project aims at using novel research technologies to link seabird foraging ecology with the abundance and distribution of forage fish, in order to answer the following questions: (1) How much forage fish does seabirds need during the breeding season?, (2) How does spatial and depth distribution of forage fish affect the phenology and breeding success of seabirds?, and (3) How does different locomotion traits (flying and diving capability) between species affect forage fish requirements?

The project is part of a larger project at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences together with Stockholm University and WWF Sweden on managing ecosystem trade-offs using novel technologies. Field work on seabirds will be performed by the candidate on the island of Stora Karlsö in the Baltic Sea, primarily on common guillemots (Uria aalge) and razorbills (Alca torda). Observation studies, including surveillance camera monitoring, and biotelemetry will be used to track seabirds’ behavior in the colony and on their foraging grounds. Forage fish will be studied using a sailing drone, equipped with an echosounder. Previously collected data on seabird and forage fish will be available to the candidate within the project.

Qualifications:

Required qualifications

- Either an MSc degree (or equivalent) in Biology / Ecology / Environmental Sciences with skills in quantitative analyses, or an MSc degree (or equivalent) in Statistics / Mathematics / Engineering with documented experience in biology.
• Good communication skills in spoken and written English (upper secondary school grades equivalent to English B/English 6).

**Preferred qualifications**

• Experience in seabird field work
• Skills in hydro-acoustic (echo-sounder) data analysis
• Knowledge and experience of research technologies, e.g. camera surveillance, biotelemetry, drones and transponders.

**Place of work:**
Lysekil

**Forms for funding or employment:**
Employment 4 years

**Starting date:**
Prospective starting date is Jan 15th, 2021

**Application:**
The application shall contain:

• A Letter of Motivation, describing the applicant's previous academic and professional experience and motivation in relation to the project
• Curriculum Vitae
• Copy of degree incl. transcript of academic records
• Copy of degree thesis
• A list of two reference persons familiar with the applicant's qualifications

We welcome your application no later than 2020-11-01, use the button below.

Please observe that applicants chosen to participate in an interview shall hand in certified true copies of certificates, diplomas and transcripts from previous studies at an internationally recognized higher education institution (university or university college) and transcripts in connection to the interview. If the applicant is a foreign citizen we require a certified copy of the page in your passport with your personal data and photography.

Read about the [PhD education at SLU](https://www.slu.se/en/education/phd)

Read more about [seabird research in the Baltic Sea](https://www.slu.se/en/seabird-research)

**Academic union representatives:**

[More info about Academic Union representatives](https://www.slu.se/en/organisation/academic-unions)

**The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences** (SLU) develops the understanding and sustainable use and management of biological natural resources. The university ranks well internationally within its subject areas. SLU is a research-intensive
university that also offers unique degree programmes in for example rural development and natural resource management, environmental economics, animal science and landscape architecture.

SLU has just over 3,000 employees, 5,000 students and a turnover of SEK 3 billion. The university has invested heavily in a modern, attractive environment on its campuses in Alnarp, Umeå and Uppsala.

www.slu.se

SLU is an equal opportunity employer.

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