

Tropical Forest Ecology Internship – Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands

***Description of project:** *The Ecology of Bird Loss project examines the effect of bird loss on forest systems by comparing forests on Guam, where forest birds are functionally extinct due to predation by the invasive Brown Treesnake, to forests on two Northern Mariana Islands (Saipan and Rota) where native bird populations are still present. Our general approach integrates landscape scale observations with manipulative experiments. The intern will assist with research to measure the benefits of seed dispersal for plants and to observe which bird species disperse which tree species on Saipan. See the project website at www.ecologyofbirdloss.org for more details about research in this system.

***Duties of the interns:** *The intern will live on Saipan to set up and maintain experiments as well as collect data from field sites. The intern will work independently and as part of a small team. Specific duties may include: constructing and maintaining experimental plots, collecting seeds, propagating plants in a nursery, planting and monitoring seedlings, mapping and identifying trees (including seedlings), conducting frugivory observations, and entering data. While the premise of this project is based on birds, the research is focused on plants- there will be little work with birds. Field crews work 8-10 hours a day, 5-6 days a week. Interns must be able to commit to working on the project from April or mid-May until December.

***Requirements:** *The successful applicant must be able to pay attention to detail, work well individually and as part of a group, and be flexible. Research in the Mariana Islands involves working in high heat and humidity, walking over rough terrain sometimes carrying heavy and awkward loads (i.e. rolls of chicken wire, flats of seedlings, water), and tolerating the tedious, and at times monotonous, work necessary for all scientific endeavors. Successful applicants must learn how to identify trees (including seedlings) quickly and accurately. Experience identifying birds by sight and sounds is preferred but not required. If a candidate is allergic to bees, he/she must carry a bee sting kit and be trained in its use, as the chances of getting stung are high. Relevant field experience and independent research experience is desired, but not required. The intern must also be comfortable living in a communal field house with basic amenities. The intern must be a US citizen with a valid US driver's license.

***Payment and benefits:** *Interns will receive valuable research experience in the field of conservation biology and field ecology – a great way to both determine whether graduate school in the life sciences is for you and to gain the necessary experience for a competitive application to graduate school. Successful applicants will also receive one round-trip ticket from any major airport in the US to Saipan, housing, transportation to and from field sites, and a monthly stipend of \$550.

***To apply:** *Candidates should email a *single pdf* containing a cover letter, resume, and contact information for three references to Janie Dubman (ebf.coordinator@gmail.com). Applications must be received by midnight EST on March 28, 2015. Please contact Janie via email if you have any questions related to the internship.