Undergraduate Research Assistant
Rattlesnake Demography study – North Okanagan

We are seeking a highly motivated, academic student to assist with an intensive population assessment of Western Rattlesnakes near Vernon, BC. The candidate will work directly with the lead Graduate student researcher on daily field work tasks. The ideal candidate has a genuine, demonstrated interest in animal ecology and conservation, rather than solely a fascination with snakes. Anticipated employment term from May 1st – August 31st for returning students, though extending earlier or later is possible depending on availability.

Applicants should be returning students or recent graduates (within 4 months of graduation) and residents of Canada. Special preference will be given to TRU students eligible for UREAP awards (GPA 3.2 or higher on TRU scale), or students who can apply for additional Undergraduate funding. Please clearly state how you meet these criteria in your application.

Desired Qualifications – please describe how you meet these within your application

- Completed, or enrolled in, a University or College program in biology, natural resources, environmental science or similar.
- Interest in academic research and potential willingness to take on a directed studies or Honours project.
- Physically fit – Able to hike 10-12km with 1-2km of elevation gain per day in extreme heat, rain, and any weather conditions with a 15-30lb pack.
- Strong understanding of ecological concepts and research methods e.g. pseudoreplication, mark/recapture methods, field sampling design, ethical wildlife handling etc.
- Successful applicant will be required to complete the University of Saskatchewan UACC Animal Ethics Course – Wildlife (no fee) within 1 month of start date
- Candidate must be comfortable physically handling animals including venomous (rattlesnakes) and non-venomous snakes. Extensive training provided, experience not necessary but is an asset.
Assets – not required but will be given preference

- Competitive GPA – will be expected to apply for undergraduate funding prior to starting to offset costs
- Previous experience with dangerous/venomous wildlife and demonstrated experience with risk assessment and field preparation
- Experience with database management and organization
- Class 5 driver’s license an asset
  o Possession of a vehicle is not required but would be considered an asset

Expectations

- Anticipated 35 hours/week. Applicant should be very flexible with scheduling throughout the work term. Due to the varied seasonal behaviours or northern snake populations, field work for this project is “boom/bust”. Time off is possible but flexibility is dependent on the time of year.
  o This position will not have ‘regular’ hours and will see start times shift throughout the season including early mornings and/or nightshifts (heat of summer).
- Strong communication skills. Applicants will be expected to maintain open communication with the lead researcher and research team.

Stipend

- Compensation is between at $2000-$2400/month, depending on qualifications
  o If applicant is successful in securing UREAP or other undergraduate funding the salary will increase
- Accommodation in Vernon will be provided.
  o Successful candidates will be responsible for food and all other expenses outside of job activities. Transportation to and from field site during the term will be provided.

Interested candidates should apply with a Cover Letter and Resume with reference contact information no later than Feb. 10, 2019 however, qualified applicants will be contacted on a first-come, first-served basis. Questions and applications can be directed to Marcus Atkins (atkinism18@mytru.ca), Thompson Rivers University, and Research House 6/7. Local applicants are welcome to come speak to me in person.