PhD Position in Food Web Ecology

The Nelson Ecosystem Lab at the University of Georgia in the Department of Marine Sciences has funding for a PhD student to work on food webs and nekton at the Plum Island LTER. The student will have the opportunity to conduct research on a variety of topics related to food web dynamics, including:

The role of nekton in energy transfer and nutrient cycling

The impacts of climate change and other stressors on food webs

How changing landscapes alter food webs and ecosystem function

The successful candidate will conduct summer field research (May-August) at the Plum Island Long Term Ecological Research Site (https://pie-lter.ecosystems.mbl.edu/) working with an experienced team of collaborative scientists. The student will gain experience collecting nekton and conducting sampling in saltmarshes and coastal systems. They will also develop skills using stable isotope analysis and/or remote sensing to understand how nekton communities respond to changing landscapes and community composition. At UGA the student will have access to state-of-the-art facilities and equipment to process and analyze their data.

Highly qualified candidates will have a Masters degree in Marine Biology, Ecology, or a related field. Other preferred qualifications include experience sampling nekton in marshes and coastal habitats, experience with small boat operations, interest stable isotope analysis for food web studies, and/or GIS. Applicants should also have a strong academic record, research experience, and excellent communication and writing skills. Experience with R coding is also desirable but not required.

The Marine Sciences Department (https://www.marsci.uga.edu/) is within UGA’s Franklin College of Arts and Sciences and includes campuses in Athens, where this position is located, and at the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography (Savannah). UGA has unique analytical facilities, including the Center for Applied Isotope Studies (https://cais.uga.edu/) and Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center (https://gacrc.uga.edu/).

The Nelson Lab is committed to supporting and sustaining a collaborative work and learning environment. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, religion, age, or protected veteran status. Applicants interested in starting in the Spring or Summer 2024 are most desirable, but those who can start in the Fall of 2024 will also be considered. Candidates should send a one page letter describing their interest in the position, CV, and contacts for three references to jimmy.nelson@uga.edu and apply to the Marine Science Program https://www.marsci.uga.edu/graduate-application by 12/31/2023 for full consideration.