

Bird conservation on a tropical island: fieldwork opportunity in Cape Verde, September – November 2022

Description: We are looking for an enthusiastic volunteer, master student or bird ringer to help with monitoring, capturing and collection of behavioural data of a small ground-nesting shorebird, the Kentish plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*. Fieldwork is taking place in on the island of Maio, Cape Verde from 1st September until 30th November 2022. Accommodation costs will be covered, but the volunteer is expected to pay for his/her own expenses and transport costs to and back from Maio.

For an exceptionally strong candidate the international ÉLVONAL Shorebird Science project (www.elvonalshorebirds.com), the University of Bath (UK) and the Maio Biodiversity Foundation (Cape Verde) may offer further support.



Duties: Include walking through saltmarsh/grassland/semi-desert areas on foot or in a mobile hide to search for nests and re-sighting individuals with binoculars and a scope. When nests are found, hatch date is estimated by floating the eggs, then both parents are caught on the nest with funnel traps and are colour-ringed, measured and blood is taken. Behavioural observations of courtship and brood care are also recorded. The volunteer will be part of the bird team of the local NGO Maio Biodiversity Foundation.

Knowledge/skills required: Applicants should have a strong interest in ornithology, ecology and conservation. Experience with handling birds and knowledge of Portuguese/Spanish would be advantageous but are not a must. Candidates must have the ability to work long hours independently in tropical conditions while maintaining a positive and enthusiastic attitude. Colour vision and the ability to walk for long distances in the heat on uneven terrain are a must. A manual driver's license is required. Willingness to explore a new culture, live in a remote location, eat local cuisine, and adapt to the local lifestyle is expected. Volunteers must be available for the full fieldwork period between the 1st September and the 30th November 2022.

Skills and training offered: Use of binoculars and scope. Re-sighting colour-ringed birds, finding nests, taking nest measurements, trapping adult and juvenile birds, colour-ringing adults and juveniles, taking morphometric measurements and taking blood samples. Taking behavioural observations on courtship and parental care. Candidates will be familiarised with standardised data collection. If the candidate is inexperienced in the aforementioned techniques, but shows strong enthusiasm and interest in ornithology, we will seriously consider the application and provide the necessary training in the field. We can offer research topics for master students, and bird ringing and trapping experience for prospective bird ringers.

To apply: Interested candidates should contact Noémie Engel (nce25@bath.ac.uk) by sending a one-page motivation letter and their CV of max. 3 pages highlighting relevant experience and mentioning the name and contact details of 3 referees. Do not hesitate contacting Noémie if you have any further questions about this position.

Application deadline: 20th August 2022