

## Bird Genoscape Project: Expectations of Employment

Welcome to the Bird Genoscape Project! We're excited to have you part of our team helping to protect migratory birds across the Western Hemisphere one feather at a time. Our team has been together in some form since 2015 and each of us serves a specific role in making this project a success. This manual is your guide to achieving success as a member of our team. Please read it carefully to fully understand not just your duties, but the scope of your work.

First, it's important to understand the context of what the BGP works to accomplish. We use trace amounts of DNA found on bird feathers to paint a picture of genetic diversity across a species' total range. Feathers are plucked from birds by volunteers across the hemisphere. Those feathers are then shipped to us in tiny coin envelopes, along with any necessary metadata to keep track of the information we need to do our work. After we receive the feathers, they must be entered into our database of more than 250,000 feather samples. This is a massive task but is critical before we can begin our genetics work to uncover the breeding and wintering populations of each species, and the connections in between. Your role is helping to bridge the gap between feathers being collected in the field and our genomic work.

It's likely you're just getting started in your scientific career. Because of that we want to begin by teaching you the fundamentals of research science. You must be able to walk before you can run. That's kind of cheesy, but it's true. This is a great opportunity to do just that. We have a massive influx of new data coming in all the time. Your main role is helping us with managing this critical step in our scientific process. It's often going to be tedious and repetitive, but again, it's critical that it's done correctly. We can't emphasize this enough. It's also important to recognize that every member of the BGP has tasks that are boring, but we do them because it's part of our process and the scientific process in general. We're in this together.

The second most important job you'll have is clearly and consistently communicating with our Lab Manager, Amanda Carpenter. We all must be on the same page for this process to work so don't hesitate to ask questions if anything is unclear or if you run into any issues!

Asana is a program we use for our team to communicate with each other. We'll provide you access to the 'Curatorial' daily tracker where you'll find a section that outlines the work you're to complete. If you click on any task, you'll see instructions for how to complete the task. It's important that you keep Amanda updated on when you complete each task.

Outside of this curatorial work, Amanda may have other tasks they need your help in completing. Again, your primary role with our team is helping us stay on top of the process from feathers to genoscape. There are many ways to do that, so it's important to remain adaptable!

Outside of normal work duties you are required to do the following:

1. Attend weekly lab meetings. Meetings are usually one hour in length and are often on Thursday afternoons but can vary from semester to semester. If you are unable to attend meetings, you'll need to speak with Dr. Ruegg in person and provide a written statement of why you can't attend them. Attendance counts towards work study hours, and you may also receive credit for

attending meetings by signing up for BZ492. You'll need to talk with Dr. Ruegg about obtaining a course override.

2. If you're a work study student, you'll need to make sure to keep track of your hours via the TimeClockPlus app or website. Reach out to Amanda if you need help with TimeClockPlus.
3. Complete lab safety training. Every volunteer/worker must complete this training. You'll work with Amanda to complete this training.

After you've worked with us for a period and shown us that you're responsible and enthusiastic about the work and you've shown yourself that you're interested in this work, we can then begin to have discussions about how you'd like to grow as a young scientist. We don't take this part lightly because a lot of time and energy goes into training new scientists. If we are committing this energy to helping you achieve your goals, you must be honest with yourself and us that you intend on following through with these commitments. To be considered for a research project, you also must meet one of the three following criteria:

- Signed up for research credits
- Apply for a summer internship when/if one becomes available
- You are an Honors student working towards completing a thesis

If you meet these criteria and when you're ready to start working on a project, you should set up a meeting with Dr. Ruegg. She will help guide you in finding a project of scope that is right for you and helps us achieve our goals.

Once you've read this document and the [Bird Genoscape Project: Workflow Manual](#), and agree with our expectations and understand listed work duties, please print and sign your name below:

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_