

Ecologist / Researcher

The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGFI) is seeking a full-time scientist with a background in ecology, conservation biology, primatology, or equivalent, to lead biological research at our field site in the Nkuba Conservation Area (NCA), a community forest reserve in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The successful candidate will be expected to design, lead and execute research projects on unhabituated Grauer's gorillas as well as vegetation, large and small mammals, birds, and potentially other taxa present in this forest. This position will be predominantly field-based, where the candidate will actively oversee data collection, but will also be able to spend time based out of our facility in Rwanda for periods of desk-based research and analyses – culminating in various peer-reviewed publications. Finally, when requested and aligned with the candidate's skills, the candidate may participate in larger projects that concern the overall management of the NCA, including those related to community-based conservation, capacity building of staff, outreach, etc.

The Nkuba Conservation Area (NCA) encompasses a unique primary forest of ~1300 km² in eastern DRC, between Kahuzi-Biega National Park and Maiko National Park. This region, which forms the core of the distribution of critically endangered Grauer's gorilla, contains a large variety of animals (including chimpanzees, giant pangolins, and forest bongos) and a large tract of forest in pristine conditions where neither mining nor logging have yet made their mark. This unique forest is protected by a collaboration between DFGFI and local land owners and communities. From a base camp at the edge of the village of Nkuba, we deploy field teams to monitor unhabituated Grauer's gorillas as well as the larger biodiversity. The successful candidate will be predominantly based at this field location, overseeing the scientific aspects of monitoring efforts, analyzing existing data, improving upon current study protocols, and designing new studies.

The candidate will share leadership over field teams, and possibly visiting students, with both the gorilla program manager and biodiversity program manager, with the candidate responsible for all *scientific aspects* of activities and the managers for logistics and human resources. The candidate will report to the country director for DRC as well as the CEO and Chief Scientist of DFGFI, and will collaborate with the larger Fossey Fund scientific team based at our field office in Rwanda.

Interested candidates should be highly motivated, productive, independent, and have extensive experience working with in remote field settings, preferably in Francophone Africa. The candidate must be able to work effectively in a team with members from a variety of backgrounds, and have outstanding written and verbal communication skills. Where necessary, the candidate will also be able to use his/her skills to connect with external researchers. The applicant must be interested in multi-disciplinary science and field research and have a solid publication record. The ideal candidate would have previously conducted multi-disciplinary ecological research, preferably on mammals, in a field setting and mentored students.

The candidate should have experience working with a variety of taxa, ecological field protocols, and analytical methods. Experiences with methods such as acoustic monitoring, camera traps, and remote sensing are a plus. We expect the candidate to be able to grasp the entire scope of

ecological research, from field data collection to statistical analyses and manuscript writing and publication.

Minimum requirements are:

- 1) A PhD in ecology, conservation biology, or a related (sub)field of science.
- 2) Experience working in remote field settings in the tropics, preferably Africa.
- 3) Advanced conversational skills in French, adequate writing skills in English; fluency in both is a plus as is the ability to hold conversations in Swahili.
- 4) The ability to live in remote settings for prolonged periods of time.

Responsibilities will include:

- 1) Overseeing and improving current data collection efforts on Grauer's gorillas and other elements of NCA's ecosystem.
- 2) Data management and analyses of both existing data collections and new projects.
- 3) Designing and implementing new ecological studies in NCA that are of relevance to the conservation and protection of the area.
- 4) Contributing to our mission to build scientific capacity among current staff and visiting students (mentoring).
- 5) Publish peer-reviewed articles on NCA and the organisms found there.
- 6) Assist and/or lead grant writing efforts and assist with grant reporting.

This is a full-time permanent position, with a three-month probation period and an annual renewal of contract in mutual agreement. DFGFI will provide a salary commensurate with experience as well as all ground/logistical support.

Potential candidates should send a CV and letter of interest to Helen Law (hlaw@gorillafund.org).