



8122 Rogers Rd. S., RR #5 ~ Aylmer, Ontario, Canada ~ N5H 2R4
 Tel: (519) 875-3340 ~ Email: earthquest@hotmail.com
 Website: www.earthquestcanada.ca
 Canadian Charitable Number: 89042 9061 RR0001

Research/Conservation Projects, Programs and Courses, 2010

Plant inventory intern – Plants of Ontario Field Project

Background:

Currently there are over 3000 vascular plants of Ontario comprising trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, sedges, rushes, club mosses and ferns. Most of the provincial records for vascular plants are maintained by the Natural Heritage Information Centre in Peterborough, Ontario. Since June, 2005 EARTHQUEST has been collecting data on flowering date records across Ontario. This data is currently stored in a 41 000 record ACCESS database and represents 146 families, 498 genera and 1007 species of vascular plants across 39 counties of Ontario. Additionally, we are attempting to provide regional rankings (R ranks) of all vascular plants within their respective Site Regions as there are currently no records for this outside of local natural history clubs and Site Region field botanists. This internship also serves to provide field experience, training and expertise in field botany, database management and reporting requirements of an active and ongoing field project hosted by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA).

Requirement:

To assist with the completion of field botany work and plant photo files and collections for the ACCESS database, official plant collection and the classification of a natural area for the GRCA. The protocol and procedures in the field assessment will follow the EARTHQUEST (Canada)'s flowering database records. You will also be required to conduct a full Ecological Land Classification (ELC) of the Pinehurst and other properties in Haldimand County along with GIS mapping for reports to stakeholders, the GRCA and EARTHQUEST.

Period of Contract:

mid to late June to December, 2010, possibly with an extension into 2011.

Basis of Payment:

This internship is being awarded in a format to meet the requirements of the environmental industry and the changes reflected by the incorporation of the Green Energy Act into the environmental planning and consulting process. It is intended to provide people who are experiencing difficulties with finding and maintaining employment in the environmental industry with professional skill upgrades so that they may qualify for employment. Please note, if you lack any of these required certifications you must be willing to upgrade and pay for these courses at your own expense. Candidates who state this in their cover letters will be given preference. Once an internship has been awarded payment is based on qualifications + how many required certifications the candidate possesses. Successful candidates who possess all the requirements may receive a wage of between \$12 to \$25/hr, depending on experience.

Qualifications:

Please do not apply unless you meet the following criteria;

1. You possess a post graduate degree/diploma from a recognized college/university
2. If you lack the required 3 – 5 years of practical working knowledge field experience you must state in your cover letter that you are willing to enroll in the 6, 9, 12 month or 2 year EARTHQUEST international Field Biology Training Program to make up for this lack of required experience
3. You wish to work in aquatic/wetland ecology

4. You are willing to work and go to school, if necessary, on paid internship opportunities, but you must pay for any required certifications or professional skill upgrades before gaining acceptance on any paid internship opportunities.

All applicants must be willing to enroll, close to graduation or graduated from the EARTHQUEST International Field Biology Training Program, preference given to full time 6, 9 and 12 month students who must also possess the following attributes and skill sets;

- i. Excellent organizational, report writing, communication and interpersonal skills
- ii. Valid Ontario "G" class license
- iii. Familiarity with terrestrial plant identification to the 75% accuracy range for the Carolinian and Mixed Deciduous forest regions of Ontario
- iv. Familiarity and experience with the EARTHQUEST Plants of Ontario ACCESS database and ability to enter flowering date records of all vascular plants (ie. trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns and club mosses) encountered within the Carolinian and Mixed Deciduous forest regions of Ontario
- v. Experience or an interest in collecting voucher specimens and cataloguing
- vi. Experience with utilizing cameras (digital or SLR) to photograph flora
- vii. Currently enrolled or completion of EARTHQUEST GIS certification
- viii. Currently enrolled or completion of EARTHQUEST ELC certification
- ix. Currently enrolled or completion of EARTHQUEST plant courses

EARTHQUEST FBT Certifications or recommended or needed to apply (Candidates with 3 – 5 years of practical experience may also apply)

- Level 1 FBT terrestrial plants – families
- Level 2 FBT terrestrial plants – genera
- Level 1 FBT aquatic/wetland plants – families
- Level 2 FBT aquatic/wetland plants – genera
- Level 3 FBT SAR plants of Ontario – species
- GIS
- ACCESS
- ELC

Please see following links on our website for more details (most of these courses can be completed within 5 days);

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/Plantcourses.htm>

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/FBTCourses.htm>

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/Grasssedgerushcourse.htm>

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/InternationalFBTProgramcoursedescriptions.pdf>

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/GIScourse.htm>

<http://www.earthquestcanada.ca/SARPlantcourse.htm>

Statement of Work:

- i. Work independently in the field (as part of a larger project team) to assist with the completion of plant records & field inventories/surveys. Surveys will require movement throughout terrestrial or aquatic/wetland sites
- ii. Interns will contribute toward the completion of a total plant species list for each county where work is performed.
- iii. Hours of work will be part to full time, during the day in accordance with EARTHQUEST protocol requirements (ie. Mondays, Tuesdays, or other days specified by the Project Coordinator).

Deliverables:

- i. Verbal or email reporting on a biweekly basis
- ii. Submission of flowering date records for all vascular plants encountered while on surveys, particularly for counties not well surveyed or covered on a weekly basis to the Project Coordinator for EARTHQUEST in the format of EXCEL spreadsheets or ACCESS database tables which are compatible with EARTHQUEST.
- iii. Original field data/survey sheets completed and submitted to the Project Coordinator for EARTHQUEST
- iv. A summary report of findings, discoveries, significant observations to be submitted to the Project Coordinator for EARTHQUEST within two business days (48 hours) of completing field surveys via email
- v. Submission of properly catalogued plant voucher specimens
- vi. Submission of edited photographs of plants
- vii. Submission of rarity reports for all S1 – S3 ranked vascular plants along with GPS coordinates in UTM (eastings and northings and latitude/longitude)
- viii. Submission of all ELC data cards
- ix. Submission of well written report which incorporates ELC findings and GIS work
- x. Search of Ontario SAR flora and fauna, with concentration on vascular plants

Wages:

Any wages based on floral inventory rates and are set at the following pay schedule;

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|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| i. \$12 – 15/hr | Floral inventory rate of 10 – 20% |
| ii. \$15 – 18/hr | Floral inventory rate of 20 – 30% |
| iii. \$18 – 21/hr | Floral inventory rate of 30 – 50% |
| iv. \$21 – 25/hr | Floral inventory rate > 50% |

Selected candidates may receive an honourarium for floristic inventory (dependant on funding) component only, by the close of the internship, contract or field season as long as they have maintained a consistent inventory rate. Travel allowance and transportation to and from sites, incl. gas as well as accommodations are not provided. EARTHQUEST may also choose an intern specifically for plant inventory, another for GIS and another for computer data entry, management and analysis for this internship. The length of this internship is not known at this time, but candidates may be short listed for longer term internships if they do well on this internship and submit all required documentation in a timely and organized manner. Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter, Ontario plant species list of all trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns and club mosses observed and resume detailing how their skills match the qualifications stated herein no later than 5 pm on **June 30th** to the attention of;

Mr. Dave Jolly, B.Sc.,
 Project Coordinator
 Plants of Ontario Field Project
 Email: earthquestcanada@yahoo.com
 Website: <http://www.earthquestcanada.ca>