

# Seeking applicants for a funded Master's graduate project on hunting behavior of barn owls in winegrape vineyards of California

The Cal Poly Humboldt Dept of Wildlife is seeking a Master's graduate student to lead fieldwork and analysis on a project examining the behavior of hunting barn owls and their prey in winegrape vineyards of California. The fieldwork, conducted in late spring/early summer of 2025 in the Central Valley, will include deploying GPS telemetry tags on owls coupled with solar-powered videography at their nest boxes. Simultaneous vegetation sampling and rodent surveys will complement the owl work. The two-year graduate position starts in August 2024 and runs through July 2026, with wages totaling \$19,000 per year (work hours are 15 hrs/week in the academic year and 40/week in the summer). An in-state tuition waiver (~\$10,000/year value) is also provided. Applicants from the [15 Western States](#) would receive the full tuition waiver; applicants from other states would be responsible for the out-of-state portion of tuition (currently \$396/unit).

The position will also involve supervising two field technicians to assist with field work.

Required qualifications include: (a) BS in Ecology, Wildlife or related field, (b) interest in and capacity for technical aspects of GPS tags and surveillance cameras, (c) strong quantitative skills, (d) interest in agroecology, and (e) willingness to work in hot conditions and in collaboration with private farms. Preferred qualifications include experience with statistical modeling analyses using R, GPS tags, and/or experience working with farmers.

Candidates should express interest with a cover letter/statement of purpose, resume, and list of three references in an email to Matt Johnson at [matt.johnson@humboldt.edu](mailto:matt.johnson@humboldt.edu); please use the subject line OWL TRACKING MS APPLICANT. Your application statement of purpose should express interest in this position and articulate the required and any preferred qualifications. The top selected candidate will then be asked to fully apply to the Natural Resources graduate program at Cal Poly Humboldt <https://cnrs.humboldt.edu/node/294>. In addition to the application documents already mentioned, the full graduate school application also requires official transcripts and a \$70 application fee.

Applications accepted now (Dec 2023); review of applicants begins on 15 January 2024, and the position remains open until filled.

