

FITZPATRICK INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN ORNITHOLOGY



Post-doctoral research opportunity at the FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Town



Project: Western Indian Ocean seabirds and climate change

Project focal area: Climate change scenario modelling and seabird foraging ecology

We invite applications for the above full-time research opportunity at the FitzPatrick Institute, a world-renowned, national Centre of Excellence (CoE) in ornithological research with a strong emphasis on postgraduate studies. The tenure of the Fellowship is for up to two years, providing there is satisfactory academic progress in the first year.

The successful applicant will lead a multi-disciplinary and innovative effort linking seabird distributions to environmental variables. They will then use climate and oceanographic data to assess ocean productivity patterns and trends in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO), and relate future scenarios of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to make predictions about seabird populations and distributions. The project will be co-supervised by Francis Marsac (ICEMASA/IRD and research associate in the Oceanography Department at UCT), in collaboration with Ross Wanless and Peter Ryan. In addition there is a strong team of collaborators supporting this work.

Applicants must have strong geospatial/oceanographic modelling and analytical skills, and should be familiar with remote sensing data and climate change models. Strong scientific writing skills and a proven publication record are required. A variety of data are available to build conceptual models of oceanographic productivity, and to relate these to seabird abundance and distribution patterns. With a base model, the successful candidate will investigate which trends/patterns are arising under various scenarios of climate warming/altering productivity in the tropical WIO region, and then assess how potential spatio-temporal changes/reductions in ocean productivity could affect the tuna-seabird assemblages.

The project will be run through BirdLife South Africa, in association with the University of Cape Town (UCT). Conditions of the award of a Postdoctoral Fellowship at UCT are:

- (i) postdoctoral fellowships are only available to individuals who have achieved a doctoral degree in a relevant subject within the past 5 years;
- (ii) applicants may not previously have held full-time professional or academic employment;
- (iii) the successful incumbent may, as part of their professional development, be required to participate in departmental activities including limited student supervision and duties incidental thereto; and
- (iv) the successful incumbent will be required to comply with UCT's approved policies, procedures and practices for the postdoctoral sector.

The value of the fellowship is R250 000 per annum, renewable for a second year dependent on satisfactory academic progress. Some assistance with relocation costs can be provided, if needed. The Fellowship is compliant with the SARS guidelines and rules and is exempt from taxation.

To apply, please send a CV (including your academic record, publication list and the names and contact details of two academic referees) and a short motivation letter to Hilary Buchanan at hilary.buchanan@uct.ac.za (subject 'your surname' Seabirds and Climate Change Post Doc). Informal enquires can be directed to Peter Ryan: peter.ryan@uct.ac.za or Ross Wanless ross.wanless@birdlife.org.za

For more information on the FitzPatrick Institute visit www.fitzpatrick.uct.ac.za.

Closing date: 30th May 2017 (possible interviews to be held in June 2017)

UCT is committed to the pursuit of excellence, diversity and redress. UCT reserves the right to disqualify ineligible, incomplete and/or inappropriate applications, and reserves the right to change the conditions of award or to make no awards at all.

Approved
M. Hakenj
20/04/2017