



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

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CONSERVATION
RESEARCH!

GAIN VALUABLE
FIELD EXPERIENCE!

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PROSPECTS!

PhD project: Movement of herpetofauna through fragmented agricultural landscapes

To maintain biodiversity in agricultural landscapes, millions of dollars are expended annually on habitat restoration and corridor establishment. However, the effectiveness of these expensive conservation actions hinges on unconfirmed assumptions about how animals move through these landscapes. With growing pressure to increase agricultural production, it is a national priority to discover the connectivity and habitat needs of fauna in these complex and changing human-natural systems. Preliminary fieldwork has been completed for this project thus far, and our next step will be understanding species specific responses.

Movement behavior and survivorship of the Tree Dtella (*Gehyra variegata*; a highly territorial and patch-dependant gecko) would be examined, using transects extending from a remnant patch into four contrasting matrix treatments (planted native vegetation, woody mulch, pasture, cropped), using radio-tracking, fluorescent powder tracking and mortality trials. By understanding how matrix structure and quality affects movement, our findings would inform land-use planning and restoration management that help maintain an ecologically sustainable agricultural sector while reducing isolation of preferred habitats.

Methods used: Trapping, spotlighting, radio-tracking (night work), fluorescent powder tracking (latter part of the study), camera work (predator detection)

What's required: hard (but rewarding!) work, good fitness levels - lots of walking outdoors on moderate terrain, long nights and some day work, getting dirty and handling a broad range of animals. Experience handling reptiles is an advantage but not a requirement. It does get very hot, particularly in the western locations!

Provided: All food (three meals a day, and some snacks) and basic accommodation is covered (ranging from shearer's hut to camping), in return for dedicated support in the field. Training in a variety of wildlife survey methods incl. animal handling, direct tracking. Fantastic opportunity to interact with likeminded people, and see the wonderful agricultural belt, national parks, state forests and crown lands.

What's not provided: Transport to the locations unless arranged prior (once on site, then transport is provided). Extra/special snacks. There will be spare time between fieldwork to explore the local area! Spending money – there are little towns/shops around the locations.

Location: sites are located near Ardlethan, Grenfell and Young, NSW. Locations vary depending on your available dates.

An exciting collaboration between the ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society, ARC Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions & National Environment Research Program, & the Central Tablelands Local Land Services!

DATES

Surveys start from late September to the end of November, 2015. Then from early January, 2016 to mid March, 2016. Dates are subject to change & weather dependant.

One week commitment required. Preference would be given for those that can commit to 2-3 weeks.

For further information contact:
Nicole Hansen

Please forward a summary of your skills relevant to the project, availabilities (e.g. how many weeks available in each month) as well as a CV (no more than 2 pages) to nicole.hansen@anu.edu.au or for enquires call: 0407 727 076

