

**Title**

Positions M.Sc./Ph.D. Disease Ecology

**Agency**

Virginia Tech  
Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, Laboratory of  
Disease Ecology and Biogeography.

**Location**

Blacksburg, VA

**Job Category**

Graduate Assistantships

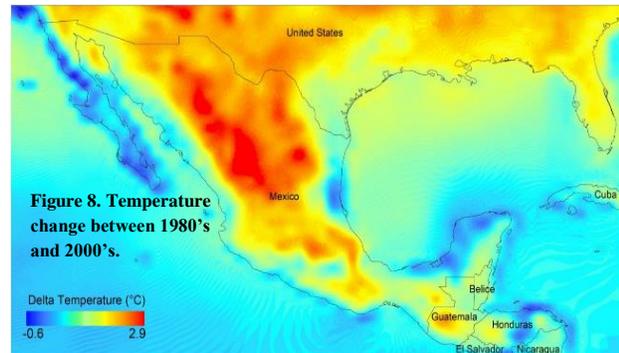
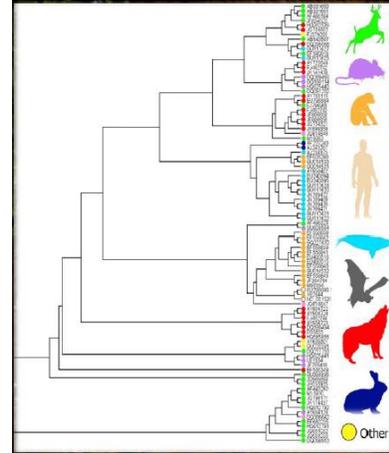
**Last Date to Apply**

October 20, 2018

**Description**

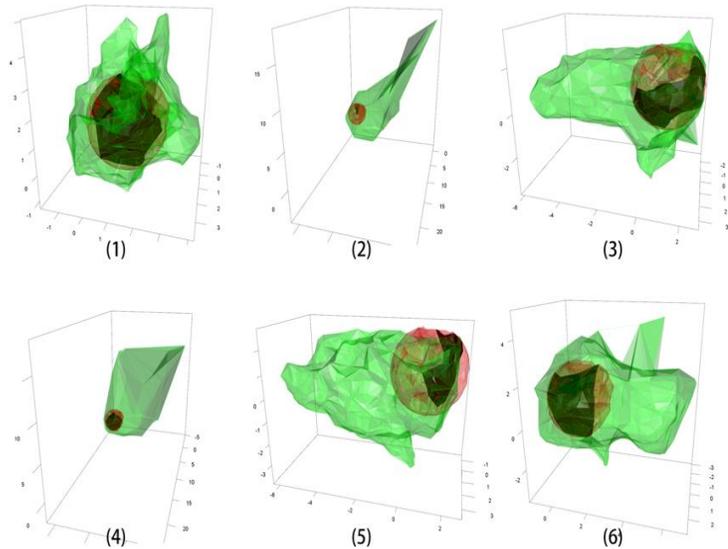
Are you interested in understanding why epidemics occur in some places but not others? Many studies have shown that infectious diseases do not occur at random; outbreaks occur under specific environmental conditions facilitated by specific human activities and behaviors. To effectively control and anticipate epidemics, it is indispensable to understand the ecological factors that better explain the occurrence of an outbreak. Disease ecology helps to determine how changes in the environment are associated with emerging infectious diseases. MS and/or PhD student positions are available for Spring 2019/Fall 2019 to conduct research in the areas of biogeography and ecology of infectious diseases. The intended research will use ecological niche modeling and other analytical tools to study infectious diseases affecting humans and wildlife. Potential research topics include rabies, vector-borne diseases, mange, and others. In addition to research work, responsibilities will include acquiring teaching experience, raising extramural funding for international internships and research work, and mentoring of undergraduate students. We are seeking highly motivated students to be part of a research team investigating diseases using theory and methods from ecology and biogeography. Preference will be given to candidates with evident passion for these topics and quantitative and writing skills.

The positions are based within Dr. Luis Escobar at the Laboratory of Disease Ecology and Biogeography, in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation, which is affiliated to the Global Change Center and part of the College of Natural Resources and the Environment, the No. 1 ranked natural resources program in the US (by USA Today) for three years running.



The Escobar's group is highly collaborative and works with researchers in universities across the US, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, and with state, federal, and non-governmental agencies. International students are accepted. This position includes full tuition and salary support. Minorities and underrepresented groups in STEM are encouraged to apply.

Virginia Tech's main campus is located in Blacksburg, Virginia, in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The New River Valley offers the charm of a small town combined with the modern conveniences of a metropolitan area. The thriving community boasts a plethora of unique and chain restaurants and stores, symphonies, theatres, historical attractions, museums, a vibrant night-life, sporting events, outdoor recreation activities, and a temperate climate. We have mountains to the west, the ocean to the east, and Washington D.C. to the north.



### Qualifications

The Laboratory has a long history of multidisciplinary research. Students from diverse academic backgrounds with interest in joining the lab are encouraged to apply (e.g., B.S. in wildlife, ecology, computer sciences, statistics, mathematics, or related fields are welcomed). Applicants must have a strong work ethic; quantitative, oral, and written communication skills; high attention to detail; the ability to work independently and collaboratively within a culturally diverse team; and capacity to work long hours. A prior DVM or a MS in ecology, epidemiology, or related biological or health sciences would be a plus, although not required.

### To apply

Send a single pdf including: **1)** a cover letter of no more than two pages that highlights your research interests, interest in graduate school, interest in infectious diseases, and why we should consider your application; **2)** curriculum vitae; **3)** unofficial transcripts; **4)** sample of scientific writing (e.g., a manuscript in preparation, an undergraduate thesis, published manuscript as first author); and **5)** contact information for 3 references who can explain your research skills and interests. Application consideration will begin on October 20, 2018 and will continue until the positions are filled. References will only be contacted after applicants are notified.

### Contact Person

Contact Dr. Luis Escobar at [escobar1@vt.edu](mailto:escobar1@vt.edu) for additional questions and to submit your application.

### Website

<http://www.fishwild.vt.edu/faculty/escobar/index.html>