Project Description:
I am currently looking for two unpaid research assistants to help with field collections and lab experiments as part of my PhD dissertation project on Mate Choice in the Color Polymorphic Arceye Hawkfish. The primary objectives for this summer are to collect live hawkfish from Oahu and Big Island, transport them to the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB), and conduct mate-choice experiments that will test for color-associated mate preference. Fieldwork will consist of diving and collecting on Big Island (over one 4-5 day trip) and 2-3 days on Oahu. Lab work will be conducted throughout the summer on Coconut Island. Primarily, I will need help prepping and running the mate-choice trials in our wetlab facility at HIMB. Experiments will include using a video recording system mounted over a choice-chamber aquarium to monitor and record fish movements during behavioral trials. Video will then be uploaded, processed and analyzed. The student will be involved with and exposed to all aspects of the research from collection to data analysis. In addition, the student will be responsible for assisting me in maintaining our wetlab facility including monitoring the seawater filtration system, cleaning aquaria and feeding/caring for our captive fish.

Additional Opportunities:
An interested student could also become involved with several other ongoing projects including performing diet analysis on stomach contents of hawkfish, and various genetics projects (e.g., preparing RAD libraries for Illumina sequencing). There are also opportunities for motivated students interested in conducting independent research for their degree requirements. There are many very interesting research questions involving hawkfish behavioral ecology that could be investigated as a side project.

Schedule:
I am primarily interested in help from mid June through late August (ending before fall term), with July being the most time-intensive period. Although, I would prefer to have one or two committed students that will be available most days, I am willing to work with different availabilities.

Qualifications:
The ideal candidate would be an advanced undergraduate student with a keen interest in marine ecology, behavioral ecology, and evolutionary biology, a current AAUS Scientific Diving certification, experience working with aquaria and live fish. I would like to take on students that will be involved with both the fieldwork and lab work, but this is not a requirement. Therefore, if you are not yet a Scientific Diver you could just be involved with the work at HIMB. At the very least, I am interested in a motivated student who is hardworking, attentive to detail, curious & eager to learn, and has an inherent interest in animal behavior research.

Compensation:
This is an unpaid position, however students assisting in Big Island fieldwork will have all expenses paid including travel, room & board, tanks, etc.

Contact:
If interested, please send me an email at jw2@hawaii.edu detailing your academic background, field & lab experience (if any), diving experience and certifications (if any), your motivation to be involved with this project and any other relevant experience or skills.

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