

Alaska Songbird Institute
Migration Station Volunteer Job Description

SUMMARY: Migration station volunteers assist in the operation of mist nets to capture and band migrant and resident birds at Creamer's Field Migration Station in Fairbanks. Volunteers work under the supervision of ASI biologists.

DUTIES:

- Assist with mist net operation (opening/closing, adjusting tension, mending nets, net lane maintenance, etc.)
- Remove birds from mist nets and transport birds to banding lab
- Recording data
- Help with banding station maintenance, including tidying station at day's end
- Greet visitors; assist with banding demonstrations if desired
- Note birds sighted in the area
- Assist with area searches, and taking phenology data as needed

RESPONSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEERS:

- Become knowledgeable about the migration station policies and procedures (attend meetings and trainings, review handouts and ask questions)
- Commit to the schedule for which you sign up
- Arrive on time
- Call if you can't make your scheduled day or time
- Follow all instructions given by ASI staff and interns; accept help when offered
- Know your limitations, evaluate whether or not you are physically capable of walking briskly over uneven terrain several times a day and consult your doctor if you have any health concerns
- Inform an ASI biologist of any concerns you have, including personal health issues such as insect allergies, or concerns about volunteer/bird safety
- Attempt to learn/improve basic bird identification skills
- Be courteous to visitors; become familiar with ASI to help you answer questions from visitors

ASI RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide training and materials outlining migration station policies and procedures, mist netting and scribing
- Be respectful of volunteers, provide constructive comments and solicit feedback
- Communicate with volunteers regarding schedule changes
- Provide a stimulating learning/working environment

- **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES:** Sew bird bags, trail work, and data entry/proofing

WHEN TO ARRIVE

If you are scheduled to help open nets, please meet a few minutes before the scheduled times below at the back door of the little white farmhouse. Volunteers should park their vehicles in the parking lot west of the farmhouse, near the bunkhouse and the foreman's house, rather than in the Creamer's Field Visitor Center parking lot.

Split shifts are available if you cannot volunteer for the entire shift. If you are scheduled for a late shift, please come all the way out to the banding station by your start time.

<u>Hours:</u>	<u>Full Shift</u>	<u>Early Shift</u>	<u>Late Shift</u>
April 21-June 6	8:30 AM-1:30PM		
August 1-August 21	5:30 AM-1:30 PM	5:30-9:15 AM	9:00 AM-1:30 PM
August 22-26	5:45 AM-1:45 PM	5:45-9:30 AM	9:15 AM-1:45 PM
August 27-31	6:00 AM-2:00 PM	6:00-9:45 AM	9:30 AM-2:00 PM
September 1-23	6:30 AM-2:15 PM	6:30-10:15 AM	10:00 AM-2:15 PM
September 1-30	7:00 AM-2:30 PM	7:00-10:30 AM	10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Cancellations

If you can't make your scheduled day, please call the CFMS banding phone at **888-2121** as far in advance as possible. If you have to cancel the evening before your scheduled day, banding phone by 8 PM so we can schedule a replacement. If you must cancel the morning you are to help, or if you are running late, please leave a message on the CFMS phone.

Rain Policy

If the weather looks questionable, call the CFMS office at **888-2121** 45 minutes before the scheduled meeting time. We will change the outgoing message **if** banding is postponed or cancelled. Never assume banding is cancelled! We may ask volunteers to check back in a few hours in case we can open the nets late.

WHAT TO BRING

- Warm clothing, including a jacket/warm sweater, hat and gloves. It can be cold in the morning, then warm and sunny later, so dressing in layers and bringing a daypack to store extra clothes is a good idea.
- Lightweight raincoat, even if it is sunny in the early morning
- Appropriate footwear. The trails between nets are not level, so boots with good ankle support may be better than sneakers. Weather conditions may dictate warm footwear or rubber boots; check with the office for current trail conditions.
- Small knife or scissors for rare situations when a net thread must be cut to extract a bird
- Snacks, lunch, water or other beverages
- Important medications/ bee sting kit if appropriate

Optional

- Mosquito jacket and head net (late spring, early summer)
- Sunscreen, sunglasses, hat with visor
- Rainpants and rubber boots (after heavy rain or on dewy mornings)
- Binoculars
- Fanny pack or belt for carrying empty bird bags
- Plastic toothpick or crochet hook to free caught bird tongues

WHAT'S AT THE STATION

- Small weatherport, chairs, picnic table, propane heater
- Port-a-potty and hand-sanitizer soap

