Two Ph.D. scholarships for studying foraging ecology of an Arctic seabird

Project title: What really matters for a High-Arctic zooplanktivorous seabird foraging in rapidly changing environment - prey size or energy content?

Studied species: Little Auk *Alle alle*

Location: The PhD students will be based at the Faculty of Biology, University of Gdańsk, Poland. Fieldwork will be conducted on Spitsbergen (European Arctic)

Project objectives: In this study, foraging ecology of the pelagic seabird, the Little Auk *Alle alle* breeding in High Arctic (Spitsbergen) will be investigated. The aim of this study is to: **1)** comprehensively characterize the Little Auks foraging areas and behaviour, applying modern technologies (GPS-tracking, zooplankton laser counter and underwater camera, remote sensing, video-recording); **2)** compare energetic values of the two sibling *Calanus* species and verify the commonly interpreted selectivity of Little Auks for *C. glacialis*; **3)** build predictive models of future Little Auk foraging habitat conditions based on energy- oriented (not size-oriented) prey selectivity.

Tasks: Successful candidates will conduct their Ph.D. study being supervised by Dariusz Jakubas and Katarzyna Wojczulanis-Jakubas from POLar Ecology Group (https://polarecologygroup.wordpress.com/) at University of Gdańsk in Poland. Both students will work in the field on Spitsbergen (Arctic) during ~2.5 months (June-August) in two seasons, in a research small team. Field work will include nest searching, bird catching and handling (marking/measuring), loggers deployment, collection of diet and feather samples. Fieldwork will be conducted both at day and night hours. Analytical part of the project will include analyses of the collected materials (molecular sexing, analysis of video material), data wrangling and complex statistical analyses (spatial analyses, randomization, etc), preparation of manuscripts and conference presentations. Dissertation will consist of few papers published in high-impacted journals.

Founding: A grant from the National Centre of Science, Poland covering costs of the fieldwork. The successful candidate will be awarded a Ph.D. scholarship for three years 5000 Polish Zloty gross per month (no other funds provided).

How to apply?
Interested candidates should contact Prof. Dariusz Jakubas (biodj@univ.gda.pl) or Dr. hab. Katarzyna Wojczulanis-Jakubas (biokwj@univ.gda.pl) at the University of Gdańsk appending:

1) CV with scientific achievements and experience including papers published in scientific journals, awards, scholarships, participation in workshops, internships, scientific projects, etc.
2) covering letter detailing reasons and motivation for applying for this specific project.
3) two letters of recommendation a previous supervisor and/or collaborator (with an email address to contact them).

Candidates may be asked to participate in interview by internet communicators (Teams/Skype).

Deadline for applications: 15 July 2022

First decision (short list): 15 August 2022, final decision: 5 September 2022.

In the case of not finding the candidate fulfilling requirements, or resignation or disqualification of the successful candidate, the second recruitment will be organised.

The next step for the successful candidate is recruitment for Doctoral School of Natural Sciences of University of Gdańsk. The detailed information here:
https://sd.ug.edu.pl/en/scisle/glowna

Due to administrative reasons, Doctoral School enrollment (and so scholarship) will start at the beginning of 2023. The first field season July-August 2023.

Basic requirements
- M.Sc. degree in biology, ecology or similar sciences (with an appropriate diploma in English or Polish);
- fluent English enabling communication and scientific writing;
- highly motivation and experience in fieldwork with birds: searching for nests, catching, measuring, banding etc;
- minimum 8 hours per day in working days in Poland (with computer) and few hours daily (including night hours) every day or depending on weather during 2-3 months staying in the Arctic (including fieldwork, work with computer and in laboratory);
- Good health (both physical and mental); intensive fieldwork in two seasons (2-3 months each) in the Arctic, in a small multicultural team, in condition of isolation, low temperature, high winds;
- capability to work both in the team and individually;
- high ethical standards, reliability, precision, and persistence in fieldwork, lab work and manuscripts preparation;
- candidate pass successfully through Doctoral Study recruitment.

Additional candidate features

- experience in publication preparation documented by authored/co-authored papers;
- knowledge of statistical methods;
- experience in work in R environment (very welcome);
- experience in GIS analyses highly welcome;
- experience in laboratory work (molecular sex identification will be a part of the study);
- high ethical standards, reliability, precision, and persistence in fieldwork, lab work and manuscript preparation;
- sense of humour and open attitude;
- good conduct (certificate of good conduct is required for applying for borrowing a rifle for scaring off polar bears); carrying a rifle during fieldwork is mandatory on Spitsbergen.

Additional information:

The application must include the following statement: "I hereby give consent for my personal data included in my application to be processed for the purposes of the recruitment process under the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)."

The applications will be considered by a selection committee according to the regulations about scientific scholarships in research projects financed by the National Science Centre, Poland https://ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/uchwaly-rady/2019/uchwala25_2019-zal1_ang.pdf