

MRres student project: The global conservation status and threats to rails (Rallidae)



Supervisory team: Dr Matt Geary (University of Chester) Dr Alex Bond (The Natural History Museum) & Dr Auriel Fournier (Mississippi State University)

Rails, coots, and gallinules (family Rallidae) are an understudied group of nearly 150 globally distributed species. Despite Rallidae's global distribution, many species are secretive and poorly studied, and while many species have large geographic ranges, many are single-island endemics, resulting in very different potential threats to each group's populations. Over 30 species have gone extinct in the last 500 years, and 35 are globally threatened on the IUCN Red List. This project will evaluate the global conservation status of Rallidae, and synthesize the threats to populations, following similar work done for seabirds (Croxall et al. 2012. Bird Conservation International 22:1-34), including synthesizing their Red List Index, geographic areas of high endemism, common conservation themes among species, while highlighting research gaps and priorities.

The student will be based with Dr Matt Geary at the University of Chester (<http://mattgeary.github.io/>), also work closely with Dr Alex Bond (The Natural History Museum; <https://alexanderbond.org/>) and Dr Auriel Fournier (Mississippi State University; <https://aurielfournier.github.io/>), and with staff of Birdlife International, the Red List Authority for birds.

Anticipated start date: October 2017

For more information, or to express your interest, contact Dr Matt Geary (M.Geary@Chester.ac.uk)