**Seeking PhD student for White-tailed Deer integrated population modeling**

We are seeking a PhD student to join our team of researchers at Auburn University’s College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment. We are partnering with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) to develop a modeling, monitoring, and decision-analysis framework for improving deer population management throughout the state of Alabama. The student will be responsible for:

1. Developing and evaluating integrated population modeling approaches to improve deer population estimates by incorporating supplemental data sources (e.g., citizen science data or roadkill reports) with traditional data sources (e.g., game check data and hunter surveys);
2. Comparing agent-based and matrix-based models for assessing population changes;
3. Designing decision scenarios and assessing the the tradeoffs of alternative modeling approaches for making informed decisions under these scenarios;
4. Developing a decision support tool for ADCNR to inform deer management at local and state-wide scales.

In a nutshell, we are looking to develop creative, ecologically sound, and scientifically defensible approaches for quantifying deer distributions, population dynamics, and management objectives. The student will be co-advised by Dr. Jonathon Valente (<https://www1.usgs.gov/coopunits/staff/480646>) and Dr. Aniruddha Belsare (<https://cfwe.auburn.edu/profile/aniruddha-belsare/>). The position is fully funded for up to 5 years, including a ~$30,000 annual stipend, tuition waiver, and subsidized health insurance. The student will be free to develop their own dissertation within the scope of the project, and under the agreement that they will meet the primary objectives outlined above and in the project proposal. Ideally, the student will begin in the fall semester (August 2024) but start dates may be flexible for the appropriate candidate. Prospective candidates should be highly motivated, interested in developing computer-based modeling skills, and have a strong background in ecology, biology, zoology, wildlife, population modeling, or a related field.

**Required qualifications**

* MS degree in Wildlife, Biology, Ecology, Zoology, Statistics, or another closely related field
* Strong communication skills in oral and written English
* Ability to work independently and as part of an interdisciplinary team
* Self-motivation, a positive attitude, and strong interpersonal skills

**Desired qualifications**

* Experience presenting and publishing peer-reviewed research
* Experience working with government agencies
* Experience with population modeling, species distribution modeling, Bayesian data analysis, GIS software, and the R statistical programming language

To apply, email BOTH Dr. Jonathon Valente (jjv0016@auburn.edu) and Dr. Aniruddha Belsare (avb0033@auburn.edu) with the subject line “Deer Population PhD.” Combine the following into a single PDF and attach it to your email: (1) a cover letter that states why you are interested in and qualified for the position; (2) a CV; (3) unofficial transcripts; (4) contact information for 3 references; and (5) TOFEL scores if applicable. Applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis and continue until suitable candidates are found. Please feel free to email Dr. Valente or Dr. Belsare with any specific questions in the meantime. More information about our graduate program can be found here: <https://cfwe.auburn.edu/graduate-study/graduate-degrees/>