

Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation

Wildlife Research and Education

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Greetings from the Welder Wildlife Foundation:

We appreciate the interest you have expressed in the Welder Wildlife Foundation's research scholarship program.

Initial contact with the Foundation concerning a scholarship may be in letter form with (1) an abbreviated proposal and (2) a preliminary estimate of expenses signed by a qualified member of the faculty at the parent university. If the Foundation staff entertains the matter further, you will be asked to submit a formal application, proposal, budget, and transcripts. Deadline for formal application materials is Oct. 1 for projects beginning the following year.

Studies are limited to the continental United States. Students must have a GPA of 3.0/4.0 and a combined verbal and analytical GRE score of 300 or above. This award is directed to graduate study at the M.S. and Ph.D. levels only.

The Foundation will entertain research proposals in the following areas of study: animal behavior, biology, botany, conservation education, ecology, genetics, mammalogy, ornithology, parasitology, range science, veterinary pathology, and wildlife and fisheries sciences. Other things being equal, proposals will be ranked in the following order of descending priority:

1. Studies already in progress which need to be extended into or through the coming year.
2. New studies which would be initiated on the Foundation Refuge or within the south Texas region.
3. Proposals having to do with problems or species in which we have a special interest because of its relationship to our area or on which we have done some work previously.
4. After consideration of the above criteria and if funds remain, we then take into consideration projects originating elsewhere within the continental U.S. and those making the greatest contribution to wildlife management in general.

Scholarship stipends for full-time students are \$1600.00 per month for M.S. candidates and \$1800.00 per month for Ph.D. candidates to cover living costs, tuition, fees and books. Students may not hold graduate or teaching assistantships or other employment while receiving a Welder scholarship.



Proposals should be sent to: Director, Rob & Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation, P.O. Box 1400, Sinton, TX 78387. Additional inquiries may be made by phone at 361-364-2643.

Sincerely,

Terry Blankenship, Director
tblankenship@welderwildlife.org



Welder Wildlife Foundation Application Policy and Procedures

The Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation's graduate research scholarship program was initiated in 1956, with the first graduate students beginning field research in wildlife and wildlife-related subjects, to promote the education of exceptionally qualified young people along these lines. The scientific breadth of the program is suggested by the academic units of previous scholarship recipients, among them: animal behavior, biology, botany, conservation education, ecology, genetics, mammalogy, ornithology, parasitology, range science, veterinary pathology, and wildlife and fisheries sciences.

Scholarships are awarded directly to properly accredited U.S. colleges or universities for bona fide graduate students who are approved candidates for M.S. or Ph.D. degrees after project proposals have been submitted to and approved by the Foundation. To be eligible for financial support, a student must have a minimum GRE score of 300 (verbal plus quantitative) and a "B" or higher average in the last two years of undergraduate or graduate work.

Academic institutions are responsible for the competitive selection and supervision of scholarship recipients, subject to Foundation approval. Students working on or near the Refuge are provided dormitory-apartment living quarters, utilities, office space, and such field and laboratory facilities as are available. The Foundation normally does not provide even temporary transportation for students; special cases calling for temporary transportation must be cleared in advance.

Students and their major professors are expected to take the initiative in deciding the number of specimens required for a given study. Students working on the Refuge are to take specimens only after they have complied with state and federal regulations and have approval of Foundation Directors. Foundation Directors normally hold master permits under which students may secure sub-permits to satisfy their needs. The Directors may write letters in support of applications for permits. Copies of all permit reports, records, etc. must be filed in the Foundation office. Students should check with the Directors to determine any required special permit provisions.

Scholarships for full-time students amount to \$1,600.00 per month for M.S. candidates and \$1,800.00 per month for Ph.D. candidates to cover living costs, tuition, fees and books. For those months in which students receive full support from the Foundation they are precluded from receiving additional assistance for which they are obligated to perform other duties, i.e., they may not hold overlapping graduate or teaching assistantships or other employment. If a student's university requires that the student perform a teaching assignment, then scholarship funds and budget requests must reflect plans for any teaching assignments that include remuneration. When this situation arises, the Foundation may temporarily suspend the student's fellowship during the semester the student is required to teach. G.I. Bill benefits are not involved with these requirements, except they and all other sources of support must be listed in the proposal budget. Recipients must satisfy all registration requirements of their respective institutions.

Funds for equipment and supplies are generally not allocated in student budgets. Smaller grants may be made for the partial support of cooperative projects. **In no instance is overhead or indirect costs paid to the student's university.**

Project travel will be allocated at a maximum of \$1,200 per year, pro-rated at \$100/mo in accordance with the number of months the student is doing field work. The student's major professor is encouraged to travel to the project study area at least once, and one advisory/inspection trip may be budgeted, not to exceed \$500. Student travel to meetings is covered under separate arrangement as described below. All Foundation Fellowship recipients are encouraged to present the results of their field research at appropriate professional meetings. The Foundation will reimburse the student for travel to one professional meeting upon or near completion of his/her data analysis and thesis/dissertation defense if the student is presenting a paper at the meeting. Any and all requests must be initiated with and approved by the Director prior to travel.



The paper must have been approved by the student's major advisor before the Foundation will fund the travel. Funding will be considered when the student presents a letter of acceptance for his/her paper or poster and an estimate of travel expenses. Reimbursement will be as follows: (1) registration fee, (2) coach-class airfare, (3) up to \$110.00/day for expenses including hotel bills, food, and other expenses for a maximum of three days. Payment will be made following submission of receipts by the student. Students are encouraged to purchase airline tickets early, search for lowest fares, and use economical hotels.

Three copies of the student's final thesis are required by the Foundation in all cases where support has been granted. A cloth-bound (hardback) copy of the thesis is required for the Foundation's library. A second, paper-bound copy is required for reserve use. A third copy should be on CD. Costs of printing and binding copies of the thesis are the responsibility of the student.

The Foundation desires to promote publications, especially those of students whose work was supported by the Foundation. Page charges are ordinary costs of research and are expensive. The student should not budget page charges in requests for funds. These funds will be provided when evidence of acceptance of the paper is received at the Foundation and when a Welder contribution number is provided for the paper. All articles resulting from work supported by the Foundation (feature articles and notes) must have a Welder number. Support of publications will be limited to a period of four years after the student has filed the thesis or dissertation.

Scholarships are granted on a calendar year basis; however, the Foundation recognizes its obligation to continue support until the work is completed, provided the student demonstrates a superior degree of scholarship, ability to do research, dedication and personal development. Continued support is dependent on the Foundation's availability of funds. Requests usually exceed the annual scholarship budget; therefore, the Foundation must exercise selectivity within its stated priorities.

Non-expendable equipment (e.g., cameras, calipers, scales, etc.) purchased with Foundation funds shall revert to the Foundation at the conclusion of the project. The Foundation shall be contacted for a decision regarding the status of such equipment when there is doubt about the expendable or non-expendable nature of the items. Equipment should be returned in working condition although the occurrence of normal wear is recognized.

Regulations of the Internal Revenue Service stipulate that to protect our tax-exempt status, we must require the following reports from scholarship recipients:

(1) Progress reports are due immediately following June 30 and December 31 each year outlining courses taken, field research performed, or other activities involved in the student's degree program. Progress reports shall bear the student's signature and the signature of the supervising professor or other committee member. Should a scholarship terminate at an intermediate date, the customary report should be submitted at that time. Delayed reports will result in delay of subsequent scholarship checks to students.

(2) Grade cards or sheets, as issued by the university registrar, are to be sent to the Foundation with the student's bi-annual progress reports. If a student is not required to be registered for any given period but will be involved in work required by his degree program, an official statement to that effect must be provided to the Foundation by the proper authority. Otherwise, funds cannot be paid for such period or periods.

For our permanent files and biennial report, each student shall furnish the Foundation five (5) digital images 300 PSI depicting activities involved in their research and an abstract (hard and computer disk copies) not to exceed 500 words.



Applications, including project proposals, should be sent to Director, Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation, P.O. Box 1400, Sinton, Texas 78387, or may be sent electronically to tblankenship@welderwildlife.org. Initially, applications and abbreviated proposals may be submitted in letter form and must be signed by a qualified member of the faculty at the parent university. Deadline for scholarship applications is October 1 for consideration of funding for the following calendar year.

This information is also available on our web site: www.welderwildlife.org

