

We are a research campus with a strong tradition in biosciences focused on complex ecological, evolutionary & developmental aspects of LIFE.
Faculty of Science, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czech Republic is seeking qualified applicants for the position of

Post-doctoral Researcher in Animal Migration Ecology



Global Life-history, Ornithology & Behavioural Ecology (GLOBE) research group (<https://GLOBEresearchgroup.com> – new webpages under construction will be launched soon) focuses on ecology, behaviour, life-history strategies and population dynamics of wild animals, particularly birds, including impacts and consequences of recent environmental changes. The GLOBE research group, led by [Vojtěch Kubelka](#) from Department of Zoology and Centre for Polar Ecology at the Faculty of Sciences, University of South Bohemia in the Czech republic, has been recently awarded a prestigious ERC CZ grant: *Animal migrations in a changing world – still advantageous strategy or maladaptive behaviour?* for five years till 2029.

Animal migrations represent one of the greatest spectacles in nature, providing crucial ecosystem services as well as resources for human communities. Why do animals migrate? It has been thought that animals migrate to reproduce at higher latitudes, taking advantage of lower predation pressure, fewer parasites and seasonally high pulses in food supply. However, it has been highlighted that recent climate change and human pressure impacts can erode such benefits and migratory animals are declining globally with poorly understood underlying mechanisms.

We strive to tackle pressing issues: Are there still latitudinal gradients in predation, parasitism and seasonal food availability, supporting the benefits of migratory behaviour? How are migratory animals able to cope with environmental changes? What are the most important drivers and life stages limiting populations of migratory animals? To achieve this, we are executing comprehensive research of migration profitability, combining experimental, observational and comparative approaches – investigating latitudinal gradients in predation, parasites, food supply and whole life-cycles of tracked shorebirds, a suitable model taxon with intra-specific variability in migratory strategies and exposed ground nests – at 16 study sites from the Arctic to Patagonia.

We seek to appoint an early career scientist as **post-doctoral researcher** to contribute to this new project.

What would be your main responsibilities

- Organize and conduct ornithological field work at selected study sites across Western Palearctic and South America in association with international collaborators
- Combine experimental and observational fieldwork with a comparative approach based on extracting relevant information from published literature
- Coordinate data collection and analyses, working with large datasets in relational databases
- Prepare and write manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals
- Lead or participate in funding applications for research in collaboration with team members
- Supervise students and research assistants
- Participate in conservation activities
- Present and promote the results at conferences and seminars
- Disseminate the project outputs to stakeholders and public,
- Carry out other scientific and/or academic activities that are important for the success of the project

What we offer

- A two-year position with the possibility of extension based on the performance
- Excellent instruments, equipment and multiple research platforms within the Faculty of Sciences, University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, Czech Republic
- Access to the Czech Arctic research station at Svalbard and fieldwork at study sites along latitudinal gradients from Morocco to Arctic and from tropical South America to Patagonia
- Extensive international networking and mentoring opportunities
- Full logistical support for own follow-up research funding applications
- English speaking, stimulating & friendly international research environment
- HR Award certificate, jcu.cz/about-the-university/development/hr-award-hrs4r
- Professional administration support and assistance with all personal, economic, legal, project, IT, intellectual property needs, flexible working time
- Competitive salary + possible bonuses, 5 weeks of paid vacation per year
- Meals allowance, special mobile services, university kindergarten
- Work-life balance in a historical middle-sized university city, budejce.cz/en/

Competitive candidates are expected to have

- PhD in evolutionary biology, behavioural ecology, zoology, or relevant field of life sciences
- A foundation of knowledge in two or more fields: evolutionary ecology, climate change biology, demography and population dynamics, predator-prey interactions and animal migration
- Experience in conducting or supervising international research projects
- 3+ years hands-on experience in field research, with preference for experience with fieldwork in tropical or Arctic locations
- Ornithological fieldwork experience including bird handling and ringing (bird ringing licence is welcomed but not necessary)
- Good skills in statistical modelling, advanced level in using R
- Strong record of success conducting research and scholarly activities, including publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Experience working with analysis and presentation of large data sets
- Demonstrated project management experience and leadership skills
- Budgetary and general administrative skills
- Excellent interpersonal skills and ability to collaborate within a team-based environment, ability to work effectively both in a team and independently
- Valid driving licence

Representative publications of our research

Kubelka V., Šálek M., Tomkovich P., Végvári Z., Freckleton R. P. & Székely T. 2018: Global pattern of nest predation is disrupted by climate change in shorebirds. **Science** 362: 680–683.

Zámečník V., Kubelka V. & Šálek M. 2018: Visible marking of wader nests to avoid damage by farmers does not increase nest predation. **Bird Conservation International** 28: 293–301.



- Halimubieke N., Kupán K., Valdebenito J. O., Kubelka V., other 19 authors, & Székely T. 2020: Successful breeding predict divorce in plovers. **Scientific Reports** 10: 15576 (1–13).
- Engel N. C., Végvári Z., Rice R., Kubelka V. & Székely T. (2020). Incubating parents serve as visual cues to predators in Kentish plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*). **PLOS ONE** 15(7): e0236489.
- Koleček J., other four authors & Kubelka V. 2021: Global population trends in shorebirds: migratory behaviour makes species at risk. **The Science of Nature** 108: 9(1–8).
- Kubelka V., Sandercock B., Székely T. & Freckleton R. P. 2022: Animal migration to northern latitudes: environmental changes and increasing threats. **Trends in Ecology & Evolution** 37: 30–41.
- Dillenseger G., Rimoldi A., Barreto S., Ugarte-Lewis L. & Kubelka V. 2023: Male-dominated courtship in an unexpectedly late-breeding Andean Lapwing (*Vanellus resplendens*) population. **The Willson Journal of Ornithology** 135: 560–569.
- Kiss A., Végvári Z., Kubelka V., Monoki Á., Kapocsi I., Gőri S. & Székely T. 2024: Breeding in an agricultural landscape: conservation actions increase nest survival in a ground-nesting bird. **Oryx** 58: 240–249.
- Székely T., Carmona-Isunza M. C., Engel N., Halimubieke N., Jones W., Kubelka V., other six authors 2024: The causes and implications of sex role diversity in shorebird breeding systems. **Ibis** 166: 560–569.
- Cooke S. J., other 14 authors, Kubelka V. & Lennox R. J. 2024: Animal Migration in the Anthropocene: Threats and Mitigation Options. **Biological Reviews** 99: 1242–1260.
- Cevenini D., Cecere J. G., De Pascalis F., Tinareli P., Kubelka V., Serra L., Pilastro A., & Assandri G. 2025: Habitat selection of the threatened northern lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) breeding in an intensive agroecosystem. **European Journal of Wildlife Research** 71: doi.org/10.1007/s10344-025-01903-w (1–13).



Application

Interested candidates should contact **Vojtěch Kubelka** (vkubelka@prf.jcu.cz). Applications should include: i) **letter of interest** (max 2 pages) – describing how their qualifications address the terms of the position as well as explaining their motivation; **curriculum vitae** (max 4 pages) – including education, relevant research experience and major achievements; iii) **contact information for at least three references**. Three documents in English should be sent to Vojtěch Kubelka before the deadline.

Deadline for applications: 10 August 2025

Position start: Start dates are negotiable but could be as early as September 2025.

Location description

České Budějovice is a vibrant medium-sized city and centre of South Bohemian region with an international university community. The University of South Bohemia is the biggest higher education institution in the region with more than 9,000 students, numerous leading departments in natural sciences and field research stations at Svalbard or Papua New Guinea. Five institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences are situated on the same campus, forming the Biological Centre and representing outstanding cooperation opportunities. The surrounding of České Budějovice has diverse natural and cultural landscapes, including Šumava National Park, two UNESCO biosphere reserves and numerous protected areas with impressive wildlife.

