White Oak conserves and sustains some of the earth’s rarest wild animals through innovative training, research, education, breeding and field programs that contribute to the survival of wildlife in nature. The conservation programs span 700 acres along the St. Mary’s River in northeast Florida, surrounded by over 16,000 acres of mixed forest and wetlands that make up the beautiful White Oak property. Founded in 1982, White Oak leads professional efforts to improve veterinary care, develop holistic animal management techniques, and better understand the biology of critically endangered species by providing excellent care and managing conservation programs for over 30 species of imperiled wildlife in large, naturalistic enclosures.

The Florida grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum floridanus*) is one of the most endangered birds in North America, with less than 40 breeding males left in the wild. In a cooperative effort with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Tall Timbers Research Station, captive breeding and reintroduction protocols were established with a close relative, the Eastern grasshopper sparrow (*A. s. pratensis*). Beginning in 2016, White Oak established, refined, and utilized these protocols to initiate conservation breeding of the Florida grasshopper sparrow. White Oak is now the only facility with a successful breeding program for this species. The unique ‘hands off’ management style has resulted in captive bred offspring that exhibit natural wild behaviors suitable for release into the wild, which began in 2019.

White Oak is seeking a qualified applicant with a strong passion for avian husbandry and conservation to assist with any and all aspects of the avian breeding season, with specific focus on the grasshopper sparrow program. This internship is designed to provide additional work experience with a strong in-situ and ex-situ conservation focus. The internship requires the creation and implementation of a sparrow-focused project and commitment to the selected schedule and work duties.

**Acquired Skills and Experiences (hands-on and discussion/observation)**

- Basic husbandry - feeding, shifting, and animal observation in large enclosures with natural social organization and groupings
- Hand-rearing passerines
- Breeding introductions and management
- Transport (in-house and external)
- Veterinary care
- Avian capture and hand restraint
- Imprinting prevention
- Artificial incubation and hatching
- Candling
- Pre-release conditioning
- Non-chemical fire ant control methods
- Reintroduction programs
- Identifying avian vocalizations
- Daily reporting
- Diet preparation
- Flight restriction management
- Assisted reproduction techniques
- Identifying individuals
- Sample collection
- Guest interactions and education
- Enclosure landscaping and maintenance
- Camera trapping and video monitoring
- Research and scientific management basics
- Sweeping for wild insects
**Application Information:**
The Grasshopper Sparrow Internship is a six-month, 40 hour a week, paid internship. The selected candidate will receive a $1,466 monthly stipend, before taxes, and free housing at White Oak for the duration of the internship. Interns will share an apartment with another intern of the same gender. The work schedule will include weekends and holidays. Due to the potential of around-the-clock hand-rearing of altricial passerines, the applicant must have a flexible schedule and availability to work a daytime or afternoon/evening shift as needed. White Oak provides transportation to and from the Jacksonville airport (for initial pick-up and final drop-off only). Interns have access to select White Oak amenities including a fitness center and swimming pool. Housing for pets and/or spouses is not available. White Oak reserves the right to terminate internships at any time. There will be no guarantee of employment at the end of the internship. To avoid conflicts, the selected candidate will not be eligible for job openings at White Oak that occur during the internship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2020 Grasshopper Sparrow Internship Sessions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Breeding Season</td>
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<td>Fall &amp; Winter</td>
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*Session dates may alter slightly

**Eligibility Requirements**
- Candidates should have previous avian experience, with passerine hand-rearing and handling experience preferred.
- Candidates must have the physical ability to identify color bands on small birds from a distance, and hear and identify very soft/quiet sounds.
- Candidates should be self-motivated, able to work well alone and with others, and willing to learn new skills and make the most of the internship experience.
- Candidates must be able to lift 50 lbs. without difficulty, work in adverse weather conditions including Florida’s summer climate, and remain on their feet for long periods of time.
- Candidates should be currently enrolled, or recently graduated (less than 3 years) from college.
- Candidates must be 18 years old or over.
- Candidates must have proof of a valid driver’s license and health insurance.
- Candidates must pass a drug test upon the start of the internship.
- Candidates must abide by White Oak’s dress code, including covering of tattoos and natural hair color.

**How to Apply**
All candidates will submit in ONE document a resume/CV, a list of 3 professional reference’s contact information, and a cover letter explaining their career goals and how the internship will help them achieve those goals. Only electronic submissions will be accepted (.doc, .docx, or .pdf only). Please send application materials to training@white-oak.org with the subject line: ‘Grasshopper Sparrow Internship Application’. Applications materials must be submitted within the application period for consideration.