



ARCHELON, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece

UNDERTAKING RESEARCH IN ARCHELON FIELD PROJECTS

There are opportunities for self-motivated and enthusiastic students to undertake either undergraduate or postgraduate research studies on sea turtles whilst participating in one of ARCHELON's field projects. These studies are generally for unpublished university dissertations and reports. Some study topics are site-specific as they may refer to factors affecting sea turtles that may not be present at all sites, e.g. photo-pollution and hatchling disorientation problems, and this needs to be taken into account when applying for a volunteer placement.

To undertake a research project the student must have volunteered before on one of ARCHELON's field projects. Only in exceptional cases, when students are recognized as having sufficient experience with other sea turtle conservation projects, a student who has not previously volunteered for ARCHELON can undertake a research project.

ARCHELON field leader and field assistant duties are incompatible with conducting research, and therefore research opportunities are only open to volunteers.

To undertake a research project several further prerequisites must be met, these are listed below.

- The student must have a university tutor who will be the *main* supervisor of the research project, from whom ARCHELON must receive a letter confirming support for the proposed project. The tutor should take an active role in choosing a research topic to be undertaken. Please note that the topic and precise methodology must be conservation oriented, not involving invasive techniques for biological sampling or manipulation.
- The student must undertake data collection and hence participate for a minimum of 6 weeks on the project during which time their research work is to be carried out in addition to regular project duties. **Only data collected by the student can be used in his/her analysis.**
- The student, the student's university tutor and ARCHELON must sign a Research Agreement, provided by ARCHELON, prior to 21 April of the year of the project. Thus **21 April** is the closing date for confirmation of research projects. Projects not finalized by this point will be cancelled; this does not affect the offer of a volunteer placement.
- An ARCHELON scientific supervisor will be defined in the Research Agreement. He/she will assist the student in various issues that may be raised in the course of the research. Additionally, ARCHELON will provide an on-site supervisor to oversee correct practice and offer advice. The on-site supervisor will be the student's first point of contact while in the field and will act as liaison between the student and the ARCHELON scientific supervisor.

- ARCHELON must receive a copy of the data collected by the student prior to their departure from the project. This is to ensure adequate backups are kept and that ARCHELON is assured some outcome from the student in case of discontinuation of the research project. In such a case the collected data can be used by ARCHELON for unpublished internal analysis.
- ARCHELON must receive a draft of the final report (or dissertation) to review for suggestions and comments, prior to submission to the university. In the report (or dissertation) ARCHELON should be duly credited for hosting the student. If the student later decides to submit a scientific paper or other article to be published with results from the research in peer reviewed periodicals, then ARCHELON must be approached at the start of the write-up for appropriate participation in the authorship of the article.
- The deadline to submit a research proposal is **15 March** of the year of the project. All proposals will be answered within two weeks. If accepted then an agreement must be signed by 21 April the latest.

If you agree to, and can comply with the above, then to start the process you must define a topic, develop methodology that will be followed during the project, and send your proposal to ARCHELON. Further, the research work should take into account the limitations of ARCHELON fieldwork routines, and avoid putting extra workload on ARCHELON staff and volunteers. For this reason the student is asked to describe in detail the proposed methodology and to fill a form (see attached Appendix) in order to show how his/her research work will fit within the routine field work of ARCHELON.

ARCHELON is not in a position to provide any equipment for research projects and hence you must obtain all instruments required for your project from your institution.

Please submit, by **15 March at the latest**, your proposal with the attached Appendix duly filled, and your university tutor's supportive letter at: volunteers@archelon.gr

We look forward to receiving considered proposals and to subsequent fruitful collaboration.

Sincerely

The Scientific Committee of ARCHELON

To help with literature searches, finding articles for reference and with relevant methodology, we recommend visiting the following web sites:

<http://webluis.fcla.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/fclwlv3/wlv3/DGref/DBST/CM2/P1basic> - This is an extensive online bibliography for all things pertaining to sea turtles.

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/prot_res/PR3/Turtles/symposia.html - This provides large (up to 30MB) downloadable proceedings of the International Workshops on Sea Turtle Conservation and Biology.

www.seaturtle.org - This is a very useful Internet Portal with links to the above sites and much more.
