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2016

UA Foundation Awards Migratory Bird Research Grant



The University of Alaska Foundation announced today that Danielle Gerik, a graduate students in fisheries and ocean sciences at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, is the recipient of the 2016 Angus Gavin Memorial Migratory Bird Research Grant.

The award is provided to support research on bird species found either permanently or seasonally in Alaska or its coastal waters, including their biology, general ecology and habitat relationships. Gerik received the \$12,046 award for her research proposal entitled "Investigation of Shorebird Diet using Genetic Analyses of Feces from Captive fed and Wild-caught Adults and Young."

"Danielle's study is an intricate part of the 'Climate Change Effects on Wetlands, Invertebrates and Shorebirds' (CEWISH) study funded partially by the Arctic Landscape conservation Cooperative and an assortment of universities," wrote Richard Lanctot, Alaska Shorebird Coordinator for the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in his letter of recommendation.

Gerik's study will assist in documenting the prey eaten by shorebirds, prey availability, and the timing of the breeding season to find the impact of shorebird growth and survival. The study will help researchers and natural resource managers understand how the timing of key ecological events can impact wildlife abundance. They study will also compliment the U.S. Geological Survey's 'Changing Arctic Ecosystem Initiative' that projects habitat change and potential species responses in order to better manage natural resources in the Arctic.

This grant, part of the UA Foundation's consolidated endowment fund, was established in 1981 with a gift from the Atlantic Richfield Co. to honor the memory of Angus Gavin, an environmental scientist and advisor to ARCO. Gavin was hand-picked by ARCO Chairman Robert O. Anderson to observe, categorize and quantify the little know flora and fauna of Prudhoe Bay in 1969. Gavin's work was instrumental in helping ARCO and the scientific community draw conclusions, pro or con, about the impact of oil field development on the ecology of the North Slope and to recommend operational changes that would minimize or negate any adverse effects on the environment.

For more information, call Dory Straight at the UA Foundation, 907-450-8030.