

On his way to the zoo or an aquarium

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Nate Jahns, an ecology and field biology major, has been spending the summer at Mississippi State University, Starkville, Miss., in a National Science Foundation program that gives undergraduates direct research experience.

Jahns, Merrimack, N.H., was made aware of the National Science Foundation internship by SCSU biology professor Matt Julius. The program gives undergraduate students the opportunity to work at institutions throughout the country. Jahns said that he chose the Mississippi State site because of the ecological research performed there.



As a member of a small research group, Jahns is performing bird population studies in bottomland hardwood forests and green tree reservoirs. The two habitats are essentially the same, but the latter are intentionally flooded during the winter months to create environments conducive to duck hunting. The researchers hope that their study will shed light on the impact of human-induced flooding and the use of duck blinds on bird populations in forest habitats.

After he earns his degree, Jahns plans to attend graduate school and hopes to eventually work at a zoo or an aquarium. He sees his summer experience as an opportunity to bolster his resume and solidify his future. He says that his research experience will give him an edge in applying to graduate schools. He also believes that it will provide reassurance that ecology is the right field for him.

- Marge Proell