

2026 WASHINGTON BIOLOGISTS' FIELD CLUB RESEARCH AWARDS COMPETITION

Purpose: The Washington Biologists' Field Club (WBFC), organized in 1900, annually provides competitive grants to support field research on the natural history of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the United States. The WBFC welcomes proposals that consider aspects of natural history, systematics, biodiversity, ecology, or environmental studies. Studies focusing on organisms occurring on Plummers Island, Maryland, or within the Potomac River drainage will be given high priority for funding, but **field-based** research projects conducted throughout the Mid-Atlantic will also be considered for funding. The WBFC is particularly interested in studies increasing knowledge of the biodiversity, conservation, and natural history of poorly-known taxa. Awards that were funded in 2025 supported studies of behavior and population biology of birds and black bears, disease ecology in dolphins, ecological genetics of ivies, effects of light pollution, heatwaves, and saltwater intrusion on insects, butterflies, and coastal trees, respectively, the community ecology of pitcher plants and a local spider inventory.

Eligibility: Applications are accepted from individuals qualified to perform the proposed research. Applicants who are not members of the WBFC are required to obtain a letter of sponsorship from a WBFC member. A list of sponsors is available at the club's web site (<https://wbfc.science/>; click on the "Research" link). The sponsoring member need not be involved in the applicant's research or the publication of results, but must be familiar with applicant's scientific abilities, credentials, and proposed research. The sponsor will serve as liaison between the grant recipient and the WBFC Research Committee during the term of the award.

Financial information: WBFC provides awards of up to **\$6,000** for selected studies. Proposals requesting smaller amounts (< \$4,000) are *strongly encouraged*, because these permit WBFC to support a greater number and diversity of studies. Awardees are reimbursed for qualified expenses upon submission of receipts. Funds may be used for travel to study sites, actual field expenses, research assistance, and cost of specialized equipment and tests. Principal Investigator's salary, publication costs, and overhead or administrative costs are not supported. Awards for projects that include funds for field or research assistants must have those funds or the entire award run through their institution's sponsored research office. The WBFC does not directly reimburse stipends or salary. Equipment purchased with WBFC funds becomes the property of the institution with which the researcher is affiliated at the time the proposal is funded.

Duration: Grants are officially awarded for **one year**, but applicants will have until **January 1, 2028**, to spend 2024 award funds. After that date, unspent funds revert to the WBFC.

Application procedure: An application consists of (1) a **description** of the project, including title, name and affiliation of applicant, and a concise (≤ 1000 words) referenced explanation of the project that includes its scientific significance and relevance to the Mid-Atlantic Region; (2) a clear, itemized **budget** listing anticipated expenses and explanations of expenses; (3) a **time table** that includes the anticipated spending schedule and completion date; (4) a **curriculum vitae** of the applicant, including educational background and a list of publications; and (5) a **letter of support** from a sponsoring member. Items #1–4 should be sent as a single electronic file (pdf). The letter of support may be sent separately. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the letter of support arrives before the deadline.** Items #4 & 5 are not required for applications from WBFC members. Incomplete proposals will not be considered.

Responsibilities: A status report summarizing project activities is required by **1 February 2027**, and a **final report** must be submitted to the WBFC Research Committee chair before **1 February 2028**. Publications from studies supported by WBFC should acknowledge WBFC support, and PDFs of publications should be provided to the Chair of the Research Committee. **It is the responsibility of the grantee to obtain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees approvals and all appropriate research permits. Voucher specimens should be deposited in an appropriate institution.**

Submission: Applications and letters of support should be submitted by email to:

John Lill, Chair, WBFC Research Committee lillj@gwu.edu

The deadline for submissions is **January 23, 2026**.

You should receive an e-mail acknowledging that your application has been received (if you do not please send a follow-up email). The committee anticipates reviewing applications immediately following the deadline, and applicants should receive notification of the status of their proposals by **early March 2026**.