

Position Description: Paleontology Student Field Assistant

Position Overview

The Museum of the Rockies (MOR) at Montana State University is seeking motivated students with experience in vertebrate paleontology fieldwork to join its field program for the 2026 season. Successful candidates will work alongside MOR's professional paleontology staff and contribute to ongoing research through active participation in field excavation and camp operations.

Minimum Qualifications

1. Currently enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student in paleontology or a related field at Montana State University.
 2. Previous volunteer or research experience with the Museum of the Rockies.
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About the Program

The Museum of the Rockies is internationally recognized for its contributions to paleontological research and its long-standing field program. MOR houses one of the largest collections of dinosaur fossils in the United States and serves as an official repository for specimens collected from federal and state lands. Field assistants play a key role in supporting this research through both excavation and field camp operations.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Paleontology Student Field Assistant will report to the Field Specialists (Dr. Haviv Avrahami and Dane Johnson) and the Curator of Paleontology (Dr. John Scannella). Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting with field camp setup and takedown
 - Operating and maintaining some field equipment
 - Supporting vehicle operations and logistics
 - Surveying fossiliferous formations and leading small prospecting teams
 - Excavating and collecting vertebrate fossils
 - Mapping fossil localities and documenting field data
 - Maintaining accurate and detailed field notes
 - Safely transporting collected specimens to the museum
 - Assisting with supervision of volunteers and visitors during field activities
 - Performing additional duties as assigned
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Preferred Qualifications

1. Experience working on a paleontology field crew, including camp setup and logistics
 2. Experience collecting large and small vertebrate fossils and associated data for research purposes
 3. Familiarity with field equipment maintenance and safe vehicle operation
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The Successful Candidate Will

- Work effectively both independently and as part of a team
 - Demonstrate strong attention to detail while maintaining awareness of broader project goals
 - Exhibit a strong work ethic and ability to meet deadlines
 - Communicate clearly and professionally with a diverse range of team members
 - Uphold the ethical standards of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP; [code of conduct](#)) and comply with [PRPA regulations](#)
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Physical Demands

- Ability to lift and carry a minimum of 50 pounds
 - Ability to work in rugged terrain and remote field conditions for extended periods
 - Tolerance for variable and potentially extreme weather conditions
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Special Requirements / Additional Information

- Fieldwork will take place in remote locations throughout Montana
 - Position may require extended travel and multi-week field assignments
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Disclaimer

This position description is intended to provide a general overview of the role and does not represent a comprehensive list of duties or responsibilities. Montana State University reserves the right to assign or modify duties as needed.

Application Instructions

To apply, please submit a resume and brief cover letter to Dr. Haviv Avrahami at haviv.avrahami@montana.edu by Wednesday, April 15th, 2026.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning the following week, and selected candidates will be contacted to schedule interviews.