

A **PhD Studentship** is available to work on the project

Does competition really structure ant communities in tropical forest canopies?

A highly motivated postgraduate student is sought to join a project that aims to explore the relative contribution of biotic (interspecies competition, forest structure) and abiotic effects (climate) on the structuring of canopy ant communities in tropical rain forests. The student will conduct field surveys, and perform experimental transplants of ant colonies across different forest systems and between dominant species territories in New Guinea, a region with globally high insect and plant diversity. In addition to innovative manipulations of species composition, the project will include functional and phylogenetic measures of ant community diversity, and behavioural and thermal-tolerance experiments. There will also be opportunities to develop the project in a direction of the student's own choosing. Duties will include spending extensive period of time in the field in Papua New Guinea, with remaining time spent in the laboratory in the Czech Republic.

The successful applicant will join the **Ant Research Group** (<http://antscience.com/>) at the Institute of Entomology, Biology Centre CAS, Czech Republic, under the supervision of Dr. Petr Klimes, and Prof. Vojtech Novotny. The research facility is in Ceske Budejovice, a charming historical city in the south of the country, within easy reach of Prague and Vienna. The laboratory is a dynamic, multinational group studying ant ecology and is embedded within the [Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology](#), a world-class centre for tropical ecology research that publish in leading journals (e.g. *Ecology Letters*, *Ecography*, *Science*). The project is in collaboration with [New Guinea Binatang Research Centre](#) and the [Laboratory of Behavioural Ecology at Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz](#).

The deadline for applications is January 15th 2021, with expected start date of April 1st 2021 (negotiable). The successful applicant will receive a scholarship from the University of South Bohemia and employment on an ongoing grant, for the 4-year PhD course, sufficient to cover living expenses in Czech Republic. Applicants from all countries are eligible.

Required

- A master's degree (non-negotiable requirement for PhD study in Czech Republic) in ecology, entomology or a related field.
- Interest in the ecology of insects and/or invertebrates.
- Enthusiasm for working in the field for extended periods of time in challenging conditions in tropical forest.
- Ability to work independently and manage small team of assistants, as well as collaborate with other team members.
- Fluency in spoken and written English.
- Experience in the use of ecological statistical analyses.

Desirable

- Previous working experience in the tropics.
- Research experience with social insect ecology & entomology.
- Experience with experiments and analyses in R in the community ecology.
- Scientific publishing in the above fields.



To apply, please send a CV, contact details for three references, and cover letter stating qualifications, previous work and motivation for the position to **Jana Liparova** (slancarova@entu.cas.cz). If you would like to discuss the project further, please feel free to contact Petr Klimes (peta.klimes@gmail.com).