

A position as **Postdoctoral Researcher** is available to work on

The impacts of tropical forest degradation and fragmentation on ant-plant mutualisms, and consequences for plant community dynamics

A highly motivated Postdoctoral Researcher is sought to join a project exploring the shifts that occur in a mutualistic ant-plant network when tropical rain forest is logged, fragmented, and converted to oil palm plantation in Malaysian Borneo. The successful candidate will lead a team conducting field surveys for ant-inhabited trees, measuring ant and plant fitness correlates, and performing experimental manipulations of the mutualistic communities, in particular in relation to forest regeneration. They will also conduct analyses and write papers on the main project findings. The project will provide the opportunity to collaborate with two cutting-edge large-scale manipulations of tropical forests: 1. The Stability of Altered Forest Ecosystems project (SAFE), the world's largest rain forest fragmentation experiment. 2. The Sabah Biodiversity Experiment (SBE), a project assessing the impacts of different diversities of tree planting on ecosystem functioning. There will also be opportunities to develop the project in a direction of the postdoc's own choosing. Duties will include spending extensive periods of time in the field in Malaysian Borneo.

The successful applicant will join the Ant Research Group (<http://antscience.com/>) at the Institute of Entomology, Biology Centre Academy of Sciences, Ceske Budejovice, Czech Republic, employed on a grant held by Tom Fayle (<http://www.tomfayle.com/index.htm>). The group is a dynamic, multinational group studying ant ecology, evolution and biogeography, and is embedded within the Department of Ecology and Conservation Biology, a world-class centre for interaction network research with regular publications in *Science*, *Nature* and other leading journals. The position allows the successful candidate to apply for standard research grants from the main Czech grant agency (GACR) to expand the project. The deadline for applications is **February 29th 2016**, with a start date of May 1st 2016, and the appointment lasting until Dec 2018. Applicants from all countries are eligible. Salary for this full time position is CZK 40,000 per month (approx. EUR 1500). Note that living costs in Czech Republic are substantially lower than in many other European countries (e.g. <http://bit.ly/1NCKQKJ>) and living costs in Malaysia are fully covered.

Required

- A PhD degree in either entomology or plant ecology.
- Experience and enthusiasm for working in the field for extended periods of time in challenging conditions in tropical rain forest, including ability to lead field teams.
- Good publication record for career stage.
- Experience in the use of ecological statistical analyses.

Desirable

- Previous work on insect plant interactions.
- Experience of molecular laboratory work, specifically DNA barcoding for species identifications.
- Experience in use of methods for statistical analysis of interaction networks.

To apply please send a CV, contact details for three references, and cover letter stating qualifications, previous work and motivation to Tom Fayle (tmfayle@gmail.com).