1 Advertisement

Post Title: Research Fellow
School/department: School of Life Sciences
Hours: full time or part time up to a maximum of 1FTE
Requests for flexible working options will be considered (subject to business need).
Contract: fixed term for 2 years
Reference: 6514
Salary: starting at £34,304 to £40,927 per annum, pro rata if part time
Placed on: 10 August 2021
Closing date: 21 September 2021 Applications must be received by midnight of the closing date.
Expected start date: 1 January 2022

2 year postdoc available on the project “Unravelling the ecology of mites on bumblebees” funded by the Leverhulme Trust. Bumblebee nests commonly contain a variety of minute mites, but little is known about these creatures. Are they harmful parasites, beneficial nest cleaners or predators of pests? This project seeks to find out.

A parallel 2 year postdoc based at University of Reading is focussed on the identification and taxonomy of mites, including development of molecular tools to aid identification.

The Sussex team will conduct lab studies to determine what different foodstuffs common mite species consume within bumblebee nests, to determine whether they are predators, detritivores, or kleptoparasites. Lab studies with bumblebee ‘micro-colonies’ inoculated with different mite species will be used to screen host-mite interactions to identify mite species that appear to have a significant influence on host fitness (positive or negative). A smaller number of mites will then be selected to take part in full field trials with entire bumblebee nests, which will be inoculated with mites and then followed through to determine their growth and reproductive output.

The postdoc at Sussex will be joining the Evolution, Behaviour and Ecology (EBE) group within the School of Life Sciences. EBE has a great strength in research on social insects.

Please contact Prof Dave Goulson, d.goulson@sussex.ac.uk for informal enquiries.

The University is committed to equality and valuing diversity, and applications are particularly welcomed from women and black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in Science, Technology, Engineering, Medicine and Mathematics (STEMM) at Sussex.

Please note that this position may be subject to ATAS clearance if you require visa sponsorship.

For full details and how to apply see our vacancies page.
The University of Sussex values the diversity of its staff and students and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds.

2. The School / Division

Please find further information regarding the school/division at: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/lifesci/ebe/research

3. Job Description

Job Description for the post of: Research Fellow

Department: Evolution, Behaviour & Environment

Section/Unit/School: Life Sciences

Location: JMS

Grade: 7

Responsible to: Professor Dave Goulson

Responsible for: n/a

Role description: Research Fellow I is an early career-grade research position. Post-holders will be expected to contribute to the work of the research team, and also to develop their research skills with support from more experienced members of staff.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1. To engage in individual and/or collaborative research activity resulting in high-quality publications

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Research, Scholarship & Enterprise

1.1 Conduct research projects individually and in collaboration with others.

1.2 Analyse and interpret research findings and draw conclusions on the outcomes.

1.3 Produce high-quality research outputs for publication in monographs or recognised high-quality journals, or performance/exhibition, as appropriate, and contribute to the School’s REF submission at acceptable levels of volume and academic excellence.
1.4 Build internal contacts and participate in internal networks and relevant external networks in order to form relationships and collaborations.

1.5 Continually update knowledge and understanding in field or specialism, and engage in continuous professional development.

1.6 Contribute to outreach / public engagement and dissemination activities

2. Contribution to School & University

2.1 Attend and contribute to relevant School and project meetings.

2.2 Undertake additional duties, as required by the Principal Investigator and/or Head of School.

3. Role-specific duties

3.1 Conduct experiments on the interactions between bumblebees and mites, using both microcolonies and whole colony approaches. Analyse, write up and publish results.

3.2 Liaise and collaborate with the Reading University team

This Job Description sets out current duties of the post that may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed.

4. Person Specification

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

1. Normally educated to doctoral level, or other equivalent qualification, or appropriate level of experience, as appropriate to the discipline (see role-specific criteria below).

2. Evidence of engagement in high-quality research activity.

3. Excellent presentation skills, with the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with students, colleagues and external audiences.

4. Ability to work individually on own initiative and without close supervision, and as part of a team.

5. Ability to exercise a degree of innovation and creative problem-solving.

6. Excellent organisational and administrative skills.

7. Ability to prioritise and meet deadlines.
8. Excellent IT skills.

ESSENTIAL ROLE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA

1. Experience of designing and conducting ecological experiments
2. Competence in statistical analysis.
3. Experience of ecological fieldwork

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

1. Emerging track record of high-quality publications in reputable journals and other appropriate media of similar standing.
2. Experience of generating research or knowledge exchange income.
3. Experience with insects, particularly social insects, and ideally with bumblebees.
4. Experience of working with mites
5. Experience in public engagement