



**Faculty of Biological Sciences
School of Biology**

Research Fellow in insect evolutionary ecology

Fixed term for up to 3 years, available from 5 October 2015

Project Title: The impact of environmental change on insect evolutionary ecology

We are looking for an enthusiastic and highly motivated individual for this post which is funded by the Natural Environment Research Council and is in collaboration with Swansea University. You will work as part of a team investigating the ecology and evolution of moths and their natural enemies, such as parasitic wasps and pathogens, in laboratory microcosms. The project will focus on how climate variation impacts on the ecological interactions between species.

You should have a PhD (or be close to completion) in population and community ecology or a related discipline. Postdoctoral experience would be advantageous, but is not essential. You should have excellent analytical skills that encompass a wide range of statistical approaches and you should have a proven track record of publishing peer-reviewed papers. You must have the ability to work well both independently and as part of a team, together with excellent data management, time management and communication skills.

University Grade 7 (£31,342 - £37,394 p.a.) Please note that due to funding limitations an appointment will not be made above £35,256.

Informal enquiries may be made to Dr Steven Sait, email s.m.sait@leeds.ac.uk

Closing Date: 27 October 2015

Ref: FBSBY1037

**Click here for further information about working at the University of Leeds
www.leeds.ac.uk/info/20025/university_jobs**

Job Description

Responsible to: Head of School of Biology

Reports to: Dr Steven Sait

This three year fixed term post based in the Sait Laboratory is funded by the Natural Environment Research Council and is part of a long term interest in insects and their natural enemies. The experimental components of the project will focus on how environmental variation affects the interaction between moths and parasitic wasps. Specifically, experiments will be carried out to obtain detailed measures of individual life history responses to variable environments; to carry out long term host and host-parasitoid microcosm experiments to determine how environmental variation drives patterns in population growth; and to quantify changes in life history traits that underpin the population dynamics. This project is in collaboration with Drs Mike Fowler and Chenggui Yuan at Swansea University who will develop population models that are informed by the experiments.

You will work with a research technician also to be employed on the project. As well as the duties outlined below, you may have the opportunity to develop skills in insect pathology, molecular biology and modelling as appropriate.

Main duties and responsibilities

- Liaise with the PI (principal investigator) and associated researchers, including collaborators at Swansea University, to perform techniques and protocols as appropriate
- Design and conduct a programme of investigation in consultation with the principal investigator and collaborators as appropriate
- Prepare, collate and present data in an understandable manner to members of the research group at regular group meetings as well as those with project collaborators.
- Evaluate methods and techniques used and results obtained by other researchers and to relate such evaluations appropriately to their own work
- Communicate or present research results through publication, conferences or other recognised forms of output
- Understand broader issues relating to the management of research
- Take part in impact, outreach and knowledge-transfer activities, where appropriate and feasible
- Contribute to the supervision of junior researchers, including day-to-day management of the research technician, as appropriate
- Maintain own continuing professional development and act as a mentor to less experienced colleagues, as appropriate
- Maintain a safe work environment, including ensuring compliance with legislation and the undertaking of risk assessments

- Assist with supervision of graduate and undergraduate project students as appropriate
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the post as requested by the Head of School or their nominee

Career Expectations

The University of Leeds is committed to developing its staff. All staff participate in the Staff Review and Development scheme and we continue to work with individuals, supporting them to maximise their potential.

Progression to a higher grade is dependent on an individual taking on an increased level of responsibility. Vacancies that arise within the area or across the wider University are advertised on the HR website - <http://jobs.leeds.ac.uk> - to allow staff to apply for wider career development opportunities.

University Values

All staff are expected to operate in line with the University's values and standards, which work as an integral part of our strategy and set out the principles of how we work together. More information about the University's strategy and values is available at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/comms/strategy/>.

The University of Leeds' commitment to women in science has been recognised with a national accolade. The University has received the Athena SWAN Bronze Award and the Faculty of Biological Science holds the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in recognition of our success in recruiting, retaining and developing/promoting women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET). We are proud of our commitment to equality and inclusiveness.

Applications from women, who are currently under-represented in this area, will be particularly welcome; however, the final recruitment decision will be based solely on merit.

Person Specification

Essential

- A PhD (or be close to completion) in population and community ecology or related discipline
- Excellent data management and computer skills
- Excellent analytical skills that encompass a wide range of statistical approaches
- Ability to design and execute experimental work independently and efficiently
- Good organisational and time management skills
- Excellent written skills, as evidenced by a proven track record of peer-reviewed publications
- Excellent verbal communication skills with colleagues and the ability to communicate with non-specialists
- Excellent presentation skills, as evidenced by attendance at conferences
- Ability to work to deadlines and work at unusual hours, such as at weekends, as experiments require
- Proven ability to work effectively and responsibly as part of a team and independently without close supervision
- Have the ability to deal with and prioritise varied tasks
- Commitment to own continuous professional development

Desirable

- Previous postdoctoral experience
- Experience of carrying out research in a lab environment
- Practical experience of rearing and handling insects
- Knowledge of health and safety issues in a lab and carrying out risk assessments as appropriate
- Experience of student project supervision
- An interest and some experience in developing approaches to impact and knowledge exchange activities

Additional Information

The University offers generous terms and conditions of employment, a wide range of benefits, services, facilities and family friendly policies. Full details are available on the Human Resources web pages accessible at www.leeds.ac.uk/hr

The Partnership

The Partnership has been developed by students and staff and describes the mutual expectations of us all as members of the University of Leeds community. More information about the Partnership is available at <http://partnership.leeds.ac.uk>.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check is not required for this position. However, applicants who have unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings, including any pending criminal proceedings must indicate this in the 'other personal details' section of the application form and send details to the Recruitment Officer at disclosure@leeds.ac.uk.

Disabled Applicants

The post is located in the Faculty of Biological Sciences. Disabled applicants wishing to review access to the building are invited to contact the department direct. Additional information may be sought from the Recruitment Officer, email disclosure@leeds.ac.uk or tel + 44 (0)113 343 1723.

Disabled applicants are not obliged to inform employers of their disability but will still be covered by the Equality Act once their disability becomes known.

Further information for applicants with disabilities, impairments or health conditions is available in the applicant guidance.

School of Biology

Organisms have evolved to function in their natural environment. Genetic information is translated, through development, into a phenotype that functions within the organism's particular environment. In the School, we study different parts of this whole process (from genetics, through development, cellular biology, physiology, life history and ecology to evolution) in both plants and animals. In a rapidly changing world, with ever greater demands on resources, there are numerous scientific problems that demand our attention. How can we grow sufficient crops to feed a growing population, and can we do this in a way that is sustainable for the environment? Can we understand the biology of disease vectors – like malarial mosquitoes – with a view to their control and reduction in the million or so people killed by the disease each year? The rise of genome-sequencing begs important questions about the functioning of those genes that have been sequenced, and the translation of genetic information into the phenotype that functions in an ecological setting. These are a flavour of the research being undertaken within the Institute.

The School consists of approximately 30 academic staff, grouped within three research groups: the Centre for Plant Sciences; Ecology and Evolution; and Heredity, Development and Disease. In line with the University's strategy, our aim is to undertake high quality research on societal issues that matter. Within the School we aim to foster an environment where research can flourish because it is the focus of our activities and because we work in an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment.

The School is responsible for delivery of the suite of Biology undergraduate degree programmes, including Applied Biology, Biology, Ecology and Environmental Biology, Genetics, and Zoology. We also have the primary role in teaching on the MRes/MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation and contribute to other taught masters courses offered by the Faculty. The focus on research-led learning means that all Biology staff contribute to the highly integrated set of modules from which these programmes are constituted.

The School fits within the Faculty of Biological Sciences at Leeds and alongside the other research Schools. Collaborations between members of the different schools are common and encouraged, so "School of Biology" is part of the larger biological enterprise at Leeds. Collaborations outside the faculty are also common. For example, the University Interdisciplinary Institute, the Earth & Biosphere Institute (<http://earth.leeds.ac.uk/ebi/>) is a grouping of scientists with interests in the effects of biotic and environmental changes on a spectrum of time and space scales, from short term to geological, and from nano-scale to global.

Biological Sciences

The Faculty of Biological Sciences is one of the leading groups of life-science researchers within the UK, offering superb facilities, providing a high quality research training environment and delivering an exceptional student education.

Our position amongst the UK elite for bioscience research was confirmed in the results of the recent Research Excellence Framework (REF) where we were ranked as 6th in the country for research impact. The assessment also identified that over

80% of biological science research at Leeds has a top quality rating of either "world leading" or "internationally excellent".

In addition to 110 academic staff, the Faculty has over 400 postdoctoral fellows and postgraduate students supported by a current active research grant portfolio of around £50m derived from a range of sources including charities, research councils, the European Union and industry.

With around 2000 undergraduate students and 150 taught postgraduate students, we are one of the largest life sciences faculties in the UK. Our programmes cover the breadth of the biological sciences with undergraduate programmes in the areas of biology, biochemistry, microbiology, sport and exercise sciences and medical sciences including physiology and neuroscience.

Significant investments in our infrastructure contribute to our dynamic and vibrant research environment, offering excellent opportunities for leading edge research focused around key areas, including neuroscience, sports and exercise science, membrane biology, and structural molecular biology.

The Faculty has 3 Schools:

- [School of Biomedical Sciences](#)
- [School of Molecular and Cellular Biology](#)
- [School of Biology](#)

Find out more about the Faculty [here](#)