



Graduate Research Assistantship Available:

The Forest Entomology Laboratory in the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology, Entomology and Plant Pathology at Mississippi State University announces a Ph.D. research assistantship with up to 4 years of support (based on performance) starting in spring or summer 2018. The selected student will be under the direct supervision of Dr. John Riggins and will be involved with an interdisciplinary team of scientists studying biogeochemical dynamics in forest ecosystems after bark beetle epidemics. This NSF funded research is already underway, with field sites in north and south Mississippi, northern Arizona, and Honduras. The student will have opportunities to conduct interdisciplinary research at the intersection of insect-fungus interactions (bark beetles, termites, and fungi), brown food web ecology, climatology, and high-throughput fungal metagenomics. The successful applicant will collaborate with an interdisciplinary team of faculty and students in the Forestry department at MSSTATE, the School of Biology at Louisiana Tech University, and the USDA Forest Service Forest Products laboratory in Starkville, Mississippi. A stipend (~\$20K/yr), graduate student health insurance, and tuition waivers will be awarded to the successful applicant. The position ideally starts summer 2018, but the search will continue until a suitable applicant is identified.

The Forest Entomology laboratory at Mississippi State University is a very collegial and collaborative group of researchers and students who enjoy investigating non-native forest insect invasions, plant-insect-fungus interactions and their influences on landscape scale ecosystem processes such as carbon and nutrient cycles, disturbance ecology of forest insects, and integrated forest pest management practices. Dr. Riggins' research program integrates forest entomology and pathology, geospatial sciences, eco-physiology, applied science, and ecosystem ecology to better understand native and introduced forest insects and their role in the biogeochemical cycle.

Successful applicants will have exhibited the ability to publish in peer reviewed literature, and exhibited success in applying for grants and fellowships is a plus. Those with suitable B.S. or M.S. degrees and/or experience in entomology, ecology, forestry, spatial sciences, biology, and/or statistics should apply. Students who know how to have fun while working hard, and who are creative, persistent, independent, and honest are especially sought.

Interested individuals should contact Dr. John Riggins and provide a cover letter, C.V., GRE scores, TOEFL scores (if not a citizen of the U.S.), GPA, and a list of references.

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