

Two Graduate Research Assistantships – Land use effects on insect population dynamics

We are seeking two highly motivated Master's or PhD students to join the Kim Eco Lab in the Department of Entomology at Kansas State University. Members of the Kim Lab study the ecology of plant-insect interactions and how these interactions vary with insect management and land-use change. For more information about our current work, please visit kimecolab.com.

Project 1: Land management and restoration effects on insect population dynamics

The grad student (MSc level) will on projects examining how land management and restoration affects insect population dynamics. The research will involve a combination of fieldwork at the Lonsinger Sustainability Research Farm, near Alton, KS and lab/greenhouse work. Students interested in the fields of insect population ecology, insect taxonomy, and food-web interactions are encouraged to apply.

Project 2: Spatial distribution of insect pests and beneficial insects in agroecosystems

The graduate student (MSc or PhD level) will work on projects examining the spatial distribution of insect pests and beneficial insects in soybean in Kansas agroecosystems. The research will involve a combination using modeling species occurrences using existing insect data and fieldwork to collect insects in soybean fields. The research sites will mostly be in east-central KS. Students interested in the fields of species occurrence modelling and GIS are encouraged to apply.

Requirements: Competitive applicants will have backgrounds in biology, ecology or entomology with an interest in conservation and insect biology. Prior experience doing field work and being part of a research project is desirable. For project 1 (MSc level), applicants with experience in insect taxonomy is preferred. For project 2 (MSc or PhD levels), applicants with strong quantitative skills (GIS, coding) is preferred. Applicants interested in a PhD should have a MSc degree. For both positions, communication skills (oral and writing) are important as is the ability to work on a team.

Both positions will be competitively funded through research assistantships (tuition and stipend). We prefer that the student starts at the beginning of the fall 2022 semester (end of August), although earlier start dates (as early as June 2022) may be considered.

To apply: For consideration, please email a cover letter stating your research interests and qualifications, your CV with names and contact information for 3 references, and unofficial transcripts to Dr. Tania Kim (tkim@ksu.edu) by February 28, 2022. I will begin screening applications in late-February; have initial online or phone interviews in early March. Final decisions will be made by late March 2022. Please indicate which position you are applying for in your email. We strongly encourage individuals who identify with groups currently under-represented in STEM fields to apply.

Information about the Department:

The Department of Entomology maintains excellent research facilities with state-of-the-art equipment and a research insect collection. It was recently ranked the 4th best Department of Entomology in the world by the Center for World University Rankings; these rankings are based on the number and quality of professional publications produced by the department and quality of faculty research. In the most recent rankings of PhD programs in US Departments of Entomology, we were ranked 8th nationally for overall quality by the National Research Council (<http://www.phds.org/rankings/entomology>).

Our mission is to: 1) provide entomological knowledge for a safe, sustainable, and competitive food, feed, and fiber system through integrated research and education; 2) maintain a stakeholder/clientele-driven focus to research, extension, and teaching activities; 3) generate fundamental information for the advancement of science and for applied uses; 4) train students for professions in education, government, business and industry; and 5) disseminate useful, unbiased information.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Our mission in the Kim Ecology Lab is to create research and learning opportunities to a diversity of students, and promote an environment based on respect, inclusivity, equity, and compassion. Kansas State University embraces diversity and promotes inclusion in every sector of the institution. The university established the Office of Diversity, led by the associate vice president for diversity and a dedicated staff. Additionally, the Department of Entomology has a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion working group and each college has a designated Diversity Point committee to provide insight and guidance. Kansas State University received the prestigious Higher Education Excellence in Diversity, or HEED, award from Insight Into Diversity magazine for the past three years. Multicultural students account for 15 percent of our student population, a university record, and continues to trend higher.