Graduate Positions in Cognitive and Behavioural Ecology

Funding is available for PhD or MSc students in Dr. Morand-Ferron’s lab, University Research Chair in Cognitive Ecology.

Research on cognitive processes has historically targeted mechanistic questions via neurosciences and psychology, leaving evolutionary considerations mostly unexamined. As a consequence we still do not understand why cognitive abilities vary so drastically between or within species, or how they evolve in the wild. Our research aims at quantifying individual variation in cognitive abilities, i.e. learning, memory, social information use, and investigating its causes (heritability, development, habitat) and consequences (life-history, fitness).

The proposed study system is that of wild-caught field crickets, Gryllus spp. Crickets can learn their way in a maze over repeated trials, and show significant repeatability of performance in this context. They are also able to memorize several visual or olfactory associations for days or even their lifetime. They have short generation times, are easy to capture in the field in Ottawa (Gryllus pennsylvanicus), and reproduce very well in captivity, making them great models for evolutionary and behavioural studies. I can propose projects to you or you can develop your own.

To apply: Send a 1-page cover letter, resume, and latest unofficial transcript to jmf@uottawa.ca

Selected candidates will be guaranteed a paid position of 20 000$/year (4 years for PhD, 2 years for MSc). Canadian applicants with >80% CGPA in their last two years of studies automatically obtain a uOttawa scholarship covering tuition fees for the duration of their program. International PhD students pay tuition at the level of Canadian students (~8000$/year). Ideal candidates would have research experience in behavioural ecology, animal cognition, and/or working with insects. The candidates should be excited to join a highly-collaborative research group. There is no deadline for the application, although Skype interviews will start in October and positions may be filled after this time. Les candidat/es résidant au Québec peuvent être éligibles à une bourse FQRNT (date limite 2 octobre, faites vite!)

Start date: May or September 2021.

Feel free to share this ad. I look forward to reading your application letter.

Dr Julie Morand-Ferron
Associate Professor & University Research Chair in Cognitive Ecology
Department of Biology, University of Ottawa, Canada
Twitter: @JMorandFerron
http://mysite.science.uottawa.ca/jmorandf

References: