



Fully-funded PhD position: Animal personality and sexual selection

In the recently funded project “The interplay between animal personality and sexual selection” we will investigate how personality differences are reflected in behaviours such as male-male competition and space use, mate choice, and parental care; and how these differences ultimately affect an individual’s survival and reproductive performance. The project will focus on the model species *Allobates femoralis*, a Neotropical poison frog with a prolonged breeding season, pronounced male territoriality, and male parental care. The study will be carried out in an experimental island population in French Guiana. Complimentary experiments can be carried out in the laboratory frog population at the University of Vienna. One unique feature of this project is our ability to monitor, assay, and track an entire animal population in its natural habitat in an island setup over several generations. By identifying respective costs and benefits of specific personality profiles, the proposed project will help us to better understand how behavioural variation can persist over evolutionary time.

We are looking for a highly motivated PhD student, who will be responsible for conducting the field experiments (typically from end of January to end of April each year), molecular analyses (parentage, relatedness), and/or hormonal and bioacoustics analyses. Particular focus of the PhD thesis will be negotiated depending on the candidate’s specific interests and/or skills. However, priority will be given to applicants with previous experience working in tropical environments, frogs, animal personality, molecular analyses, hormonal analyses, and/or bioacoustics.

Our lab welcomes applications from outstanding students with a passion for research and field work. The candidate must be willing and capable to spend up to 3-4 months each year in a tropical research station under relatively simple living conditions (sleeping in hammock, restricted privacy, simple sanitary facilities). Fieldwork can get physically challenging and the river island can only be reached via a zipline or paddling boat.

Salary: according to the rates of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) for PhD students: 30 hours/week, €2.112,40 gross salary per month, incl. health care.

Our lab is based at the Messerli Research Institute (Unit of Comparative Cognition), from the University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna. Other research groups in this unit focus on canines (dogs and wolves), farm animals (pig, horse, pigeon, chicken) and also other wildlife (kea, Goffin cockatoo), to employ a highly comparative and integrative approach in studying animal behaviour and cognition.

See following links for further information:

PI website: <https://www.evaringler.info/>

Project website: <https://www.femoralisproject.info/>

Austrian Science Fund: <https://www.fwf.ac.at>

Field site: <http://www.nouragues.cnrs.fr/>

Messerli Research Institute: <https://www.vetmeduni.ac.at/en/messerli/science/cognition/>

Contact: Eva Ringler, Messerli Research Institute, University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna, Vienna, Austria. [eva.ringler\[at\]vetmeduni.ac.at](mailto:eva.ringler@vetmeduni.ac.at)

Please send a CV, master certificate (taken courses and grades), and short (1 page) motivation letter until 24.08.2018 to [eva.ringler\[at\]vetmeduni.ac.at](mailto:eva.ringler@vetmeduni.ac.at)

Expected starting date: 01.10.2018

