

Graduate Research Assistantships in Native Plants for Supporting Beneficial Insects - Department of Entomology,
Michigan State University

The Landis and Isaacs Labs have openings for two graduate students (MS with potential to expand to Ph.D) to investigate the role of native plants in supporting beneficial insects in agricultural landscapes. This will be part of a new USDA-SARE funded project working with native plant producers and land managers to evaluate single species and mixed plantings of native plants for their ability to support natural enemies and pollinators in agricultural landscapes. In particular, the project focuses on plants suitable for dry sandy soils, which are underrepresented in lists of insectary plants for the Midwestern US. The students will work as part of a multidisciplinary team to develop site-appropriate mixtures of plants and seeding methods capable of providing resources to support multiple arthropod-mediated ecosystem services. The team is partnering with state and federal agencies, land managers, and commercial beekeepers to demonstrate their use in agricultural systems in Michigan, so interest in outreach/extension is important. Some experience in entomology, plant restoration, biological control or crop pollination and the ability to travel and work in a variety of outdoor environments is required. Preferred start date is by May 1, 2015. The wider project team also includes colleagues working on bee biodiversity and crop pollination (Jason Gibbs), plant restoration strategies (Lars Brudvig) and outreach communications (Joy Landis). E-mail a letter of interest, CV, names of up to three references, and GRE scores (if available) to: Doug Landis, landisd@msu.edu