

**\*PhD Project in Ecological Epigenetics\***

We seek a highly-motivated student for a fully-funded (Marsden Fund) PhD scholarship position commencing in 2015. The project will investigate environmental stress induction of epigenetic variation (DNA methylation, RNA editing) using the experimental organism *Didemnum vexillum*, a marine colonial invertebrate. More broadly, the project seeks to determine if epigenetic changes provide an evolutionary 'buffer' against rapid environmental change and is a mechanism to compensate for low levels of genetic variation.

The student will be enrolled through the University of Auckland ([www.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.auckland.ac.nz)) but will be based at the Cawthron Institute, Nelson, New Zealand ([www.cawthron.org.nz](http://www.cawthron.org.nz)).

The successful applicant will have a sound background in both molecular and population genetics along with a good grasp of bioinformatics theory. The student must be comfortable with learning new software for bioinformatics and statistical analyses. An ecological background would be advantageous.

The ideal candidate is expected to hold a relevant Hons / Master's degree and must be eligible to enrol in the University of Auckland's PhD programme. This PhD scholarship has an annual stipend of NZ\$25,000 (tax free) plus student fees for a period of 3 years subject to satisfactory progress. International (i.e. non-New Zealand resident) students are welcome and encouraged to apply.

For more details contact Dr Kirsty Smith ([kirsty.smith@cawthron.org.nz](mailto:kirsty.smith@cawthron.org.nz))