Postdoctoral Associate in Insect Community Ecology and Plant-Insect Interactions

A postdoctoral position is available in the laboratory of David Crowder (http://entomology.wsu.edu/david-crowder/) at Washington State University to study insect community ecology and plant-insect interactions in wheat-based cropping systems of eastern Washington. The postdoctoral associate will contribute to a project exploring the impacts of wireworms (Coleoptera: Elateridae) on wheat crops. Wireworms are soil-dwelling insect pests that can have devastating impacts on yields and economic returns of wheat, barley, and other cereal crops. Preliminary research in our laboratory suggests that damage caused to wheat plants by wireworms may affect plant quality, plant defensive responses, and plant vigor and indirectly impact other pest species such as aphids and weeds. In turn, damage by wireworms could affect the susceptibility of wheat plants to pathogens such as barley yellow dwarf virus through plant-mediated mechanisms. Other work in the laboratory has also begun to explore potential impacts of environmental variation and climate change (drought, etc.) on wireworm-wheat interactions. The postdoctoral associate will have significant freedom to develop an independent research program in this system focusing on these areas or other aspects of the wireworm-wheat system.

The ideal candidate will have experience with insect ecology and conducting large-scale field experiments involving insects and plants. Moreover, a demonstrated record of research productivity (publications, presentations, etc) from the PhD is expected. Experience working in agricultural ecosystems, and interest in extension/outreach, is preferred but not required.

The Crowder lab is diverse, with students and postdocs studying plant-insect interactions, community ecology, integrated pest management, and behavioural ecology. The lab also provides a strong training and career development environment for candidates interested in academic positions. The position is available starting in March or April, and applications will be reviewed as they are received. The ideal candidate would arrive in the lab in April prior to the summer field season (May-September), and the latest start date that would be considered is June 1st. The position is funded through the end of the summer of 2017 (2+ years), contingent on satisfactory annual progress.

Interested candidates should send an e-mail to dcrowder@wsu.edu containing a cover letter describing their experiences and potential research interests/career goals, a current CV, reprints of any relevant research publications, and names/contact information of three references.