

## PEET Assistantship Announcement

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### Header:

Two Systematic Entomology Research Assistantships Available -- Antlion PEET (Insecta: Neuroptera: Myrmeleontidae)

### Body Text:

Please pardon cross-posting. Educators: please forward to any potentially interested students.

Two Ph.D. graduate Research Assistantships are available in the laboratory of Dr. John Oswald, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University, starting January 2010.

Description: The two Ph.D. students will participate as the primary graduate trainees in a 5-year NSF PEET ([http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm\\_summ.jsp?pims\\_id=5451&org=NSF&sel\\_org=NSF&from=fund](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5451&org=NSF&sel_org=NSF&from=fund)) project designed to train the next generation of insect systematists with specialized expertise in the family Myrmeleontidae (order Neuroptera) -- the antlions. The students will undertake monographic research on selected antlion taxa, and conduct phylogenetic studies on antlions using both morphological and molecular data. The students will have opportunities to participate in a wide variety of systematics training activities, including (1) the development/refinement of skills in taxonomic monography; (2) participation in national (USA) and international field excursions [trips currently planned to Mexico, South Africa and Australia], museum visits and scientific meetings; (3) development/refinement of skills associated with the capture and analysis of data for morphological and molecular phylogenetics; and (4) contributing to the further development of the neuropteran biodiversity informatics portal the Lacewing Digital Library (<http://lacewing.tamu.edu/>).

Timing: Grant funding is expected to start in January of 2010. Preference may be given to students who can start their programs during Spring semester 2010, but well-qualified students proposing later starting dates during the summer or fall of 2010, particularly in order to complete current Masters degree programs, will also be considered.

Candidate Experience: Candidates for these positions should have a strong interest in insect systematics (both taxonomy and phylogenetics) and be working toward career goals that include a professional position in this field. Demonstrable experience and/or interest in several of the

following areas will strengthen a candidate's qualifications: insect taxonomy, revisionary/monographic studies, insect morphology, molecular lab methods, phylogenetic analytical methods, systematics publications, biodiversity informatics (particularly web design & development), field experience, and international travel. An earned Masters degree in entomology or a related field is strongly preferred, but not absolutely required. Previous experience working with one of the neuropterid insect orders (Neuroptera, Megaloptera or Raphidioptera) is desirable, but not required. Students with backgrounds in other taxa will be required to undertake their Ph.D. work on antlions. U.S. citizenship is not required.

Expressions of Interest: To express interest in one of these two assistantships, please send (1) a cover letter, (2) a curriculum vitae, (3) a statement of research experience that explains your background, specific interest in the project, and experience/interests in the areas outlined above under Candidate Experience, and (4) the names and contact information for at least two scientists who have agreed to serve as professional references. Send your expression of interest documents as a single PDF or Word (.doc) document to: Dr. John Oswald at [j-oswald@tamu.edu](mailto:j-oswald@tamu.edu). Competitive applicants will be contacted for additional information and two will be invited to apply formally for the openings. Expression-of-interest documents will be reviewed until two highly qualified candidates have been identified.

Formal Application: The students selected for these assistantships will be required to successfully enroll as graduate students in the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA. For information on the department and the application process see: <http://insects.tamu.edu/futurestudents/grads.html>. For additional information about policies and entrance requirements pertaining to university admission see: <http://admissions.tamu.edu/graduate/default.aspx>.

Assistantship Package: While continuing to meet academic, project and assistantship criteria, the students selected for the assistantships will qualify for multiple years of support (ca. 3-5 years each). Opportunities for teaching at the undergraduate level may also be available (as Teaching Assistantships). The expected assistantship package for these awards will include: a stipend (currently \$1750/mo. = \$21,000/yr), a waiver of out-of-state tuition, partial payment of in-state tuition, and partial payment of health care insurance coverage.

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