PhD position Experimental Plant Ecology

Institute for Water and Wetland Research, Faculty of Science, Radboud University

The aim of the Institute for Water and Wetland Research (IWWR) is to be a multi-disciplinary world-class institute of water and wetland research. The research of the IWWR is focused at understanding the environmental stress responses of wetland systems at various levels of organization; from cellular levels via organisms to ecosystems. In particular we aim to elucidate the adaptation of micro-organisms, plants and animals to changes in water quantity and quality under aerobic or anaerobic conditions. From the novel fundamental understanding of these processes, the IWWR wants to make a significant contribution to innovative solutions for some of the pressing global water problems. The IWWR transfers the mission to future generations of young researchers and professionals.

www.ru.nl/iwwr

“Who’s next?”

Does plant-soil feedback drive plant community patterns in a species-rich grassland?”

A fascinating and still unresolved question in ecology is how so many species can coexist in a single ecosystem. Studies in recent years have suggested that the communities of bacteria and fungi in the soil likely play a special role in maintaining plant species diversity. In this project, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), we are making use of a unique field dataset to test whether plant-soil feedback interactions drive plant community dynamics in a species-rich grassland in the Czech Republic. The project combines statistical analyses of long-term field data, experimental work on plant-soil feedback responses in outdoor mesocosms, molecular characterization of soil microbial communities, and plant community modelling. The project aims to test whether species-specific soil microbial communities are a significant force in maintaining plant biodiversity in grasslands.

Work environment

Your place of employment will be the Department of Experimental Plant Ecology, Institute for Water and Wetland Research, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

What we expect from you

You hold a university degree (MSc or similar) with a solid background in community and/or plant ecology, preferably with a focus on biodiversity in ecosystems. Previous experience with and an interest in experimental work and the application of molecular techniques are required. A good statistical background and experience with appropriate software are expected. You are a highly motivated, flexible and communicative person. The activities are diverse, so you should be ready and willing to do experimental work in the greenhouse, molecular analyses at the laboratory, and extensive statistical analyses on the computer. You will be based in Nijmegen, and you should be prepared to travel regularly to collaborators in Wageningen (molecular analyses) and spend some time in the Czech Republic (field work, statistical analyses and modelling) and the United Kingdom (bioinformatics). You are a team player who easily interacts with various collaborators with different expertise.

The research should lead to a PhD thesis, including a series of English manuscripts to be published in international journals. You should have an excellent command of the English language.

What we have to offer

• employment: 1.0 fte;
• a maximum gross monthly salary of € 2,664 based on a 38-hour working week;
• in addition to the salary: an 8% holiday allowance and an 8.3% end-of-year bonus;
• the gross starting salary amounts to €2,083 per month, and will increase to €2,664 in the fourth year;
• you will be appointed for a period of four years. Your performance will be evaluated after 18 months. If the evaluation is positive, the contract will be extended by 2.5 years;
• you will be classified as a PhD Candidate (promovendus) in the Dutch university job-ranking system (UFO).

Are you interested in our excellent employment conditions?

Other Information

Applicants should send their CV, a statement on your motivation for applying for the position, and the names (and email addresses) of two references.

Would you like to know more?

Further information on: Plantecology
Prof. Hans de Kroon, Telephone: +31 24 3653380, E-mail: H.deKroon@science.ru.nl

Applications

Are you interested?
Please include with your application a motivation letter (attn. of ms. W. van der Pluijm), CV and any required attachments. You should upload these documents using: PhD Experimental Plant Ecology