

Graduate Student Opportunities in Plant Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Two to three graduate student opportunities are available to join my lab (Erika Hersch-Green) in the Department of Biological Sciences at Michigan Tech in Houghton, MI. Starting date is flexible but ideally student(s) will join the lab group in Spring 2023 as research technicians to become familiar with the group/projects and to engage in a fun, productive field season!

Research Group and Project Details:

- Our research group seeks to better understand the factors that influence how plants interact with their abiotic and biotic environments and the ecological and evolutionary responses of these interactions. Particular research foci include – climate change biology, genome size/polyploidy, hybridization, invasive species biology and species interactions (fungal antagonists and mutualists, herbivores, pollinators).
- **For these openings - students will work as part of a team of students, scientists, teachers, and video media specialists on research examining whether and how nutrient availabilities and/or disturbances affect plants differently based upon their genome sizes and whether this contributes to the structuring of biodiversity patterns from the molecular (genomic and transcriptomic) and functional attributes of organisms to multispecies assemblages.**
- Student(s) will be expected to develop their own research questions within this general framework based upon their own interests but should reach out to me to learn more about opportunities - as there are several projects that we anticipate starting that could serve as a MS project (e.g., a transcriptome project) and/or 1-2 chapters of a PhD project. Field work can be done locally (<https://youtu.be/H6MtEnAIyi0>) and/or at other collaborative sites (see: <https://nutnet.org/home> OR <https://dragnetglobal.weebly.com/>)
- **Funding (including tuition) is available for full support** from an NSF CAREER grant.

Qualifications and Application Details:

- Candidates **must** have prior work experience in a field setting **or** with molecular/transcriptome work, and be able to work well independently and as part of a team, and have or be able to obtain a US driver's license upon starting. PhD candidates **must** have a MS in the fields of ecology or evolutionary biology or a related discipline.
- Desired qualifications include a good quantitative/statistics background and strong (demonstratable) English scientific writing skills. Students will be trained in scientific teaching and communication skills and will have the opportunity to work with G6-12 and undergraduate students. Therefore, we are also looking for a student who is interested in community outreach.
- All members of our group are committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion and the successful candidate will be expected to commit to this approach.
- **Qualified and interested candidates should email Dr. Erika Hersch-Green (eherschg@mtu.edu) to express interest.** In this email: include an updated CV and a statement of interest describing what (1) what position you are applying for (MS or PhD), (2) what area(s) of research you are most interested in exploring and (3) what previous and related skills/experience you have. I will then contact candidates for further discussion - at which time a formal application process will be discussed. Review of interested candidates will start immediately and close when filled.