

Research Associate in Forest Chemical Ecology @ LSU

(This is a contract/grant-funded, non-tenure track position. This position is available for at least one year and may be extended upon satisfactory progress and continuation of funding.)

WORK LOCATION: Department of Entomology, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

POSITION DESCRIPTION: We are looking to hire a careful and organized individual that is excited to join a dynamic group working on projects related to the chemical ecology, conservation, and management of plants and arthropods in forest ecosystems throughout Louisiana, and the Southeastern United States. As part of a collaborative effort with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the primary responsibility of this position is to identify and count Southern pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*) and associates collected from pheromone traps deployed across the state. When not leading this effort, the successful candidate would be expected to assist in laboratory management, as well as the coordination of ongoing and developing research projects in the field and laboratory relating to the behavior and chemical ecology of trees, insect herbivores, and their natural enemies. Some travel within the state, as well as to neighboring states is expected.

Opportunities for career development related to this position might include:

- Networking: Direct interaction with a diverse team of scientists across state and federal agencies, as well as collaborating universities
- Skills: Hands on experience in the trapping of insects, collection and characterization of plant and insect chemicals, assessment of host plant resistance, and behavioral assays
- Mentorship: Direct interaction with undergraduate and graduate researchers
- Project management: Analysis of data, preparation of reports and manuscripts, allocation of budgets and research effort.

ABOUT US AND OUR RESEARCH: Insect populations are regulated by abiotic and biotic factors that vary across the heterogenous landscape. Our recently formed research group (September 2022) seeks to understand how natural variation influences ecological interactions in forest ecosystems, especially among organisms that contribute important ecosystem services (e.g., pest suppression, decomposition) or threaten biodiversity and ecosystem function (e.g., invasive species). We seek to use the knowledge we gain to further our fundamental understanding of forest ecosystems and their management. Ongoing projects in our group include: community ecology of arthropods on ash trees, chemical ecology of classical biological control agents of the emerald ash borer, ecology of the flatheaded hackberry borer, host-selection and chemical ecology of longhorned beetles, and impacts of soil type on pine functional traits. We have a strong commitment to maintaining a diverse, equitable, and safe environment in our research group and Department.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: Degree in Entomology (BS/MS) or related discipline including Ecology, Botany and Forestry. The ability to work in adverse field conditions including hot and humid days, light rain, and in areas that have mosquitoes, ticks, and snakes is

required. A background check and valid drivers license are also required. Experience working in forest ecosystems, insect identification, insect herbivores or parasitoids, and collection/analysis of chemicals from plants, insects, or soils is preferred. We are especially interested in creative individuals with love of field ecology, a knack for tinkering, and drive to challenge themselves and learn.

SALARY AND BENEFITS: Salary (range: \$30,000-\$40,000) will be commensurate with education and experience. The LSU AgCenter has an attractive benefits package with a wide variety of benefit options. Benefits offered include retirement, multiple medical insurance options, supplemental insurances (dental, life, long-term disability, accident, vision, long-term care, etc.), Tax Saver Flexible Benefits Plan (saves tax dollars on some child care and medical expenses), university holidays (14 per year, typically includes a week off at Christmas), generous annual (vacation) and sick leave benefits, Employee Assistance Program, and possible educational leave and tuition exemption for coursework at campuses of the LSU System. Specific benefits depend on job category, percent effort and length of employment.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 15, 2025 or until a suitable candidate is identified.

IDEAL START DATE: February 15th, 2024

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Apply online at https://lsu.wd1.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/LSU/details/Research-Associate-Specialist--Forest-Chemical-Ecology-_R00100537-1 (or through Workday for internal applicants) by attaching cover letter with resume, curriculum vitae and contact information for three references. (Paper, faxed or e-mailed application materials will not be accepted.)

If you have questions, please contact:

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