

Job advertisement

The Institute for Ecosystem Research at Kiel University is seeking to fill the following position within the **DFG Research Unit Multitroph FOR 5281 "Multi-trophic interactions in a forest biodiversity experiment in China"**.

Research Assistant (doctoral candidate) (65%, E13 TVL)

expected to start on January 15, 2025 until January 14, 2027 (with optional extension).

The **MultiTroph** (<https://multitroph.com/>) research group is part of the Biodiversity-Ecosystem Functioning China (BEF-China, <https://bef-china.com>) research platform and aims to identify mechanisms underlying the relationships between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning via different trophic interactions along an experimental tree diversity gradient of BEF-China. The call for applications is aimed at university graduates interested in a doctorate in the field of ecology, multitroph-sub-project '**Trophic interactions along tree regeneration stages**'. The sub-project is headed by Prof Dr Alexandra Erfmeier (Institute of Ecosystem Research) and Prof Dr Tim Diekötter (Institute of Nature and Resource Conservation).

The researcher will study different stages of tree regeneration with an entomocentric view on the Janzen-Connell hypothesis. Using experimental approaches, the researcher will quantify the herbivory of seedlings of selected tree species and pre- and post-dispersal seed predation in the field. These data to be collected in the field will be linked to recorded observation data of tree regeneration in the BEF-China sites. By identifying generalist and specialist interaction partners of selected tree species, this subproject will add a crucial component to the trophic network in subtropical forests.

Your work tasks will include:

- establishing and conducting exclusion experiments at different stages of tree regeneration in BEF-China experimental plots
- establishing and deploying seed traps, seed cards, and collecting fruits to study seed predation as well as the collection and analysis of data from seed traps
- monitoring of herbivory, biomass determination and recruitment success of selected tree species in a reciprocal transplant experiment in the experimental plots
- preparing molecular analyses for the identification of insects
- writing of manuscripts and publishing them in international journals
- presenting your scientific results at national and international workshops and conferences

Your profile includes:

- a very good degree in biology (Master's or Diploma) in the field of plant or landscape ecology, biodiversity, or environmental sciences with an ecological focus.
- scientific curiosity and high motivation to develop your own ideas in relation to ecological theories
- sound experience in statistical data analysis (preferably in R) and a high motivation to expand statistical knowledge
- skills and great motivation for scientific writing and presentations
- very good language skills (C1-C2) in English (mandatory) and preferably basic to advanced language skills in German or Chinese
- the ability to work in a structured way in experimental planning and enjoy working independently under demanding field conditions in the subtropics. Experience in field ecology work is helpful.
- open communication and high motivation to work in an international, interdisciplinary research team.

We offer you:

- excellent integration into an international research network
- the opportunity for intercultural exchange through practical work experience in China
- optimal training through connection to the Kiel Plant Center, the use of the services of the Graduate Center of Kiel University and the supervision of your qualification by a doctoral advisory board

We welcome your application regardless of your age, gender, cultural and social background, religion, ideology, disability or sexual identity. We promote gender equality. Women will be given priority in cases of equal suitability, ability and professional performance.

Kiel University is committed to the employment of people with disabilities: Applications from severely disabled persons and persons of equal status will be given preferential consideration if they are suitable.

We expressly welcome applications from people with a migration background.

Kiel University bears the quality seal "audit familiengerechte hochschule" and supports the compatibility of work and professional life.

Written applications with CV, letter of motivation, and certificates (translated into German or English) should be sent as an e-mail with **one pdf** file to aerfmeier@ecology.uni-kiel.de by December 15, 2024.

Please note that applications containing only a CV are considered incomplete and will unfortunately not be considered.

We ask you to refrain from submitting application photos.

For further information or questions, please contact Prof. Dr. Alexandra Erfmeier (aerfmeier@ecology.uni-kiel.de), Institute for Ecosystem Research, Geobotany, CAU Kiel, Tel. +49-431-880-1010 or Prof. Dr. Tim Diekötter (tdiekötter@ecology.uni-kiel.de), Institute for Nature and Resource Conservation, Landscape Ecology, CAU Kiel, Tel. +49-431-880-1212.

