

Postdoctoral position in Biological Control of the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer

We seek to hire a postdoctoral research fellow to conduct mission oriented research to develop and improve integrated pest management tactics and strategies for the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB) and its *Fusarium* fungal symbiont in South Africa (www.fabinet.up.ac.za/pshb). Emphasis will be on the potential biological control of this insect and/or its fungal symbiont. This position is part of a larger project on the PSHB invasion in South Africa, funded by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), based at FABI, University of Pretoria, and in collaboration with the Centre for Biological Control, Rhodes University.

The successful candidate will conduct research with a primary focus on the exploration, evaluation and potential implementation of biological control agents against the PSHB and/or its fungal symbiont. The ideal candidate will have a background in one or more of the following: insect-plant interactions, insect-fungus interactions, entomology, mycology, biological control. Experience in insect rearing will be an advantage. The project will combine extensive field work and laboratory experiments. The ideal candidate will be able to work independently and as part of a large team (see www.fabinet.up.ac.za/tpcp).

Required Qualifications: PhD in entomology, integrated pest management, ecology, microbiology, or closely related fields; demonstrated analytical/statistical abilities and writing skills; ability to work independently and as part of a team; good communication skills; publication record; driver's license; and be able and willing to do physical field work for extended periods of time (locally and abroad). Preference will be given to candidates with previous research experience post a PhD.

Responsibilities: The post-doc will be responsible for: 1) conduct a thorough literature review on potential biocontrol agents of bark and ambrosia beetles and their associated fungi; 2) design a systematics collection strategy for field collections; 3) contribute to the successful rearing of both the PSHB and potential biocontrol agents in the laboratory (in collaboration and supervising a technician); 4) design of experiments that contribute to the development of IPM tactics and strategies to reduce the impact of the PSHB in South Africa; 5) supervising postgraduate students; 6) analyses and publication of research results; and 7) presenting results at professional, stakeholder and extension meetings.

Compensation: The compensation package for this position is very competitive in South Africa and dependent on experience.

Duration: 12 months, full-time initial appointment with the possibility of a second year's additional support conditional on satisfactory performance (evaluated annually) and the availability of funds.

Review of applicants will begin July 15th, 2020 and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. Preferred start date: ASAP depending on COVID-19 related restrictions.

Application Process: Email the following to Prof. Brett Hurley (brett.hurley@up.ac.za): (1) A cover letter that includes your research interests; (2) CV, including contact information for three references.