



Graduate position: bark beetle-fungus symbiosis, BOKU Vienna

The University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna, BOKU (Department of Forest and Soil Sciences; Institute of Forest Entomology, Forest Pathology and Forest Protection) is offering a 3-year PhD position to study the fungal symbionts and their effects on the biology of their host, the pine bark beetle *Ips acuminatus*, a species of increasing importance.

In this project we will study the community of ophiostomatoid (blue-stain) fungi associated with *I. acuminatus* in different tree species (*Pinus* spp., *Pseudotsuga menziesii*) under field conditions. Isolates of the most important fungi will be used for experimental inoculations of trees to assess their pathogenicity and their relevance for *I. acuminatus* performance. Finally, lab bioassays on the preference of beetles for trees infected with different fungal symbionts will be performed to get a comprehensive understanding of the ecology and evolution of these symbiotic relationships.

We are looking for a candidate who has strong interest in hands-on experimental work with insects and fungi, in statistical analysis of data, and is passionate in writing. A MSc degree in Biology, Ecology, Zoology, Entomology, Mycology, Forestry or related fields is desired. Furthermore, interest in molecular work, knowledge in statistics (e.g. using R) and excellent writing and communication skills would be an advantage.

The 3-year project will be conducted in Vienna, one of the most-livable cities worldwide. BOKU Vienna has about 12,000 students with focus on life sciences. The institute deals with various entomological and mycological topics in forest ecosystems, with numerous PhDs, Postdocs and research staff. Gross salary is 2,294 EUR (14 times per year, plus inflation adjustment each year).

The project starts in March 2022, applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Please send a CV, if available a list of publications, a letter of motivation, and contacts of two references to the project PI Martin Schebeck, martin.schebeck@boku.ac.at. In case you have any questions don't hesitate to send an e-mail.

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