

PhD project (AIO) 'Darwinian Agriculture by fungus-growing termites'

Laboratory of Genetics, Wageningen University, Wageningen, The Netherlands

Within the recently funded VICI project 'Darwinian Agriculture. Guided by an ancient farming mutualism', a PhD position is available. Fungus-growing termites cultivate fungi of the genus *Termitomyces*, upon which they depend for food provisioning.

A single colony cultivates a single clone of fungi, i.e. a monoculture, and this monoculture can remain productive for multiple decades. The overall question addressed in this project is how termites can maintain this high productivity of their monoculture for so long. This question is inspired by observations in laboratory evolution experiments showing fast decreases in productivity due to inadvertent selection of competitive traits that trade off with collective performance of the fungi. This PhD project will involve field work in South Africa, fungal isolation, microbial and DNA techniques. The preferred candidate has experience with these techniques and is interested in evolutionary questions, especially the evolution of cooperation.

A full-time position (38 hours), initially for 1 year after which a go/no go decision will be taken on extension with another three years. Gross salary per month euro 2042,= in the first year rising to euro 2612,per month in the fourth year, for a fulltime appointment.

We are looking for a highly motivated, enthusiastic young researcher with a strong interest in evolutionary genetics/ecology and microbiology.

Following the European Commission's Guidelines for Equality between women and men the Max-CROP management team supports the promotion of women in the European Research Area, and encourages applications from women.

To apply, please send by email a cover letter, describing your motivation and suitability for the position, a detailed CV, and the name and address of two referees to support your application to Duur K. Aanen (duur.aanen@wur.nl). **The deadline is 15 May 2015.** Interviews will be held in Wageningen, The Netherlands.

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