

Postdoctoral Research Associate Position

Using eDNA to study the impact of parasitic bees on a key tropical pollinator community

Application deadline: **16 February 2025**

Background

We are offering a 3-year Postdoctoral Research Associate position at the University of Bristol funded by the Leverhulme Trust to investigate the impacts of parasitic bees on a tropical pollinator community.

Bees are key pollinators in the tropics, yet they also face multiple threats. One major threat is the parasitic robber bee *Lestrimelitta*, which damages and often kills bee colonies. However, how robber bees impact tropical bee communities (especially stingless bees) and their pollination services is not well understood. This project will use an emerging molecular tool, DNA metabarcoding of environmental DNA (eDNA), in combination with behavioural and ecological surveys to investigate how parasitic robber bees select and exploit host colonies, and how they affect vital pollinator communities in tropical ecosystems.

Beneficial skills & experience

- Ecological fieldwork in tropical habitats
- DNA barcoding or metabarcoding of eDNA, molecular tools to assess colony densities and foraging ranges (microsatellites, SNPs)
- Expertise in behaviour and ecology of bees or social insects

Team and research environment

The team includes [Dr. Christoph Grüter](#) and Dr. Emily Bell at the University of Bristol and collaborators Prof. Klaus Hartfelder, Prof. Eduardo Almeida and Prof. Fabio Nascimento at the University of São Paulo, Brazil.

The successful applicant will join an international and interactive scientific environment with access to state-of-the-art [facilities](#) at the University of Bristol. Bristol is a vibrant city known for its thriving academic community and rich cultural scene. Bristol University has a strong commitment to sustainability and diversity and offers excellent opportunities for professional and personal growth in an engaging and supportive environment.

Starting salary: £37,999-£42,632, depending on experience & qualifications

Preferred starting date: 1 May 2025

Application procedure: The application process is not yet open and will be conducted through the University of Bristol [Jobs Portal](#). For informal enquiries, please contact Dr. Christoph Grüter (c.grueter@bristol.ac.uk).