

Graduate position: Sigel Lab at University of Louisiana at Lafayette

The Sigel lab in the Department of Biology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is currently recruiting a PhD student interested in pursuing research on the phylogenetics, population genetics, and genomics of the invasive aquatic fern *Salvinia molesta*. Widely considered one of the world's most invasive and understudied weeds, *Salvinia molesta* poses an extreme ecological and economic burden in the southeastern United States. This project will involve extensive sampling of contemporary populations and historic herbarium specimens to infer the polyploid and reticulate evolutionary origins of *Salvinia molesta*, as well as characterize its genetic and epigenetic variation within Louisiana and the adjacent Gulf of Mexico Coastal Region.

This project has recently been recommended for funding by NSF as part of the Consortium for Plant INvasion Genomics (CPING), centered out of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. This consortium unites researchers from several institutions conducting similar projects that leverage herbarium specimens to better understand the evolutionary dynamics underlying plant invasions. There are multiple years of research assistant support for a student pursuing this project. The preferred start date is January 2020.

The ideal candidate for this position is a passionate and motivated scientist with previous research experience in evolutionary biology, phylogenetics, genomics, or a related field. Previous experience conducting molecular work, phylogenetics, and working with genomic data sets is highly preferred but not required. A desire to participate in field collection, learn new skills, and work collaboratively with others is necessary.

The Department of Biology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has a large and productive graduate program, with relatively low TA loads, guaranteed funding for PhD students, and many available fellowships. We also have a strong program in Evolutionary Biology with nine new faculty members in the last 5 years. Information on our graduate program and curriculum can be found at <https://biology.louisiana.edu/programs/graduate>.

Lafayette is a college town in south-central Louisiana in the heart of Acadiana, a region known for its Cajun culture, food, and music. Learn more at <https://www.lafayettetravel.com/explore/history-of-acadiana>.

If interested, please email Dr. Erin Sigel (erinsigel@louisiana.edu; erinsigel.net). Include a CV, cover letter highlighting relevant experience and motivations for the position, and contact information for three references.

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