

Vacancy for field researcher on Marion Island

(March 2020 – May 2021)

Invasions in the Changing Sub-Antarctic

The research project entitled "*Invasions in the changing sub-Antarctic*" will have one position vacant for an ecologist interested in understanding impacts of climate change and alien invasions on vegetation of sub-Antarctic Marion Island.

Posts: Field researchers

Location: Marion Island

Salary: ± R213 000 (incl. benefits) for 14 months, depending on qualification level

Basic Academic Requirements:

- Candidates must have a minimum of a BSc (Hons) degree in plant biology (for ecophysiologicalist) or plant biology, ecology, environmental sciences, entomology or similar. Some knowledge of plant ecophysiology will be an advantage. Candidates whose degrees will be conferred by April 2020 will also qualify for consideration.
- Experience of field work in rugged terrain and vegetation surveys are required. Experience of plant identification, plant functional trait measurements and/or entomology will be an advantage. Some exposure to conducting manipulative field experiments, and climate change and alien invasion theory will also be an advantage.
- Computer literacy with experience in data management, statistical analysis (at least one undergraduate statistics course) and report writing are required. Some experience of maintaining experiments and equipment required. Experience in R statistical software, spatial analysis, or programming skills (for ecologist) are preferable.

Expedition Requirements:

- Undertake fieldwork, sometimes for long hours, under very onerous conditions (i.e. cold, wet and windy).
- Fieldwork will occupy 60% of the work-time on the island, with the remaining time dedicated to office and laboratory work, including analysis of data. Must be physically fit, self-motivated, mentally robust and enthusiastic about research. Must have experience of working in physically challenging environments. Experience of navigating in rugged terrain highly recommended.
- Good organisational skills, able to work independently but also to function in a team.
- Meticulous observation, note-taking and record-keeping abilities.
- The ability to work and live with small groups of people is essential.

Other Information:

- Note that the isolated conditions can be psychologically challenging for candidates.
- Appointments to these positions is subject to a rigorous medical examination, which will be arranged at no cost to short-listed applicants.
- The opportunity exists to conduct a funded postgraduate degree based on the data collected.
- Successful applicants will spend a full year (April 2019 to May 2020) at Marion Island. *Note that there is no option to return before the end of the expedition.* The well-equipped new base station has internet and satellite telephone facilities although, periods of little to no possible communication do occur.

Duties:

Surveying vegetation plots. Monitoring vegetation plots. Mapping species and events. Collecting plant physiological and trait data. Installing, maintaining and downloading data from temperature loggers. Running and maintaining an extensive watering experiment. Note that duties may change during the course of the year.

Shortlisted candidates will undergo rigorous competency tests to ensure adherence to requirements.

Application:

Applicants should submit their applications here: <https://forms.gle/cB4M9FGE7Gtcq7Uo7>.

The below information is required. (All attachments must be submitted as pdfs.)

- **Detailed CV, including contact details of at least three referees,**
- **Cover letter indicating eligibility for the post**
- **Certified copies of qualifications (including marks) and ID**

Deadline for applications: 25 October 2019

South African applicants will receive priority.

For queries contact Dr Greve (michelle.greve@up.ac.za) by email.

