

Dung Beetles: Ecosystem Engineers

Charles Sturt University (CSU) is seeking high quality applicants for two PhD scholarships to research aspects of dung beetle biology and ecology. These projects will contribute to the delivery of a larger venture which aims to undertake targeted and monitored release of dung beetle species and assess their impact on soil processes, pest life-cycles and the social adoption of farming practices to encourage dung beetle populations. This work will involve field, controlled environment and lab-based experiments.

- Students will be enrolled full-time based at the Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, Australia.
- Stipend of A\$30,000 per year for three years, with possibility of extension.
- Successful candidates will have opportunities to apply for stipend and/or operational funding top-ups.
- Potential for tuition and fees to be supported.

(1) Dung beetle reproductive biology

This project will contribute to mass rearing dung beetles by investigating the reproductive biology of native and introduced species, and assess how environmental conditions alter their performance and reproduction.

(2) Dung beetle ecology

This project will investigate how different dung beetle species impact soil processes, pasture productivity and livestock-pest persistence.

Eligibility

The successful applicant will have an outstanding academic record and hold a qualification or experience equal to one of the following (i) an Australian First Class Bachelor (Honours) degree, (ii) coursework Masters with at least 25% research component, (iii) Research Masters degree, or (iv) equivalent overseas qualifications. These qualifications should relate to ecology, entomology and/or soil science. A strong publication record is desirable.

Contact **Prof Leslie Weston** (leweston@csu.edu.au) or **Prof Geoff Gurr** (ggurr@csu.edu.au).

International applications close 7th Sept 2018, Australian applications close 31st Oct 2018

Check the website for details: <https://www.csu.edu.au/research/scholarships>

