UCF | Department of Biology

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Postdoctoral Research Associate
Kwapich Social Insect Lab, University of Central Florida

The Kwapich Lab is recruiting a postdoctoral researcher to join an internationally funded project on myrmecophily in desert-dwelling arthropods. The initial term of the position is one year, with a firm start date in winter/spring term of 2027.

Project Focus
The postdoc will coordinate with an international team of researchers to study the chemical ecology, ecophysiology, and evolution of myrmecophily in a group of desert arachnids. Ultimately, this work will address the factors that drive and maintain symbiotic relationships, including the those that led a lineage of free-living predators to live as guests of ants. In addition to the specified project goals, the postdoc will have substantial freedom to pursue other questions within the system or region. The postdoc will be the primary operator of the lab's Shimadzu Gas Chromatography Mass Spec.

Qualifications
Applicants should have:

- A PhD by the start date
- A strong record of recent publications, pre-prints or papers in press
- Advanced skills in chemical ecology (GC-MS) and ecophysiology (and associated software).
- Training in either arachnology or myrmecology, including species identification and live animal husbandry.
- We especially welcome applicants with strong writing and quantitative skills, experience with phylogenetic trait mapping, and an aptitude for conducting remote, desert field work.

Application
This is a fully in-person position. The first review of applications will begin on November 23rd, 2026. Applications received after this date will continue to be considered until the position is filled. Interested applicants should email Dr. Christina Kwapich (Christina.Kwapich@ucf.edu) with:

- A CV including links to papers and/or preprints
- A 1-page cover letter describing research goals, relevant skills/experience, and interest in the project.

The University of Central Florida is an R1 research university and Space Grant University located in Orlando, Florida. With more than 70,000 students on main campus, it is one of the largest research universities in the country. Spectacular natural areas within 40 minutes of campus include natural springs, beaches, cypress swamps, wet savannahs with carnivorous plants, upland scrub and sandhills habitats. The campus is close to NASA and Kennedy Space Center, as well as world-famous theme parks. The Department of Biology is home to the University of Central Florida Collection of Arthropods, the biology field research center, numerous laboratories focused on social and solitary arthropods, and a vibrant community of postdoctoral scholars. The selected candidate will be required to complete the University of Central Florida's formal hiring process, and to establish residence in Florida.

Christina Kwapich
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