

2020 Alpine Ecology Studentship

Company

Research Centre for Applied Alpine Ecology, La Trobe University

Company Overview

The Research Centre for Applied Alpine Ecology (RCAAE) comprises a group of professional scientists, post-graduate students and academics who study all aspects of the ecology of alpine and sub-alpine landscapes. Our scientific research includes ecological processes, effects of fire, exotic plants and animals, endangered species management, human activities, and the management of these ecosystems in response to climate change.

Further information can be found at: <http://rcaae.org/>

Role Overview

Monitoring of vegetation in the Victorian alps commenced in the 1940s due to concerns about erosion of water catchments and the effects of livestock grazing. This ecological research has been beneficial to land managers and has provided an understanding of the long-term dynamics of alpine vegetation and how it responds to disturbance.

While livestock grazing has ceased in the Alpine National Park, climate change, invasive weeds and feral animals now pose major threats to biodiversity in the Victorian alps and are causing significant problems in managing the National Park. In recent years, plots have been established to document weed incursions into alpine and subalpine areas and at sites where particularly invasive weeds have established.

During the coming summer, you will collect data from established plots and set up new plots to expand and extend the monitoring of invasive plant species. You also will have an opportunity to participate in other research that investigates the effects of disturbance and changing climate in these environments.

Students will be trained in field ecology techniques. Skills to be learnt include plant identification, quantitative measurements of plant populations and environmental attributes, database entry and data manipulation.

During the project, students will be required to live at Falls Creek alpine resort and other locations in the Victorian alps for part of the studentship, and undertake field work in a variety of conditions.

By obtaining a studentship, you can contribute to long-term research and monitoring which is contributing to conservation of these natural areas.

Role Requirements

The studentships will suit students currently studying 2nd or 3rd year **Ecology and who wish to proceed to Honours**. If you have an interest in **field-based research, plant ecology, and vegetation monitoring and conservation**, you will be particularly suited to these cadetships. There are potential Honours projects that can be developed around the research and monitoring in the alps.

Location

Victorian Alps, and Department of Ecology, Environment & Evolution, La Trobe University Bundoora

Duration

6-8 weeks from early January until late February 2020

Scholarship

Payment of \$500 per week. Accommodation costs will be covered by the RCAAE.

Accommodation and Transport

Accommodation will be provided in ski lodges at Falls Creek and Mt Hotham resorts, a short distance from major field sites. There may be some camping trips when visiting more remote sites. Transport will be provided from Bundoora to alpine resorts.

How to Apply

To apply for the 2020 summer studentship with the RCAAE, please email a resume and a cover letter to Zac Walker (z.walker@latrobe.edu.au).

The cover letter should include why you would like to complete the 2020 studentship with the Research Centre for Applied Alpine Ecology.

Applications close 27th September 2019.

Enquires or Further Information can be obtained from

Dr John Morgan (J.Morgan@latrobe.edu.au)

Zac Walker (Z.Walker@latrobe.edu.au, 0488 538 048)