

PhD project in conservation ecology:

Feral cat control for threatened mammal recovery in central Queensland



School of Biological Sciences, University of Queensland

National Environmental Science Programme Threatened Species Recovery Hub

The National Environmental Science Programme's Threatened Species Recovery Hub is a partnership between the Commonwealth of Australia through the Department of the Environment and multiple research partners across Australia.

The conservation of Australia's rich and extraordinarily distinctive biodiversity should be secure or achievable relative to that of most other nations. Yet, Australia's extinction rate is one of the worst in the world, and that rate of decline and loss is continuing unabated. The Threatened Species Recovery Hub tackles this ongoing ecological challenge through research focused on informing policy and improving on-ground management of Australia's threatened species. It brings together leading ecological experts to work on the outlook for Australia's threatened species and ecological communities.

The Role

An opportunity is available for a PhD student to join Diana Fisher's research group in the School of Biological Sciences, UQ, as part of a broader National Environmental Science Programme Threatened Species Recovery Hub project that aims to improve our ability to effectively manage the impacts of feral cats. This PhD project will examine how the endangered bridled naitail wallaby and other mammals respond to new methods of cat control at Taunton National Park (scientific), and other sites. The broad project aim is to use field data to derive evidence-based estimates of a 'threshold of control' in magnitude and timing of cat baiting required to provide benefits to threatened mammals.

The Threatened Species Recovery Hub is supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Environmental Science Programme.

This project is a collaborative study involving Biosecurity Queensland (DAF), Queensland National Parks, Sport and Racing, and the University of Queensland. The successful student will be able to apply annually for a PhD top-up (\$6000) from the TSR NESP Hub.

Candidates must have a Bachelor's degree with first-class honours and be successful in gaining an Australian Postgraduate Award or equivalent at the University of Queensland to fund their stipend. The recommended submission date for the next scholarship round is the 22nd of April (<https://graduate-school.uq.edu.au/scholarships>). You should have skills in vertebrate field ecology and data analysis. Selection will be based on academic merit. You must also be an Australian or New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

The UQ School of Biological Sciences (www.biology.uq.edu.au/) is one of Australia's leading schools in biology, and has 47 academic staff heading research groups addressing questions in ecology, conservation biology, evolution and genetics (www.uq.edu.au/news/article/2014/02/uq-subjects-feature-global-top-50). The school's culture is research-intensive and supports a diverse and vibrant postgraduate community of >200 research students, based in St Lucia, Brisbane. We have frequent visits from international researchers, school-funded postgraduate conferences and international student travel awards.

PhD project: Feral cat control for threatened mammal recovery

Please send applications including a cv and academic transcript to d.fisher@uq.edu.au

Closing Date for Applications: 31 March 2016

For info on the Threatened Species Recovery Hub visit www.nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au

