**Graduate position: Grassland arthropod ecology at Kansas State University**

The Welti Arthropod Ecology lab is seeking applicants for a graduate student (MSc or PhD) position in the Division of Biology, at Kansas State University. This position is based in the college town of Manhattan, Kansas, USA, in the (beautiful!) Flint Hills region of the central Great Plains. Fieldwork will likely occur at nearby Konza Prairie Biological Station, with the potential to conduct research at other grassland field sites. Research questions and approaches can be tailored based on student’s interests but will examine one of the following topics:

1. Identifying arthropod community responses to presence and densities of mammalian herbivores through experiment manipulations of herbivore effects,
2. Quantifying the ecological roles played by arthropods with a focus on nutrient cycling and decomposition and how and why these roles are changing, or
3. Testing for long-term changes in inter and intra-specific traits of grasshopper communities.

The position begins in Jan 2026 (Spring semester). The position includes a stipend of $28,193.88 annually ($1084.38 bi-weekly, 26 pay periods), and coverage of tuition, health care, and university fees.

**Requirements**

* Hold an undergraduate degree in ecology, biology, or related field by time of hire
* Have enthusiasm for arthropod and/or grassland ecology
* Have strong oral and written communication skills
* Work effectively independently and as part of a team
* Be respectful to all team members
* Follow safety protocols
* Hold a valid driver’s license
* Enjoy being outdoors and willingness to work outside in hot weather
* Be willing to invest large amounts of time processing arthropods and other ecological samples

**Preferred qualifications**

* Previous experience in plant- and/or arthropod-related field work
* Plant and/or arthropod identification skills, especially in grasslands
* Demonstrated experience conducting independent research
* Statistical experience and using the R coding language

Interested applicants should apply by submitting your application materials to Ellen Welti ([elwelti@ksu.edu](mailto:elwelti@ksu.edu)). Your application materials should include (1) a brief personal statement (no more than one page) detailing your academic background, previous research experience, reasons for pursuing graduate school, your specific current research interests, and how your research interests relate to at least one of the research topics proposed above, (2) your CV, (3) informal undergraduate transcripts, and (4) contact information for three references. Application materials must be submitted as one combined PDF file. Please put “Arthropod Ecology graduate application” as the email subject line.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis (open immediately) but no later than June 15, 2025.

**Welti Arthropod Ecology Lab**

The Welti Arthropod Ecology is moving from the Smithsonian’s Great Plains Science Program to Kansas State University in late Fall 2025. We study what, how, and why grassland arthropod communities vary over space and time and the repercussions of this variation. Our lab is a welcoming and inclusive environment where discrimination is not tolerated. We prioritize the well-being of all lab members and collaborators, and value scientific integrity, strong communication, work-life balance, and scientific mentoring and research opportunities for all experience levels.

**Why Manhattan, KS, Kansas State University Biology, and Konza Prairie?**

Manhattan, KS is a friendly college town with a population of 55K residents +nonresident college students, affordable housing within walking distance of campus, a temperate climate with four seasons, an airport with multiple daily flights to Chicago and Dallas, a large number of local coffee shops, two downtown districts, art and natural history museums, and is a two hour drive away from Kansas City, a city with a population of 500K+ and many cultural amenities.

Kansas State University (KSU) is a 162-year-old public land grant and R1 research university with a large centrally located campus in Manhattan, KS. KSU has >20K students including >4K graduate students and 65 academic departments within 9 colleges. KSU’s Division of Biology is within the College of Arts and Sciences and contains ~40 faculty and ~55 graduate students spanning a broad variety of research interests and an open and collaborative atmosphere. More information about the Division of Biology at Kansas State University is available at <https://www.k-state.edu/biology/>.

Konza Prairie Biological Station, an 8,616-acre tallgrass prairie research station jointly owned and operated by KSU and The Nature Conservancy, is a 15 min drive from the KSU campus, hosts a herd of 200+ bison, several cattle allotments, a large-scale fire experiment, and is a global hub for grassland research. More information about Konza Prairie is available at: <https://kpbs.konza.k-state.edu/> and <https://lter.konza.ksu.edu/konza-prairie-long-term-ecological-research-lter>.