We are looking for a PhD student to study the impact of anthropogenic noise on fitness-related behaviours, gene expression profiles, and gut microbiome in birds.

Location: Department of Behavioural Ecology, Bielefeld University, Germany
Start Date: 01.06.2024
Duration: 3 years
Application Deadline: 03.01.2025

Background

Anthropogenic noise has become an ever-present pollutant across ecosystems, posing significant threats to wildlife. Birds are especially vulnerable due to their dependence on acoustic cues for communication, navigation, and mate selection. Despite the widespread impacts of noise pollution, our understanding of the exact physiological, behavioural, and molecular mechanisms through which it affects bird populations remains limited. This project aims to bridge this gap by examining how anthropogenic noise influences fitness-related behaviours, gene expression profiles, and gut microbiota in birds.

Job Description

We are seeking a highly motivated, passionate PhD candidate to investigate how anthropogenic noise affects avian species, employing a comprehensive approach, integrating physiological, behavioural, and molecular analyses. This highly collaborative project requires frequent, reciprocal interactions and exchanges among partner institutions, fostering a vibrant, stimulating environment that supports the growth and development of early-career researchers. PhD students will have the opportunity to work at the intersection of multiple disciplines, including molecular biology, ecophysiology and animal behaviour.

The successful candidate will work on:

• Conducting behavioural and physiological experiments on captive zebra finches

• Employing multi-omic analyses, including transcriptomics and microbiome profiling

Qualifications

• A Master's degree (or equivalent) in Biology, Ecology, Animal Behavior, or a related field

• Strong interest in behavioural ecology, molecular biology

• Proficiency in data analysis and a strong command of R

• Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English

• Strong organisational and communication skills and commitment to the research goals are essential,

• Strong motivation, critical thinking, and an ability to work independently

• Ability to work as a part of an international, multidisciplinary team

Preferable qualifications

• Previous experience with molecular techniques, behavioural experiments

• Papers in peer-reviewed international journals

• Previous experience in working with animals and/or attendance of animal experimentation course (Felasa or similar) is an advantage

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What We Offer

• Access to state-of-the-art research facilities and resources for laboratory work

• Training in cutting-edge multi-omic technologies and behavioral ecology techniques

• Salary according to Remuneration level 13 TV-L (65%)

• Fixed-term employment limited to three years

• A stimulating, open and pleasant working atmosphere

• The opportunity to contribute to cutting-edge research with implications for animal conservation

• Funding for travel, conference attendance, and publication costs

The student will be supervised by Dr. Öncü Maraci and Prof. Barbara Caspers. The working language is English.

Application Procedure: We look forward to receiving your application via our application portal: https://jobs.uni-bielefeld.de/job/apply/3865/research-position-phd-candidate?page_lang=en

For further information about our department, please see the webpage: https://www.uni-bielefeld.de/fakultaeten/biologie/forschung/arbeitsgruppen/behav_eco/index.xml

Do not hesitate to contact Öncü Maraci regarding your questions about the position, working group and Bielefeld via email: oncu.maraci@uni-bielefeld.de

Bielefeld is an equal-opportunity employer. We particularly welcome applications from people from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to women and people with disabilities. Given equal suitability, qualifications and professional achievement, people from underrepresented groups will be given preference unless particular circumstances apply.

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