PhD Scholarship in Plant Molecular/Pollination Ecology

Many arid zone plants species have undergone severe habitat degradation and now often exist as small and isolated populations that are producing too few recruits for population maintenance. At the extreme some populations are known to have flowered frequently over the past decades but set no seed.

We are seeking a PhD student to form part of an ARC funded team investigating the 'genetic rescue' of Australia's arid zone plants. We will adopt a multifaceted approach that will include better describing the demography of these populations, their pollination biology, pollinator resources, degree of isolation and their genetic diversity and genetic differentiation from other populations. This information will be used to target species that may benefit from genetic rescue (increasing genetic diversity within populations with subsequent improvement in seed/fruit production).

The candidate will be based at the University of Wollongong, with field work based in the far west and south west of NSW.

Suitable candidates will have an honours in plant biology but ideally with demonstrated experience in Molecular Ecology and Pollination Biology.

The ability to work both independently and as part of a team, and to undertake field work in remote areas is essential.

The project is funded through an ARC linkage grant to Professor David Ayre (University of Wollongong) and Mr Andrew Denham (NSW DECCW) and has industry support through NSW DECCW, the Murray and Lower Murray Darling CMAs and Sunraysia Nurseries.