PhD and MS graduate positions in Plant Systematics and Biogeography

Multiple PhD and MS graduate student positions are available in the Spalink Lab at Texas A&M University beginning in Fall 2019. Lab research concentrates on the intersection of evolution, ecology, and geography with an emphasis on modeling the roles of time, space, and form in the diversification and maintenance of life. The lab’s ultimate goal is to merge our understanding of the evolutionary history of plant lineages with observed patterns of biodiversity within and across landscapes. In observing diversity around the world in the context of global change, we ask: What is here? Why is it here? Where is it going? Projects in the Spalink Lab range from analyzing the dynamics of genetic diversity within species to the evolution of entire orders, and from regional patterns of community assembly to the global structure of phylogenetic, functional, and morphological diversity. Students with interests in a wide variety of taxonomic groups and geographic localities are welcomed to apply.

Students with interests or skills in any of the following are encouraged to apply:

- Plant systematics
- Biogeography
- Community or spatial ecology
- Community assembly
- Population genetics
- Species distribution modeling
- Evolutionary morphometrics
- Spatial phylogenetics
- Bioinformatics
- Conservation biology
- Genomics and genome evolution
- Impacts of global change on species and communities

Graduate students in the Spalink Lab have full access to the S.M. Tracy Herbarium, a vibrant and rapidly expanding collection of over 350,000 specimens. Resources for learning or improving bioinformatics skills abound at Texas A&M University. We have multiple core genomics facilities, high-throughput and high-performance computer clusters, growth chambers, greenhouses, and field research sites throughout Texas. Students in the Spalink Lab can opt for degrees in Ecosystem Science and Management (https://essm.tamu.edu), Dr. Spalink’s home department, or the cross-departmental EEB program (https://eeb.tamu.edu), of which he is a core faculty member.

Texas is a fantastic location for botanists. With over 5600 species, Texas is the second most diverse state in the U.S. With a strong longitudinal precipitation and elevation gradient, latitudinal temperature gradient, dynamic volcanic history, exposed bedrock dating back a billion years, and an extensive coastline, Texas has tremendous edaphic and climatic heterogeneity. This results in everything from extremely arid deserts to wet conifer forests, and from montane prairies to coastal plains, all converging in Texas.

Interested applicants should contact Dr. Daniel Spalink (dspalink@tamu.edu) and provide a description of your research interests and a CV/resume. Initial screening of students will begin immediately. For full consideration, applications are due February 15. However, we strongly recommend applying by
December 15 to ensure full consideration for departmental and college fellowship opportunities. The Department of Ecosystem Sciences and Management, EEB, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences have many opportunities for fellowships, research assistantships, and teaching assistantships. Details regarding the application process can be found at https://essm.tamu.edu/academics/graduate/prospective/application/ (ESSM) and at https://eeb.tamu.edu/graduate-program/prospective-students-2/ (EEB).

We especially encourage applications from members of any social group that has traditionally been, or continue to be, underrepresented in STEM.