



Graduate Studies Opportunity – Wildlife-Associated Vector-borne Zoonotic Disease

Funding is available for a M.Sc. student to join a team of researchers in the Department of Veterinary Microbiology at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada (start date September 2018).

Climate change is anticipated to increase the incidence and range of vector-borne zoonotic disease. At the same time, global urbanization is expected to increase the incidence and severity of rat infestations, necessitating increased rodent control efforts. Recent research has shown that, for non-vector borne pathogens, traditional rat control practices paradoxically increase the disease burden in rats. The impact of rat control techniques on rat-associated vector-borne zoonoses has yet to be determined. Using samples collected during a recent field experiment, the student will examine the effect of lethal rat control on the ecology of a flea-borne zoonosis in wild rats from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside neighborhood. This information will be vital for understanding rat control affects human health threats so that we can efficiently and effectively mitigate those threats in the future. The project, led by Dr. Janet Hill and Dr. Chelsea Himsworth, is an inter-disciplinary collaboration between investigators at the University of Saskatchewan, University of British Columbia, and the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative. Based in the Hill Lab in Saskatoon (<http://homepage.usask.ca/~jeh369>), the student will have the opportunity to network with our interdisciplinary team to develop advanced skills in molecular diagnostics, and epidemiology and biostatistics.

A Bachelor of Science degree (at a minimum) is required with specialization in a relevant discipline. Scientific curiosity, good communication skills and the ability to work in an interdisciplinary team environment are essential. A successful application to the College of Graduate Studies at the University of Saskatchewan will be required. Information on College admission requirements can be obtained at <http://www.usask.ca/cgps>.

Please send a *c.v.* and a cover letter describing your research interests to:

Dr. Janet E. Hill
Professor
Department of Veterinary Microbiology
Western College of Veterinary Medicine
University of Saskatchewan
Janet.Hill@usask.ca

Questions can be directed to either Dr. Hill or Dr. Himsworth (Chelsea.Himsworth@gov.bc.ca).