

## PhD Position in Cognitive Biology

The aim of this project is to investigate transmission processes of social information in corvids (crows, ravens). Corvids have been shown to possess sophisticated socio-cognitive skills in daily life as well as under controlled laboratory conditions which makes them ideal model species for the planned combination of experimental field and lab studies.

During the last two decades theories on social learning in animals have more and more focused on social learning strategies, i.e. from whom individuals preferentially learn, based on the assumption that animals do not interact randomly when they learn from each other. In this project we will allow for this assumption by analyzing the social structure of corvid interaction networks and using network based models to assess which social network influences transmission processes in several different experimental contexts, i.e. testing social learning strategies against each other. The project will involve intensive behavioural observations as well as conducting social learning experiments in the field and in the lab.

The 3-year PhD position is fully paid by the Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF) and is based at the Department of Cognitive Biology at the University of Vienna, Austria (<http://cogbio.univie.ac.at/>). The candidate will be supervised by Prof. Thomas Bugnyar and Dr. Christine Schwab.

Letters of application including CV, photograph, publication list, 2-3 letters of recommendation and a statement of research interests should be sent to Mrs. Petra Pesak, MSc. by E-mail ([petra.pesak@univie.ac.at](mailto:petra.pesak@univie.ac.at)) until December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011. Planned interview dates are in mid/end January, 2012. Planned starting date is March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

The University of Vienna promotes the employment of women in fields of work in which they are underrepresented and therefore encourages qualified women to apply to this opening. Disabled people will be preferentially treated if qualified.

### Required qualifications

- A master or an equivalent in Biology or related fields
- Excellent knowledge of English
- Research experience in animal behaviour
- Knowledge of animal social learning theory
- Strong commitment to animal cognition
- Endurance

### Beneficial (but not required) qualifications

- Experience of designing and conducting social learning experiments
- Field experience
- Experience in handling and ringing of birds
- Experience of working with corvids
- Knowledge of social network theory