



RIEL

Research Institute for the
Environment and Livelihoods

PhD opportunity: Fine-scale fire management for biodiversity conservation on the Arnhem Plateau



Charles Darwin University's (CDU) Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods (RIEL) are seeking a PhD candidate to undertake a project based primarily in Darwin, that assesses the application of fine-scale fire management for conservation of threatened species and associated habitats in the Arnhem Plateau bioregion, a globally significant hotspot of biodiversity and endemism, and stronghold of Indigenous culture.

Scholarship and financial support:

- Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship valued at \$33,511 per annum (from 2025, indexed annually and tax exempt) for 3 years from commencement is open to Australian citizens/residents or New Zealand citizens, to cover living costs.
- Scholarship 'top-up' of \$10,000 per year for 3 years.
- Fee waiver for 3 years.
- University relocation allowance of up to \$2,000 may also be available.

Project operational costs: Will be fully covered by an ARC Linkage grant.

About the project: Focusing on the Arnhem Plateau bioregion, the project will explore the benefits and feasibility of fine-scale fire management aimed conserving a range of threatened animal and plants species and ecological communities, especially those requiring long inter-fire intervals or fine-grained fire mosaics. Focal species and ecological communities will be identified as part of developing the study program. It is anticipated that project findings will contribute to the development of monitoring and assessment methods

applicable to the Australian Government's new Nature Repair Market and other nature-based market instruments.

The project forms part of a broader Australian Research Council Linkage project—*Transforming cultural and natural resource management workforce capabilities in Arnhem Land*—led by CDU, in partnership with a range of research and land management organisations, including Indigenous organisations representing the region's Traditional Owners. Under this collaborative arrangement, the project will be jointly supervised through CDU, and by colleagues from partner organisations.

About you:

- High level of academic merit, with a research background in Ecology or similar field.
- Understanding of, and interest in, working with Indigenous people in Australia, and willingness to actively participate in collaborative cross-cultural research.
- Willingness and ability to conduct remote fieldwork.

Benefits to you:

- Generous stipend and support for project costs.
- Undertake fieldwork and travel in remote and spectacular regions of the Northern Territory.
- Play an integral role in a trans-disciplinary research team with ample opportunity for professional development.
- Your research will have real-world impact, by helping to improve land management.
- Work with project partners committed to improving people's wellbeing through training, education and research.

Essential selection criteria:

- First Class Honours degree or a Master's degree containing a substantial research component.
- Must meet the RTP Stipend Scholarship requirements, including being either an Australian citizen or permanent resident, or a New Zealand citizen.
- Must meet the PhD course entry requirements at CDU.
- Demonstrated experience undertaking remote fieldwork.

How to apply: Email an Expression of Interest to Prof. Brett Murphy (brett.murphy@cdu.edu.au), including:

- 1-page cover letter, outlining your experience and research interests.
- A detailed CV, including details of publications (if any).
- Academic transcript.
- Names and contact details of two academic referees.

Application closing date: 18 October 2024

Commencement date: Early 2025

Enquiries: Prof. Brett Murphy (brett.murphy@cdu.edu.au, phone: 0466 623 079) or Prof. Jeremy Russell-Smith (jeremy.russell-smith@cdu.edu.au, phone: 0447 200 927).