

Leverhulme Doctoral Scholarships Centre for Water Cultures

Primary Supervisor: Dr Blake Morton, Department of Psychology, University of Hull

Secondary Supervisor: Dr Charlotte Hopkins, School of Environmental Sciences, University of Hull

Project Outline:

Human-induced climate change is driving major planetary changes to the environment, threatening the well-being and survival of species, including humans. Water plays a central role in these environmental changes (e.g., flooding, drought, and coastal development), but people's willingness to change their behaviour to overcome the climate crisis is made difficult by their growing psychological "disconnection" with nature. The current study aims to test whether promoting awareness of psychological traits in wildlife has a direct impact on public engagement with the climate crisis (e.g., explicit lifestyle changes). The selected candidate will evaluate how different audiences respond to various forms of knowledge dissemination in which the parallels between how animals and people adapt to the same climate-related challenges are emphasised. People's attitudinal and behavioural changes in light of their exposure to this content will be evaluated through follow-up questionnaires and in-person interviews. By the end of this study, we will be able to establish whether animal psychology research is an effective tool for generating further engagement with the climate crisis in people.

We are looking for an enthusiastic student with the following general qualities: 1) background in psychology or related discipline (e.g., animal behaviour), 2) experience conducting fieldwork with wild animals (e.g., trail cameras) and/or using social science techniques (e.g., questionnaires/interviews), 3) a valid UK/EU driving license, 4) a vehicle for driving on countryside roads, and 5) a proficiency, or willingness to become proficient, in data analysis using R.

The PI is Dr Blake Morton, and the selected candidate will join Dr Morton's on-going research programme, The British Carnivore Project, which will form the basis for this PhD project.

For further information about Dr Morton and The British Carnivore, please read here: <https://www.blakemorton.co.uk/case-studies/>

For all inquiries, please email Dr Morton directly (b.morton@hull.ac.uk).