



The Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior at its sites in Konstanz and Radolfzell offers an international, interdisciplinary, and collaborative environment that opens up unique research opportunities. The goal of our basic research is to develop a quantitative and predictive understanding of the decisions and movements of animals in their natural environment.

For the Development and Evolution of Cognition Research Group at the Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior we are looking to fill the following position **starting in February or March 2021**. The workplace will be primarily in **Konstanz**.

PhD student (m/f/d)

Background:

The work of the Development and Evolution of Cognition Research Group is largely based on orangutan behavioral research. Data on the Sumatran orangutan population at the Suaq Balimbing monitoring station in South Aceh, Indonesia has been collected since the 1990s. Our work in Indonesia is implemented by the SUAQ orangutan research and conservation project (for more information visit suaq.org). Our team is currently being established and for 2021 it will include 3 technicians, PhD, Master, and Bachelor students.

Project:

Around the age of 9 years, juvenile Sumatran orangutans start leaving their mothers to range more independently. For around 5 years, they then regularly join peer groups for multiple days, followed by days spent on their own. One of the major challenges that juvenile orangutans face during this time is learning where and when they can find food. The PhD project investigates different aspects of the development of ranging competence, including cognitive maps, planning and decision making in daily movement trajectories. Furthermore, the development of other ecological skills such as food recognition and the use of different learning strategies of juvenile orangutans will be a central part of this project.

Your tasks and your profile:

The PhD candidate will spend 2 years in the field, at the Suaq Balimbing monitoring station. The PhD candidate will collect detailed behavioral data and GPS ranging data, following our established orangutan data collection protocols. The collected data will later be combined with already existing long-term ranging, behavioral and environmental data, as well as recently collected nutritional data.

Suaq Balimbing is a very basic, remote, and often crowded camp where researchers from all over the world and the local staff live and work closely together. The PhD candidate should be ready to live with limited personal space and be highly respectful about cultural differences. The Suaq Balimbing study area is deep peat swamp forest in which moving around is difficult. The days in the forest are long and exhausting and it takes a high level of physical fitness as well as a lot of perseverance to collect accurate and sufficient data under these conditions. Good observation skills and an eye for detail are a must for this project.

We seek highly motivated candidates with field work experience in similar conditions. Experience with collecting and analyzing animal behavioral data (and ideally also GPS data) is required. We can only consider applicants with a MSc degree in Biology or a related field. Our orangutan research is highly collaborative on all levels. We therefore seek a team player who values the importance of our long-term project.

Our offer:

The positions will start in **February or March 2021**, limited for **3 years** with a possible extension of 1 more year. We offer an interesting job in an open-minded team, a responsible and varied workplace in a growing interdisciplinary and

MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR



international research institute. The payment is made in accordance with your experience and qualification and the collective agreement for the public service (TVÖD-Bund).

Questions about this position will be answered by **Dr. Caroline Schuppli** (cschuppli@ab.mpg.de).

The Max Planck Society endeavors to employ more severely disabled people. Applications of severely disabled persons are expressly welcome. The Max Planck Society strives for gender and diversity equality. We welcome applications from all backgrounds.

Are you interested? Then we are looking forward to receiving your application until **January 8th, 2020** with your CV, the contact information of three references and a short motivation letter.

Please submit your application documents under the following link:

https://s-lotus.gwdg.de/mpg/maor/perso/ornr_w010.nsf/application



MAX-PLANCK-GESELLSCHAFT