

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Fire Ant Behavior and Chemical Ecology - Post-Bachelor Research Opportunity

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0324

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0324

How to Apply *To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click **APPLY**.*

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

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Application Deadline 11/6/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

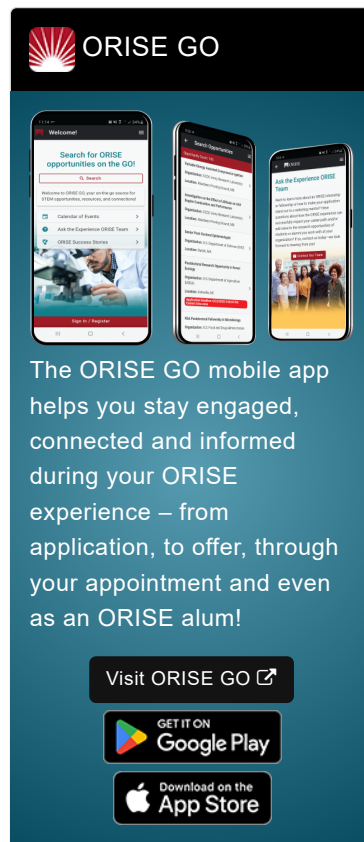
ARS Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located in Gainesville, FL.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency with a mission to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table. ARS will deliver cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation's agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. The vision of the agency is to provide global leadership in agricultural discoveries through scientific excellence.

Research Project: This hands-on research opportunity blends biology and chemistry to solve practical and basic problems associated with understanding and control of imported fire ants and other pest ants. This appointment will involve ongoing and future research and development to better understand the behavior and chemical ecology of fire ants, ultimately developing novel control methods.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will:

- Learn how to collect pest ants from the field and maintain pest ant colonies under laboratory conditions.



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- Understand how to develop new bioassays and conduct established bioassays for a wide variety of purposes.
- Learn Good Practices and understand the analyses of collected data.
- Learn new techniques and interact with experts in the field of chemical ecology.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is Robert Vander Meer (bob.vandermeer@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: October 2026. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year, but may be renewed upon recommendation of ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated monthly stipend is \$3,443.00**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

ORISE Information: This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and ARS. Participants do not become employees of USDA, ARS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Questions: Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.ARS.Southeast@orau.org and include the reference code for this opportunity.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should have received a bachelor's degree in one of the relevant fields (e.g. Entomology, Zoology, Biology, or Animal Behavior). Degree must have been received within the past 5 years.

Preferred Skills:

- Open to learning new analytical methods and development of specific bioassays as needed.
- Knowledge of statistics
- Experience in graphical display of experimental data
- Experience doing fieldwork

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Stipend \$3,443.00 Monthly

Point of Contact [Sara Beth](#)

- Eligibility**
- Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([4](#) )
 - **Veteran Status:** Veterans Preference, degree received within the last 120 month(s).