PhD project available in wildlife parasitology/ecology

The Parasitology Section within the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences at Murdoch University invite applications for the following PhD project:

**Social networks and parasite transmission in bettongs**

We have an exciting opportunity for a PhD student to join a new ARC-funded research project, looking at how animal behaviour influences parasite transmission in two species of bettongs, the brush-tailed bettong (*Bettongia penicillata*) and the burrowing bettong (*Bettongia lesueur*). These closely related species share a diverse parasite fauna exhibiting a variety of lifecycles and transmission mechanisms, yet have contrasting forms of social organisation. This project will use social network models to explore how host behaviour (and in particular, how different forms of social organisation) influences the transmission of parasites. It will provide new insights into the factors driving the transmission of parasites in wildlife populations, whilst allowing broader insights into how the behaviour of the host and transmission method of the parasite affects the spread of parasites in wildlife populations. This project involves both field-based research and laboratory work, and we invite the applicant to tailor their research project to their own interests within this broader research programme.

This PhD project comes with a scholarship awarded at the APAI rate ($27,651 pa). The scholarship is awarded on a competitive basis, and is only available to domestic students. It is expected the project will be undertaken on a full-time basis.

In the first instance, we invite interested applicants to contact Dr Stephanie Godfrey (s.godfrey@murdoch.edu.au) about their interest in the proposed project. Applications should be made through the Murdoch University scholarships page. Applications for scholarships close on the 31st October 2012, and the project will begin in early 2013.