

PhD Position – Molecular Mechanisms of Plant–Herbivore Interactions

Grbić Lab, University of Western Ontario

The Grbić Lab is seeking a highly motivated PhD student to explore the molecular and genetic mechanisms that allow herbivorous mites to adapt to their host plants. Using the two-spotted spider mite (*Tetranychus urticae*) as a model, our research integrates molecular genetics, functional genomics, enzymology, and RNAi-based approaches to uncover how these pests evade plant defenses and chemical control strategies.

The successful candidate will have the opportunity to:

- Characterize detoxification enzymes and host-adaptation pathways
- Explore plant defense responses and mite counter-defense mechanisms
- Develop and assess RNAi-based gene silencing tools
- Gain expertise in molecular biology, protein expression, transcriptomics, and plant bioassays within a collaborative, interdisciplinary environment

Qualifications:

- MSc or strong BSc (Hons) in molecular biology, entomology, biochemistry, plant science, or a related field
 - Hands-on experience with RNA, protein, genomic, or molecular cloning techniques
 - Interest in interdisciplinary research on plant–arthropod interactions
 - Experience with bioinformatics is an asset
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Application Instructions:

Please submit a CV, transcripts, and a brief statement of research interests (or cover letter). Applicants with relevant experience should also provide contact information for two referees. Send all materials to **Dr. Vojislava Grbić** (vgrbic@uwo.ca).