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Master's project in Behavioural Biology

“Comparative cognition in cichlids”

We are looking for 1-2 motivated student(s) interested in a Master's project in behavioural biology and cognition. The project will investigate the social and ecological drivers of cognitive abilities using several species of cichlid fish from Lake Tanganyika. Cognitive abilities vary considerable between species, even between closely related species that live in the same habitat. Thus, a major question in evolutionary biology is to better understand species-specific differences in cognitive abilities and particularly to examine the social and ecological factors driving these differences. The cichlids from Lake Tanganyika are an ideal model system for these questions because all species occurring in Lake Tanganyika are closely related but differ in key ecological and social traits. In this project we will use (1) an established task to test for cognitive abilities (reversal learning), and (2) several closely related species that differ in life-history characteristics to probe key predictions in the study of comparative cognition

We are particularly interested in 1-2 student(s) with a keen interest in scientific questions, that would like to research fish behaviour and cognition, are able to work independently and as part of a team. Our daily communications are in English and the student is required to have good knowledge of English and, preferably, the thesis should be written in English. The work will be based at the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Ethology which is located on Wilhelminenberg in the 16th district.

Contact: Dr. Stefan Fischer / Stefan.Fischer@vetmeduni.ac.at / +43 1 250 77 7404 / <https://www.vetmeduni.ac.at/de/klivv/>

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