

University College Cork

Department of Zoology, Ecology & Plant Science (ZEPS)

Teagasc Walsh PhD Fellowship

Topic: 'Population Dynamics of Eurasian Badgers (*Meles meles*) in the Republic of Ireland'

Badgers and their interactions with cattle are of considerable economic and ecological importance in rural areas of Ireland and Britain. A 3-year PhD studentship is available for a student to be registered at University College Cork, but located at the National Biodiversity Data Centre (NBDC), Waterford. This goal-orientated, applied project will rely on a large database containing several years' information on badgers and their setts in the Republic of Ireland. The database is held by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food (DAFF). The project is a collaborative one between Teagasc, DAFF, NBDC and ZEPS. It is essentially a desktop project that will combine use of the database with GIS techniques to develop predictive models of badger populations. Some field ground-truthing of predictions will be required and the student will interact with DAFF personnel to achieve this. The student will be supervised by a team drawn from ZEPS, Teagasc and DAFF and will report regularly to a steering committee representing all stakeholders.

The successful applicant will have an appropriate biological degree (e.g. in zoology, ecology or plant science) at Upper Second level or better. S/he **MUST** have excellent numerical and IT skills and will have had experience of database handling. Other essential capabilities include proven writing/documentation skills and an ability to meet deadlines. GIS experience would be valuable, but training in GIS can be given. Because of the number of stakeholders involved in the programme, the successful candidate must have good communication, presentation and networking abilities. Applicants will ideally require a full, clean driving licence.

Applications (in the form of a letter, *curriculum vitae* plus the names and contact details for two academic/scientific referees) should be sent electronically to **Professor John Davenport (ZEPS; j.davenport@ucc.ie) by September 25th 2009**. Professor Davenport will supply further information regarding the Fellowship on request. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed on Wednesday October 21st at the National Biodiversity Data Centre, Beechfield House, Waterford Institute of Technology (West Campus), Waterford. The successful candidate will take up the Fellowship on 1st January 2010.

The student will receive €21,000 per annum, from which annual fees (currently €5770 for EU students) will have to be paid to UCC by the student.