



Ph.D. position in Alpine Plant Community Ecology

Department of Plant and Microbial Biology
North Carolina State University

The [Sheth plant evolutionary, population, and community ecology lab](#) in the [Department of Plant and Microbial Biology](#) at [North Carolina State University](#) (Raleigh, NC) invites applications for a Ph.D. student beginning in Fall 2026. We combine long-term observational datasets collected in the field with experimental and statistical approaches to understand how populations, species, and communities adapt to climate in space and time. We strive to foster an environment where people from all backgrounds are respected. We value the safety of all team members in the lab and field.

The student will be funded through a combination of teaching assistantships and summer research assistantships associated with the non-profit organization, [GLORIA Great Basin](#). GLORIA Great Basin supports an international mission to assess global changes in composition and distribution of alpine flora in a changing climate.



Partnering with GLORIA Great Basin, the student will develop a dissertation project focused on understanding the long-term effects of climate change on alpine plant community dynamics on mountaintops in the Great Basin and Sierran regions of the Western US, with the potential of participating in a collaborative synthesis of GLORIA summits across North America. The student will contribute to collecting, managing, and disseminating the data for field sites in the Western US, performing these tasks in coordination with citizen scientists, research institutions, federal agencies, and the broader GLORIA community. The Ph.D. student will join a highly collaborative team of researchers, including Drs. [Meagan Oldfather](#), [Brian Smithers](#), and [Mike Koontz](#).

Preferred qualifications: The ideal candidate has previous experience conducting field research in remote alpine environments, expertise in plant identification and ecological concepts, and the ability to coordinate and lead field teams.

NCSU and the Research Triangle: NC State's Department of Plant and Microbial Biology offers a highly-rated research environment and is situated in a collaborative and scientifically stimulating atmosphere in the Research Triangle, with both UNC Chapel Hill and Duke University nearby. There is a vibrant and growing community of ecologists and evolutionary biologists spread across multiple departments on campus, including Applied Ecology, Biological Sciences, Entomology and Plant Pathology, Forestry and Environmental Resources, Soil and Crop Sciences, and Biochemistry, among others. Raleigh is a lively yet affordable city with a high standard of living, and its surroundings offer numerous recreational activities.

To apply: Prospective graduate students should apply to the **Plant Biology Graduate Program**. Before submitting a formal application (**due January 15**), please send the following information to Dr. Sheth at ssheth3@ncsu.edu no later than **November 3**: 1) CV; and 2) a statement of your academic background and previous research experience, current research interests, and why you want to join the lab.