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— Competition in native forests?

Konstanz biologist PD Dr Judy Simon becomes a Heisenberg fellow

The German Research Foundation (DFG) has awarded the renowned Heisenberg fellowship to PD Dr. Judy Simon, head of the research team "Plant Interactions Ecophysiology" at the University of Konstanz. Starting this May, the research project "Woody Plants – Interactions and Resource Allocation Strategies" will receive funding totalling around 500,000 euros.

— The Heisenberg fellowship is aimed at junior researchers who have demonstrated particular excellence in their research achievements. Through the programme, the fellows can carry out top-level research projects at a location of their choice and fully concentrate on their research. The funding period lasts up to five years.

Judy Simon's research in the field of plant ecology and ecosystems focuses on the interactions and strategies of resource allocation in trees. She studies how competitors influence the uptake of nitrogen as an essential nutrient for plants. To do so, she uses a mechanistic approach investigating the belowground processes in the rhizosphere, and also considering the distribution of nitrogen at the individual tree level. To gain further knowledge on the impact of global change, Judy Simon also studies aspects of climate change as well as the potential success of invasive plant species. To answer these interdisciplinary questions, she collaborates with colleagues Professor Mark van Kleunen, Ecology Group, and Professor Dieter Spiteller, Chemical Ecology Group, both at the University of Konstanz, among others. In the context of her fellowship, Judy Simon has planned research stays in Finland and Australia to transfer her research questions to other forest ecosystems.

Judy Simon completed her doctoral degree at the University of Melbourne, Australia, on the topic "Defence strategies in woody plants: Effects of cyanogenesis on plant functional characteristics" in 2007. In 2013, she earned her Habilitation (post-doctoral qualification) at the University of Freiburg (Germany) on the topic "Competition for nitrogen in temperate deciduous forest ecosystems". In 2014, she started her research at the University of Konstanz, first as stand-in professor, and now with her own research team "Plant Interactions Ecophysiology".

Facts:

- Heisenberg fellowship for PD Dr. Judy Simon
- Head of the research team "Plant Interactions Ecophysiology"
- Funding for up to five years amounting to around 500,000 euros starting in May 2017
- Research on interactions and strategies of resource allocation in trees.

Contact

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