



## Biodiversity of the quartz fields of Southern Africa

### Bursaries available in 2015-2017

1×Hons; 1×MSc; 1×PhD; 1×Postdoc

Several bursaries are available to conduct research on various aspects on the 'The quartz fields of Southern Africa'. This study is funded by the NRF, and involves a team of researchers at the University of Cape Town (Muthama Muasya, Samson Chimphango, Charles Stirton), in collaboration with Overberg Renosterveld (Odette Curtis) and German (Ute Schmiedel, Barbara Rudolph) experts in Quartz veld biology.

This project focusses on the unique quartz habitats that are scattered in the Overberg Renosterveld and the Succulent Karoo. These habitats are dominated by dicotyledonous shrubs that are dwarf succulents or low-lying shrubs, and all share the presence of the genus *Gibbeaum* (Aizoaceae). Despite the shared physiognomy, there is wide gamma diversity across the quartz fields and high levels of endemism. As the quartz fields are islands of biodiversity amongst the clay rich soils, we will test whether such quartz islands are stable habitats that have persisted longer (hence older) than surrounding eroded clay soil. The project aims to integrate ecological and plant phylogenetic / phylogeographic research activities currently conducted by the South African and German research teams by sharing knowledge, experiences and methods as well as training students in order to strengthen science through the emerging synergies.

**Requirements:** Applicants should have appropriate entry requirements for particular degree at the University of Cape Town.

**Bursary Values** (NRF grant-holder bursaries to cover living expenses and tuition fees; project running expenses will be covered separately)

- Hons R 20,000 p.a for 1 year (South African citizens only)
- MSc R 40,000 p.a for 2 years (South Africa or African)
- PhD R 60,000 p.a for 3 years (South Africa or African or international)
- Postdoctoral fellowship R 150,000 p.a for 2 years (anyone)

Please send a letter of motivation, CV and copy of your academic record as soon as possible to Muthama.Muasya@uct.ac.za; [http://aduweb.uct.ac.za/biologicalsciences/httpdocs/staff\\_page.php?staff\\_id=371](http://aduweb.uct.ac.za/biologicalsciences/httpdocs/staff_page.php?staff_id=371)

**Closing date:** Open until all students are recruited