

## George C. Eickwort Student Research Award

### GENERAL STATEMENT

This award is given annually by the NAS/IUSSI in memory of George Eickwort. The award is designed to recognize exceptional research and scholarly activity by senior graduate students and recent PhD recipients in the field of social insect biology. The award consists of a certificate, an honorarium, and a one-year subscription to *Insectes Sociaux*. This year's NAS/IUSSI Awards Committee consisted of Sean O'Donnell (chair), Terry McGlynn, and Michele Lanan.

### AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT

The committee is pleased to announce that **Dr. Clint Penick** is the recipient of the 2013 Eickwort award. Clint is currently a postdoctoral researcher in Biology at North Carolina State University, working with Rob Dunn. Clint earned his PhD in 2012 at Arizona State University Working in Jürgen Liebig's lab.

Clint stood out among a strong pool of applicants. The committee felt that the best candidates would emulate a number of George Eickwort's impressive talents: research with a comparative bent that involves a diversity of taxa, firm grounding in organismal biology, and a strong commitment to training and teaching. Clint's accomplishments capture this array of skills and promise a bright future in social insect research and student mentorship.

Clint has been a productive scholar, publishing a number of peer-reviewed papers on a diverse array of topics. His tool kit includes behavioral observations, molecular analyses, hormone physiology, analytical chemistry and morphology (truly Eickwortian!). He has worked with several taxa including *Harpegnathos* ants, fire ants, and dampwood termites. He has used these taxa to address questions on an array of topics including social aggression, thermal ecology and climate change, and the biomechanics of larval adhesion. His paper on non-destructive identification of the sex of ant larvae will likely be of use to a wide array of social insect biologists.

In addition to gaining teaching experience, Clint has made extra efforts to communicate about his work and social insect biology to broad audiences. He worked as a magazine staff writer at ASU, and he co-organized a conference on social insect-inspired biomimicry in human design. He was also active in biomimicry curriculum design. Clint's postdoc position includes a strong outreach and writing component.

As one of his letter writers noted, "One could not wish for a more active graduate student who is blessed with genuine drive and originality." Congratulations to Clint.