



## **Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU): Plant Bug Biodiversity in the California Floristic Province and Cape Floristic Region (CFR; South Africa) Biodiversity Hotspots**

**WHAT:** Summer stipend for one undergraduate student from UC Riverside for research on plant bug biodiversity in the California Floristic Province (CA-FP) Biodiversity Hotspot and the Cape Floristic Region (CFR) in South Africa during the summer 2026.

The REU has three components:

1. Independent research credit(s) (Weirauch lab: <https://heteroptera.ucr.edu/>) during spring quarter 2026;
2. 10-week summer research **internship at the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)** in Sacramento during **summer 2026**, starting June 29, 2026 (\$6,000 stipend) for 40hrs/week; the student will be mentored by Senior Insect Biosystematist [Dr. Michael Forthman](#); there will also be at least one intern from either UC Davis, Sacramento State, or Los Rios Community College District based at CDFA at the same time and working on a similar project.
3. Independent research credits (Weirauch lab) during fall 2026 to finalize products.

**WHY:** The goal is to train undergraduate students in insect systematics and biodiversity and provide experience conducting research at a state governmental agency.

**HOW:** This independent research project will focus on plant bugs (Hemiptera: Miridae). Students will co-design their own project aiming on advancing understanding of insect biodiversity in the CA-FP and CFR. This year's project will combine exploration of the phylogenetic diversity of plant bugs in CA-FP and CFR (using phylogenomic trees and spatial data) with a taxonomic project focused on discovery and description of new genera and species of plant bugs in the CA-FP and/or CFR.

**Products** will ideally include a peer-reviewed publication.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be accepted from motivated students in the life sciences (preference for sophomore or junior standing) with **interest in insect systematics**, effective communication skills, and **interest in pursuing a career in entomology and/or agriculture**. Completion or current enrollment in ENTM 100 required, with preference for students who have also completed or are enrolled in ENTM 107, ENTM 112 or ENTM 109. REUs can only be awarded to US citizens and permanent residents.

**Please email** 1) a one-to-two-page resume (CV); 2) a 500-word statement of interest; and 3) the email address of one faculty member (UCR or elsewhere) who can serve as a reference for you to Dr. Christiane Weirauch ([christiane.weirauch@ucr.edu](mailto:christiane.weirauch@ucr.edu)).

**The deadline for applications is Monday, February 9, 2026.**