INTERN IN BIOCONTROL OF THE COMMON REED (PHRAGMITES AUSTRALIS) BY ARCHANARA SPP. – 2026

Project title: Feasibility study on the management of *Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis* using the biocontrol agent *Archanara* spp. on abandoned mining sites in Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Project summary: Common reed (*Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*) is an invasive exotic plant that colonizes many wetlands and disturbed sites, including abandoned mining sites in Abitibi-Témiscamingue (QC). Its proliferation leads to a decrease in biodiversity, alters water regimes, and complicates ecological restoration efforts. As part of a partnership research project between UQAT (RIME) and the Quebec's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MRNF), and in collaboration with the University of Toronto, an innovative biocontrol approach is being evaluated. This approach is based on the controlled introduction of *Archanara* spp. larvae (stem-boring lepidoptera) to reduce the vigor of common reed and promote the return of native species to abandoned mining sites in Abitibi-Témiscamingue.
The internship is part of the preparatory work for the experimental deployment of these biocontrol agents on mining sites and will allow the intern to gain unique experience at the interface between plant ecology, applied entomology, and ecosystem restoration.

Intern responsibilities: Under the supervision of Professor Simon Taurines (UQAT-RIME) and in collaboration with Professor Sandy Smith and researcher Robert Bourchier (University of Toronto), the successful candidate will participate in all field and training activities related to the project, including:

- Installation and monitoring of experimental biocontrol devices for common reed on abandoned mining sites (in Abitibi-Témiscamingue).
- Implementation and observation of the dispersal of *Archanara* spp. larvae in selected common reed colonies.
- Training trip to the University of Toronto to learn techniques for rearing, dispersing, and monitoring larvae.
- Participation in the collection, management, processing, and preliminary analysis of research data.
- Writing field notes and scientific summaries in support of the future master's thesis proposal.

Specific requirements:

- Enrolled in a university program in biology, ecology, entomology, forestry, or a related discipline.
- Interest in fieldwork and experimental research.
- Valid driver's license (preferred).
- Good teamwork and communication skills in French and English.

Future opportunities: This internship is a preparatory step for a master's project on the feasibility of biocontrol of common reed on abandoned mining sites. Students wishing to pursue graduate studies at UQAT will be encouraged and supported in their efforts (supervision possible by Simon Taurines, in co-direction with professors Marie Guittonny of UQAT-RIME and Sandy Smith of the University of Toronto).

Financial support: $7,500 (Undergraduate Research Scholarship for Canadian students or Mitacs Globalink for international students)

Project duration: 14 weeks (May to August 2026)

Send your resume, cover letter, and transcript (unofficial accepted) to simon.taurines@uqat.ca

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The Research Institute on Mines and the Environment (RIME) at UQAT is **a cutting-edge research department internationally renowned** for its scientific expertise in **mining reclamation and sustainable mining environments**. It brings together researchers from various disciplines (including geotechnics, geochemistry, hydrogeology, engineering, and ecology) around a common goal: to design concrete solutions to reduce the environmental footprint of mining activities. As part of a dynamic, multidisciplinary team, students and interns work in a stimulating environment that combines fieldwork, laboratory work, and collaboration with the mining industry and government stakeholders. Located in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, in the heart of Quebec's mining territory, RIME offers a unique setting in which to actively contribute to the transition to sustainable mining development.

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