

Danny Haelewaters

Danny Haelewaters is a systematist, evolutionary biologist, and ecologist, who studies fungi and their interactions with other organisms. His focus goes to groups of fungi that have been understudied until now, such as a the Laboulbeniomycetes, but also unusual places and substrates, where we find fungi that we know very little about. He is interested in evolution and speciation—using molecular phylogenetic analyses to determine relationships and place taxa in the phylogenetic tree of the Fungi. He applies an integrative taxonomy approach in describing fungal diversity, which includes information from morphology, morphometry, DNA, species delimitation methods, ecology, and biogeography. Finally, his research includes a community ecology component, as his group examines how climate and landscape factors influence fungal diversity and interactions.

The Forest Fungal Ecology Postdoctoral Research Award will be used to purchase a compound microscope as an important capacity building component of a long-term fungal inventory project in Cusuco National Park, Honduras. This is a highly threatened Mesoamerican cloud forest where Haelewaters is interested in changes in fungal diversity and multitrophic networks as a response to abiotic factors (climate, forest cover).