2026-2027 Invasive Species Collaborative Graduate Student Grant Program

The ISC is committed to supporting graduate student research, outreach, and professional development. The 2026–2027 Graduate Student Grant Program opened this fall, and following a competitive selection process, seven projects were selected for funding. Meet this year's awardees and learn more about their research below. Congratulations to all!

Team Projects:

Assessing the potential of Diaporthe fungi as biological control agents for autumn olive and developing scientific visualizations

- Aoran Diao, Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation
- Jing Ren, School of Visual Arts

Seasonal nutrient sources and energy reserves of invasive mosquitoes in the New River Valley

- James Moloney, Department of Biochemistry
- Helle Aronson, Department of Biochemistry

Individual Projects:

Effects of the principal Ailanthus altissima quassinoid, ailanthone, on in vitro growth of Verticillium nonalfalfae

- Harrison Miles, Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation

An invasive mosquito and a native virus: Comparative Cache Valley virus transmission by two Virginia populations of Aedes albopictus

- Gavyn Sanford, Department of Entomology

Quantifying the environmental impacts of widespread aerial applications of SPLAT® SM-Organic on headwater streams

- David Speth, Department of Entomology

Ecological and evolutionary effects of competition between native and invasive lizard species

- Emma White, Department of Biological Sciences

Fecal samples for whole-genome sequencing of Grayson Highlands State Park's feral ponies

- Sophia Vrh, School of Plant and Environmental Sciences

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Information from the Invasive Species Collaborative's InVAsion Newsletter.