

**Dr Greg Edgecombe**  
**Research leader, Department of Earth Sciences, Natural History Museum**

*As a paleontologist specializing in centipedes, Greg's fieldwork has taken him to many exotic places.*

I have been a Research Leader at The Natural History Museum in London since 2007. I work in the Department of Earth Sciences as a palaeontologist specialising in the early evolution of arthropods, and draw extensively on the Life Sciences collections at the Museum for my research on centipedes. Before moving to the UK, I worked as a Researcher at the Australian Museum in Sydney for 14 years, where my studies centred on the centipedes of Australia, exceptionally-preserved Cambrian arthropods from China, and the life history and evolution of trilobites. My fieldwork has spanned a lot of South America and Australasia, plus Greenland, northern Canada, the Mediterranean, southern Africa, and southeast Asia.



Greg Edgecombe in the field in Vietnam (February 2012), collecting centipedes in rainforest soil

I was promoted to IMP3 in 2013 in recognition of my research on the evolution of the most diverse animal phylum, the Arthropoda. My approach aims to integrate data from anatomy, molecular sequences and the fossil record to infer how the major groups of arthropods are interrelated. This is a considerable challenge because arthropods represent about 80% of living animal species diversity and have a prolific fossil history over 520 million years.

I was attracted to the IMP initiative because of the exemplary track records of current and previous IMPs at The Natural History Museum. They include some of the most productive and influential systematic biologists of their generations.

Merit Promotion will allow me to work to an endorsed plan for several years, but with the flexibility to develop new opportunities where they present themselves. This is important because major discoveries in palaeontology often happen fortuitously, and because methods of phylogenetic inference are evolving rapidly and will almost certainly be heading in new directions five years into the future.