

Grasshopper diversity in grasslands and shrubs



About the project

Shrub expansion is an ongoing process in many mountain regions. As a consequence of changes in grazing livestock and their management, different woody species invade and overgrow species-rich pastures. A recent study on vegetation composition demonstrated that consequences of shrub encroachment strongly depend on the invading woody species. However, little is known on the effects on arthropods and other animals.

This MSc focusses on the interaction between shrub encroachment and grasshopper communities in the subalpine zone of the Swiss Alps. Grasshoppers are among the most charismatic and characteristic fauna of grasslands. They serve as valuable indicators of the ecological status and quality of grasslands. Based on GIS information, you will identify transition areas between pastures and shrubland. During field work, you will visit a selected number of sites and record grasshopper presence along the gradient as well as vegetation status and composition. Depending on your interest, trait-based analyses as well as modelling approaches can be considered for data analysis.

What we offer

- an excellent opportunity to develop your scientific and taxonomic skills
- exciting field work in the Swiss Alps
- independence to develop your own innovative approaches
- engaged support by a motivated research team

Dates

Starting date: beginning of June 2024 (flexible)

Field season: July to September 2024

Your profile

- driving license
- good physical condition
- self-motivation and interest
- no previous experience in grasshopper taxonomy needed

Application

Please email us a short dossier, including a half-page motivation letter and your CV

Contact

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