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Netherlands Ecological Research Network

NERN Messages

March 2018

HIGHLIGHTS

International PhD Course | Conflicting demands in European Forests: a wicked problem?

24 June – 2 July 2018

More and more, we are confronted with conflicting demands when trying to develop sustainable land-use strategies, resulting in so-called wicked problems. Scientists working on such wicked problems need to be trained to work in trans-, multi- and interdisciplinary teams of experts with various scientific backgrounds, such as ecologists, economists, political, and social scientists. This course aims to teach them the skills they need for working in such diverse teams, by means of a real-life case. The course is focused around Gällivare, a small town in the north of Sweden, where one can find the "last wilderness of Boreal Europe", part of an UNESCO World Heritage Site with large nature reserves and national parks. At the same time, it has an active mining industry, forestry, reindeer herding and tourism. It is a perfect place for land use and land use change discussions. A travel subsidy is available for PE&RC PhD candidates. For more information click here.

1. Workshops / Meetings / Symposia

- **Causes and consequences of plant and animal movement** (21 March 2018) @ Utrecht, the Netherlands
- **European Conference of Tropical Ecology** (26-29 March 2018) @ Paris, France
- **The First Meeting of The Netherlands Society for Evolutionary Biology (NLSEB)** (11 April 2018) @ Ede, the Netherlands
- **ECSA 57: Changing estuaries, coasts and shelf systems – diverse threats and opportunities** (3-6 September 2018) @ Perth, Australia
- **Sfecologie 2018 – International Conference on Ecological Sciences** (22-25 October 2018) @ Rennes, France

2. Courses

- **Life History Theory** (11-16 March 2018)
  Life History Theory deals with species-specific adaptive schemes of the distribution of the reproductive effort over the life of an organism. The general theoretical problem is to predict which combination of traits will evolve under specific conditions. The concepts used are also relevant to study within species

variation in life history traits. The one week course aims at giving an overview of the field and will discuss methodology and recent developments. This course is organised by the Research School for Ecology and Evolution (RSEE) and PE&RC, but coordinated by RSEE.

- **Aquatic Ecology | Robustness of aquatic ecosystems in the face of global change** (18-23 March 2018)
  Aquatic ecosystems play a crucial role in human health and well-being as a source of drinking water and food (irrigation, fisheries, and aquaculture), recreation, and tourism. Aquatic systems also provide diverse habitats, support high levels of biodiversity and vital ecosystems services and play a vital role in the global carbon cycle and in various nutrient cycles. In this 5-day course we will provide a multifaceted overview of the science on aquatic ecosystems in the Anthropocene.
- **Mathematical Models in Ecology and Evolution** (19 March – 30 June 2018)
  The aims of the course are to teach why mathematics is so useful in ecology and evolution, to acquire the ability to read and interpret equations, and to master the art of constructing and analyzing new models.
- **Resilience of living systems: From fundamental concepts to interdisciplinary applications** (29 April – 4 May 2018)
  During the course, the participants will learn about the basic concepts of resilience and their application, from an interdisciplinary perspective (micro-biome to socio-ecological systems). Accordingly, we will address how resilience theory can be used to tackle fundamental and societal issues from a socio-economic and bio-physical perspective and will provide a critical reflection on the relevance, use, and applicability of the concept of resilience. The course is organised by the Graduate Schools WIAS and PE&RC.
- **Hands on Digital Soil Mapping** (28 May – 1 June 2018)
  This course introduces methods and software for management, analysis and mapping of soil variables within the R environment for statistical computing. The course alternates between lectures and computer practicals and covers a variety of subjects, such as geostatistics, linear regression and machine learning for soil mapping, quantification of uncertainty and soil map validation.
- **World Soils and their Assessment** (28 May – 1 June 2018)
  This is a course on international standards for soils classification and assessment. It will provide an introduction to the soils of the world and their diversity, their main forming factors, classification (according to the World Reference Base for Soil Resources 2014), and management. The course will include lectures and hands-on exercises. PE&RC PhD candidates are entitled to the reduced fee.
- **Machine learning for spatial data** (28 May – 1 June 2018)
  In this course participants will learn how to model patterns and structures contained in data. The course will be focused on statistical and machine learning approaches, where the relationships between the observed data and the phenomenon under study are learned directly from observations. Through a series of lectures and practical exercises (in Matlab), the participants will learn about different strategies and their pertinence for specific problems in environmental sciences. Most applications considered in the course will be remote sensing-based, but the course will remain general for a broader audience.

3. Position Announcements

- **For job openings, check** our website.

4. Other News

- **NWO Visitor's Travel Grants** (Continuous application)
  Researchers in the Netherlands can apply for a visitor's grant for highly qualified senior researchers from abroad who hold a PhD. With this grant these researchers can stay in the Netherlands for a maximum of four months.

If you have information that you would like to have included in the NERN messages or on the NERN website, please send this information to Claudius.vandeVijver@wur.nl.