

Deciphering plant-insect communication

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Looking for: → Master Students for semester project/thesis project

The chemical diversity of nectar and pollen in a Swiss alpine plant community

Nectar and pollen are the most common rewards that plants offer to pollinators as an incentive to assist in their reproduction. These rewards contain a **diversity of chemical components**, such as sugars, sterols, and secondary metabolites, which play an ecological role in establishing plants' interactions with insects.

The goal of this semester project is to characterise the chemistry of nectar and pollen from a natural species-rich community of alpine plants.

Fieldwork (50%): at Calanda, close to Chur. Flowering season from May to July. Depending on the flower abundance and weather, the fieldwork typically lasts 1-3 days per week.

Lab work (30%): Targeted/Untargeted metabolomic analysis of nectar and pollen samples.

Statistical work (20%): Statistical analysis and report writing.

Your background: Student in biology or closely related area.

Expected skills: Strong motivation for fieldwork and lab work.

Advantage: Driving license and experience driving in mountains, basic skills in plant taxonomy.