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**UNIVERSITÄT
BERN**

Bird and vertebrate excursion: Thursday and Friday before spring semester starts (Bernese Seeland), Jura (Vallorbe) and Alps (Valais)

Meeting point and time: Conservation Biology, Erlachstrasse 9a, 08h00

Goal: during these 2 days of excursions we will introduce you to the winter fauna (birds & mammals) of Switzerland. In the field, we will address several conservation problems and mitigation solutions.

Schedule: During the first day we will visit several places in the Bernese Seeland (e.g. Fanel) and the Jura (a cave sheltering bats) while the second day will be spent in Valais.

Equipment: warm clothes (including rain coat), hiking boots, head lamp, binocular, identification guides for Swiss birds and mammals, lunch for 2 days & sleeping bag (we are staying overnight at the Valais field station in Sion on Thursday evening)

Thursday: birds and bats, Bernese Seeland and Jura

During the first morning we will visit the Fanel nature reserve at the Lake Neuchâtel as well as farmland in the Bernese Seeland. In the late morning we will drive to Vallorbe in the Vaud Jura, visit several caves and look for hibernating bat species. The next stop is in central Valais, where we will finish our first day by searching for the roost site of the elusive and endangered Eagle Owl.

Friday: birds and mammals, Valais

During the second day we will visit several spots of interest in the Rhône Valley – ranging from the intensively managed valley floor to remote alpine regions. The exact program depends on weather conditions but exciting sightings of the typical avifauna and large mammal species are almost guaranteed. We will end our excursion by visiting an abandoned underground gallery in the Pfywald (Finges) that is used by the rare greater horseshoe bat.

Organizers:

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**ECOLOGY & EVOLUTION
CONSERVATION BIOLOGY**

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Vertebrate excursions: first week after the end of the spring semester

**Meeting point and time: according to specific taxonomic group schedule
(see on ILIAS for more organizational details)**

Goal: during these 5 days of excursions you will be introduced to the vertebrate fauna of Switzerland (fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds & mammals). In the field, we will address several conservation problems and present mitigation solutions.

Schedule: Monday is devoted to fish; Tuesday to amphibians; Wednesday to reptiles; Thursday and Friday to birds and mammals. Every single-day organizer will post on ILIAS further instructions about meeting point, transportation, etc. [Fish: Ole Seehausen; Amphibians: Benedikt Schmidt; Reptiles: Ueli Hofer; Birds and Mammals: Raphaël Arlettaz].

Equipment for all excursions: warm clothes (including rain coat), hiking boots, binocular, identification guides for vertebrates, etc.

Additionally, for the bird-mammal excursion on Thursday-Friday: sleeping bag, head lamp and a tent (to be organized between participants), two lunches as well as food for Thursday evening (a barbecue can be organized at the camp site if you want).

Monday: fish (not information available; see directly with teacher: ole.seehausen@iee.unibe.ch)

Tuesday: amphibians, wildlife around Basel city

We will visit several amphibian conservation projects near Basel. Several project which are all very close (and within easy walking distance) will be used to illustrate how amphibian conservation is done. We will also discuss ecological and political aspects of the projects. Of course, we will also observe some amphibian species.

Wednesday: reptiles

We will walk through the perimeter of the Rebgüterzusammenlegung in Ligerz and address some relevant topics with respect to reptile conservation. Depending on the weather up to five reptile species can be observed, the most common being wall lizard and asp viper.

Thursday-Friday: birds and mammals, Valais – *During the first day we shall visit the Fanel reserve for breeding water birds (repeating the winter excursion, which enables us to observe seasonal changes in bird community) as well as the Seeland for ecological compensation areas promoting vertebrate wildlife. We drive the same night to Valais where we shall overnight (take enough tents, your sleeping bag, etc.) in a pine wood. On the second day we will visit several spots of interest along the Rhône Valley – ranging from the intensively managed valley floor to remote alpine regions. The exact program depends on weather conditions but exciting sightings of the typical avifauna and large mammal species are almost guaranteed.*

Organizers:

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