

MSc/MRes Ecology and Environmental Sustainability *Newsletter*



Dave Johnson, on Ben Avon in the Cairngorms

Welcome to the MSc/MRes Ecology and Environmental Sustainability programme newsletter! In it we highlight some of the recent ecological research that has been undertaken by staff and past MSc students here at Aberdeen. We hope this provides some inspiration in preparation for your forthcoming masters programme. Further information on the programme can be found [here](#), or by contacting the programme coordinators, David Johnson (d.johnson@abdn.ac.uk) and Justin Travis (justin.travis@abdn.ac.uk).

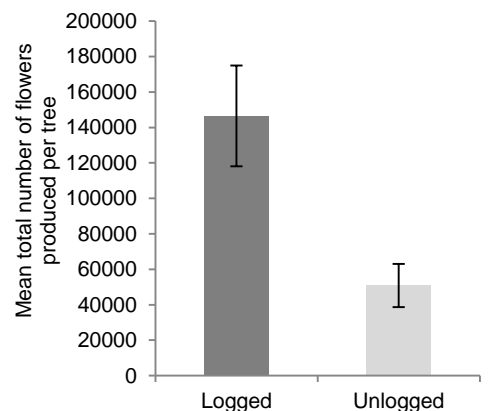
Stunning local environment

Aberdeenshire contains many beautiful habitats and ecosystems, including (clockwise from top left) dramatic seabird colonies, sandy beaches and heathland. The concentration of research activity in Aberdeen provides opportunities to use long-running experiments in nearby montane environments. During the programme, we will visit many local habitats and use them as a focus to discuss various ecological issues.



Discovering how logging impacts flowering in tropical forests

Anna Buckingham graduated in 2010 after completing her project in Borneo. She found that logging had a significant impact on the number of flowers produced by *Shorea* (right), with consequences for reproductive success of this species.

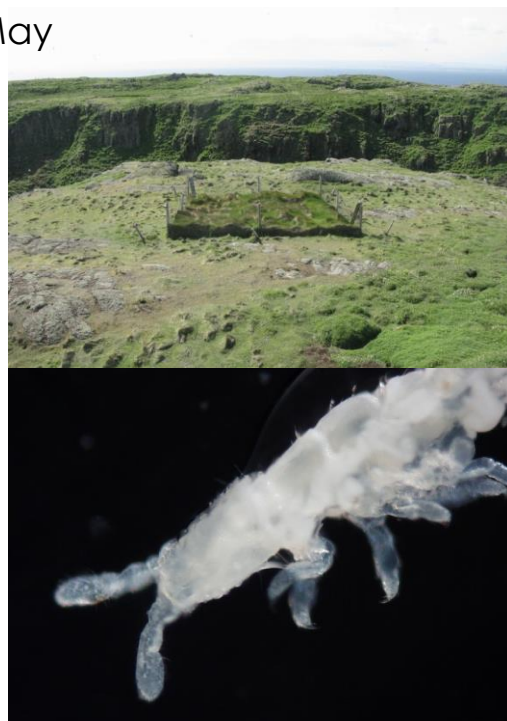


Disentangling soil food webs on the Isle of May

"My research project investigated the effects of herbivores on the soil food web at two different fertility levels. It was part of a long-term experiment set on the Isle of May, a breath-taking location to do ecology. Puffins flying above me as I did my field work, rabbits running around, and the great sea shining in the distance over the cliffs... A magical way to end a great course.

Now I am doing a PhD in soil ecology, and I am sure I would have not obtained it without doing this MRes. Its strong methodological, research-based approach is definitely the right way to prepare you for pursuing a research career."

Walter Andriuzzi MRes (Dist) Ecology 2010-2011.



Marine mammal research @ Cromarty

Our research programme on harbour seals at the University of Aberdeen's [Lighthouse Field Station](#) in Cromarty provides opportunities for a range of collaborative studies, including work on contaminants, disease, parasites, and reproductive behaviour, together making this one of the most intensively studied seal populations in the world. Current work focuses on developing our individual-based studies to help identify the factors that are driving these changes.

Cordes, L.S et al. (2011) Long-term patterns in harbour seal site-use and the consequences for managing protected areas. Animal Conservation, 14: 430–438.

Cruickshank Botanic Garden

Located between the Zoology and Cruickshank Buildings, where MSc/MRes Ecology and Environmental Sustainability students are based, are the fantastic botanic gardens. This is a great learning resource and a tranquil setting for a lunch-time stroll. Take a virtual tour of the gardens by clicking [here](#).

