

**Volunteers needed from now onwards as field assistants for the project:**

**Reducing Daily Energy Expenditure as an Adaptive Response to Droughts:**

### **Physiology and Behaviour**

**Opportunity:** This is a great opportunity for anybody who wants to get more experience in field work relating to eco-physiology, animal behavior, evolution, and ecology before starting an MSc or PhD project.

**Project:** We study the evolutionary and ecological reasons as well as physiological mechanisms of group living, paternal care, communal nesting and social flexibility in the striped mouse. One focus is on the adaptation to droughts, combining physiological, behavioral, ecological and evolutionary research. As this species is diurnal and the habitat is open, direct behavioral observations in the field are possible.

What kind of people are needed? Biology/zoology/veterinary students are preferred as candidates. Applicants must have an interest in working in the field and with animals. Hard working conditions will await applicants, as the study species gets up with sunrise (between 5 and 6 o` clock), and stops its activity with dusk (19 o` clock). Work in the field will be done for 5 days a week. Applicants must be able to manage extreme temperatures (below 0 at night in winter, sometimes over 40°C during summer days). Applicants must both be prepared to live for long periods in the loneliness of the field and to be part of a small social group.

**Work of volunteer field assistants:** Trapping, marking and radio-tracking of striped mice; all-day observations in the field. Volunteers will also see how blood samples are collected for physiological measurements. Volunteers are expected to help with maintenance of the research station (water pump, solar power, etc.).

**Confirmation letter:** Students get a letter of confirmation about their work and can prepare a

report of their own small project to get credit points from their university for their bachelor or masters studies.

**Costs:** Students have to arrange their transport to the field site

themselves. Per month, an amount of Rand 1350 (around 180 US\$, 110 Euro) must be paid for accommodation at the research station. Students must buy their own food etc in Springbok (costs of about R 3000, approx. 360 US\$ or 250 Euro/month). Including extras (going out for dinner; shopping), you should expect costs of about 600 US\$ / 450 Euros per month. Students get an invitation letter which they can use to apply for funding in their home country.

**Place:** The field site is in the Goegap Nature Reserve near Springbok in the North-West of South Africa. The vegetation consists of Succulent Karoo, which has been recognized as one of 25 hotspots of biodiversity. It is a desert to semi-desert with rain mainly in winter (June to September).

**When and how long:** At the moment we are looking for several volunteers. Volunteers are expected to stay at least three months, but longer periods of up to 6months are preferred.

**How to apply?** Send a short motivation letter stating why and for which period you are interested and your CV via email to [rribach@gmail.com](mailto:rribach@gmail.com)

**More information under**

[http://stripedmouse.com/site1\\_3\\_5.htm](http://stripedmouse.com/site1_3_5.htm)

Contact via e-mail: [rrimbach@gmail.com](mailto:rrimbach@gmail.com)

Succulent Karoo Research Station

A registered South African non-profit organization

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