



New course by Yves Basset, October-November 2012.

This course will blend insect systematics together with insect ecology, with an emphasis on the latter. The main aim of the course is to emphasize differences in the ecology of tropical and temperate insects. The course will be especially relevant to entomology or biology students who plan to study or travel in the tropics.

About 90% of insect diversity occur in the tropics. One hectare of tropical rainforest may easily sustain ca 20,000 terrestrial arthropod species. Against this background, entomology courses are often focused on insect systematics or on the ecology of temperate insects. With regard to the former, certain insect taxa are endemic to the tropics or have a pantropical distribution and are thus often ignored in entomology courses. The ecology of tropical insects is often rather different than their temperate counterparts since they often do not need a drastic diapause during their life cycle to escape winter conditions, but must face high selection pressures to locate suitable hosts or microhabitats, for example in diverse tropical rainforests.