

Ruan van Mazijk

Curriculum vitae



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Interests: systematics & taxonomy, phylogenetic comparative methods, biodiversity patterns & macroecology, community ecology, plant ecophysiology & functional traits

Education

MSc candidate in Biological Sciences (UCT)

Does genome size affect plant water use & phenology? Comparing ecophysiological function across Cape schoenoid sedges (tribe Schoeneae, Cyperaceae)

Principal supervisor: Prof A.M. Muasya

Co-supervisors: Prof G.A. Verboom & Prof A.G. West

BSc Hons in Biological Sciences (UCT)

Relating vascular plant species richness & environmental heterogeneity spatially in the GCFR & SWAFR

Supervisors: Prof M.D. Cramer & G.A. Verboom

With distinction

BSc in Ecology & Evolution, Applied Biology (UCT)

With distinction in both majors & the degree

2017

2016

Publications

Van Mazijk, Cramer, & Verboom. Environmental heterogeneity explains contrasting plant species richness between the South African Cape & southwestern Australia. *Journal of Biogeography* 48:1875–1888.

DOI: 10.1111/jbi.14118.

2021

Elliott, **van Mazijk**, Barrett, Bruhl, Joly, Muthaphuli, Wilson, & Muasya. Global dispersal & diversification of the genus *Schoenus* (Cyperaceae) from the Western Australian biodiversity hotspot. *Journal of Systematics & Evolution* 59(4):791–808. DOI: 10.1111/jse.12742

2021

Elliott, Laidler, Muasya, Muthaphuli & **van Mazijk**. Solving the sedge mystery. *Veld & Flora* 105(3):20–25.

2019

Cramer, Wootton, **van Mazijk** & Verboom. New regionally-modelled soil layers improve prediction of vegetation type relative to that based on global soil models. *Diversity & Distributions* 25(11):1736–1750.

2019

DOI: 10.1111/ddi.12973.

Van Mazijk, Smyth, Weideman & West. Isotopic tracing of stormwater in the urban Liesbeek River. *Water SA* 44(4):674–679. DOI: 10.4314/wsa.v44i4.16.

2018

Professional affiliations

SASSB¹ council member, student representative

2019–2021

SASSB student member

2018–

SAAB² student member

2017–

Golden Key International Honour Society member

2015–

Funding & awards

Scholarships & bursaries

NRF³ Innovation Masters Scholarship (R90,000)

2019

UCT Masters Research Scholarship⁴ (R30,000)

2019

¹Southern African Society for Systematic Biology

²South African Association of Botanists

³National Research Foundation (South Africa)

⁴Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of Innovation Masters Scholarship

UCT Bursary Top Ups ⁵ (R6,000 total)	2019
SAAB MSc Student Bursary (inaugural recipient) (R20,000 p.a.)	2018–2019
UCT Department of Biological Sciences Dorothy Cameron Scholarship (R20,000)	2018
UCT Once-Off Top Up Award (R5,520)	2018
UCT Masters Research Scholarship (R30,000)	2018
NRF Innovation Honours Scholarship (R60,000)	2017
SAAB Honours Scholarship (R10,000)	2017
UCT Council Honours Merit Scholarship ⁶ (R20,000)	2017
UCT Science Faculty Scholarship (R15,000 p.a.)	2015–2016

Travel grants

NRF Student Sponsorship for online attendance at MEDECOS XVII (R7,000)	2022
UCT Travel Grant for the 45 th Annual SAAB, AMA ⁷ & SASSB Joint Congress, 2019 (R3,819)	2018

Awards & honours

Best Systematics MSc Presentation ⁸ at the 45 th Annual SAAB, AMA & SASSB Joint Congress	January 2019
UCT Dean's Merit List	2014–2016
UCT Dick & Dorothy Borcherts Prize, for the highest standard in 2 nd year biology (R1,000)	2015
Top of the class at UCT for:	
• 3 rd year evolutionary biology	2016
• 2 nd year botany	2015
• 2 nd year zoology	2015
• 2 nd year marine biology	2015
• 1 st year biological diversity	2014

Leadership

SASSB council member, student representative	2019–2021
UCT Department of Biological Sciences Postgraduate Committee member	October 2018–
UCT Departmental Representative for the Department of Biological Sciences	2016
Class Representative at UCT for:	
• 3 rd year evolutionary biology	2016
• 3 rd year ecology	2016
• 2 nd year botany	2015

Teaching assistance

Teaching assistant & field assistant for 2 nd year angiosperm diversity Convenor: Dr. S. Chimphango (UCT)	2022
Teaching & field assistant for 2 nd year ecology & evolution Convenor: Associate Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)	2019–2020
Teaching assistant for 2 nd year angiosperm diversity Lecturer: Associate Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)	2018–2019
Tutor for 2 nd year study design & data analysis for scientists in R Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altweig (UCT, SEEC ⁹)	2017–2020
Lectured for SDU ¹⁰ short course <i>Teaching Biodiversity for FET¹¹ Life Sciences Teachers</i> Lecture title: <i>Biodiversity, evolution & taxonomy—an overview of the major clades of animals & plants</i>	18 March 2019
Assistant tutor for SEEC-ACCESS ¹² short course <i>Intro. to statistical modelling & data analysis in R</i>	18–20 July 2018

⁵From MSc supervisors Profs A.M. Muasya, G.A. Verboom & A.G. West

⁶Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of Innovation Honours Scholarship

⁷African Mycological Association

⁸Awarded by SASSB; three-way tie with Ms Z. Shaik (UCT, SANBI) & Mr D. Main (University of Johannesburg)

⁹UCT Centre for Statistics in Ecology, the Environment & Conservation

¹⁰UCT Schools Development Unit

¹¹Further Education & Training (grades 10–12 in South Africa)

¹²DST-NRF Applied Centre for Climate & Earth Systems

Organiser: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT, SEEC)	
Assistant tutor for 1 st year introductory statistics R practicals Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT, SEEC)	2016–2018
Hot-seat tutor for 1 st year mathematics for biology, earth & environmental sciences undergraduates Convenor: T. van Heerden (UCT); hot-seat organiser: Dr R. Moolman (UCT)	2015

Workshops taught & lead

Data wrangling & manipulation in R	1–3 July 2019
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Research assistance

Field assistant for sampling <i>Schoenus</i> spp. (Cyperaceae, tribe Schoeneae)	2018
Specimens were used for genome-size analyses and taxonomic study	
Supervisor: Dr T.L. Elliott (Université De Montréal) & Associate Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	
Laboratory assistant for <i>Schoenus</i> spp. (Cyperaceae, tribe Schoeneae) hydroponics pilot study	2018
Supervisor: Dr T.L. Elliott (Université De Montréal) & Associate Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	
Data processing assistant for assessing the current available data for the soils of the GCFR	June 2016–
With Ms L.M. Wootton	
Part of the <i>Biodiversity and Environmental Change in the Cape Floristic Region</i> research programme at the Department of Biological Sciences	
Supervisor: Prof M.D. Cramer (UCT)	
Field assistant for monitoring <i>Mimetes</i> spp. & <i>Leucospermum</i> spp. (Proteaceae)	January–February 2017
Populations were on the Cape Peninsula	
With Ms L.M. Wootton	
Supervisor: Dr J.A. Slingsby (South African Environmental Observation Network Fynbos Node, SEEC)	
Laboratory & field assistant for legume symbiotic rhizobia culturing	December 2015
Also involved plant collections & literature-derived rhizobial collection data processing	
Supervisors: Dr M. Dladlu (University of Swaziland) & Associate Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	

Workshop & conference attendance

Presenter at UCT Biological Sciences Research Day	29 November 2022
Presenter at SAAB Postgraduate Virtual Symposium	28 September 2022
Attendee at MEDECOS XVII	5–9 September 2022
Presenter at IBS ¹³ Early Career Biogeographers Conference	22–24 October 2021
Presenter & candidate at iDiv ¹⁴ Online Joint Recruitment Symposium	31 August–1 September 2020
Presenter at the 45th Annual SAAB, AMA & SASSB Joint Congress	9–11 January 2019
1st oral presentation: <i>Environmental turnover predicts plant species richness & turnover</i> Based on my BSc Hons dissertation work & publication in prep.	9 January 2019
2nd oral presentation: <i>Larger genome size constrains water-use efficiency & phenology in Cape schoenoid sedges</i> Based on my MSc work	11 January 2019
Presenter at UCT BioDay	30 November 2018
I presented my then preliminary results for my MSc on the role of genome size in shaping Cape schoenoid sedge physiology	
Attendee at satRday Cape Town (https://capetown2018.satrdays.org)	17 March 2018
Presenter at workshop <i>Biodiversity & Environmental Change in the Cape Floristic Region</i>	24 January 2017
With Ms L.M. Wootton	
We presented a progress report on <i>Development of soil atlas for the Greater Cape Floristic Region</i>	
Organiser: Associate Prof L. Gillson (UCT)	
Attendee at workshop <i>Spatial Point Process Modelling for Ecological Survey Data with inlabru</i>	11–13 January 2017
Instructors: Prof D.L. Borchers, Dr J.B. Illian (CREEM, St Andrews University) & Dr F. Bachl (University of Edinburgh)	

¹³International Biogeography Society

¹⁴German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research, Halle-Jena-Leipzig

Press releases & science communication

Radio interview on <i>The John Maytham Show, Cape Talk</i> <i>Harvesting Storm Water</i>	28 November 2018
Interviewed for article for UCT News by Susan Segar <i>Harvesting storm water from the Liesbeek River</i>	26 November 2018
Mentioned in article for UCT Faculty of Science press releases. <i>Tracing stormwater in the Liesbeeck River - students passion drives scientific discovery</i>	November–December 2018
Presenter at <i>Pint of Science Cape Town</i> I presented hypotheses concerning the role of genome size in plant water use & ecology	16 May 2018

Skills

Strong public speaker, visual design, teaching

Tools

Languages

English, Afrikaans
R, bash

R Markdown & related R-packages
tidyverse R-packages
git, GitHub
LaTeX, BibTeX
Apple macOS
Microsoft Windows
Microsoft Office Word, Excel & Powerpoint

Methods

Statistical modelling
Data manipulation, wrangling & cleaning
GIS (in *R*)

Miscellaneous

Open Day volunteer for the Department of Biological Sciences	22 April 2017, 21 April 2018
Animal Ethics Course certified by South African Veterinary Council Completed as part of BSc Hons general coursework	April 2017
Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc) member	2017–
UCT Wine & Culture Society member	2016–2018
UCT Birding Club member	2016–2017
Selected to give student feedback for curriculum-restructuring Within the Department of Biological Sciences Related to roles as Class/Departmental Representative—see above Selected by: Associate Prof A.G. West (UCT)	August 2016
Selected to give student feedback for <i>Biology: How Life Works</i> (2nd edition) Morris et al., 2016. W.H. Freeman & Co., Macmillan Education Selected by: Dr R. Kelly-Laubscher (University College Cork)	May 2016
Cape Wine Ambassador qualification Conferred by: Clive Torr	2016
UCT Biological Society member	2015
Two Oceans Aquarium Young Biologist Volunteer	2013–2014

References

Prof A.M. Muasya Department of Biological Sciences, UCT Keeper, Bolus Herbarium, UCT	muthama.muasya@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 3725
Prof G.A. Verboom Head, Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	tony.verboom@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 3398

Director, Bolus Herbarium, UCT

Prof M.D. Cramer	michael.cramer@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 2444
Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	
Prof A.G. West	adam.west@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 3628
Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	
Associate Prof R. Altwegg	res.altwegg@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 5750
Department of Statistical Sciences, UCT	
Head, SEEC, UCT	
Prof T.A.J. Hedderson	terry.hedderson@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 4037
Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	
Bolus Herbarium, UCT	