

Ruan van Mazijk

Curriculum vitae



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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. DOI: 10.1111/ddi.12973. 2019
- 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

Peer review

- Grobler & Cowling. The composition, geography, biology and assembly of the coastal flora of the Cape Floristic Region. *PeerJ* 9:e11916. DOI: 10.7717/peerj.11916. 2021

Interests

- Systematics & taxonomy
- Phylogenetic comparative methods
- Biodiversity patterns & macroecology
- Community ecology
- Plant ecophysiology & functional traits

Professional affiliations

- SASSB¹ council student representative 2019–2021
- SASSB student member 2018–
- SAAB² student member 2017–
- Golden Key International Honour Society 2015–

¹Southern African Society for Systematic Biology

²South African Association of Botanists

Funding & awards

Scholarships & bursaries

NRF Innovation Masters Scholarship (R90,000)	2019
UCT Masters Research Scholarship ³ (R30,000)	2019
UCT Bursary Top Ups ⁴ (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 ⁵ (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 ⁶ & SASSB Joint Congress, 2019 (R3,819)	2018

Awards & honours

Best Systematics MSc Presentation ⁷ 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 positions

SASSB council member, student representative	2019–2021
UCT Department of Biological Sciences Postgraduate Committee member	October 2018–2019
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

³ Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of Innovation Masters Scholarship
⁴ From MSc supervisors

⁵ Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of Innovation Honours Scholarship

⁶ African Mycological Association
⁷ Awarded by SASSB; three-way tie with Ms Z. Shaik (UCT, SANBI) & Mr D. Main (University of Johannesburg)

Teaching assistance

Teaching assistant & field assistant for 2 nd year angiosperm diversity Convenor: Associate Prof S. Chimphango (UCT)	2022
Teaching & field assistant for 2 nd year ecology & evolution Convenor: Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)	2019–2020
Teaching assistant for 2 nd year angiosperm diversity Lecturer: Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)	2018–2019
Tutor for 2 nd year study design & data analysis for scientists in R Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT, SEEC ⁸)	2017–2020
Lectured for SDU ⁹ short course <i>Teaching Biodiversity for FET¹⁰ 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 ¹¹ short course <i>Study design & data analysis for scientists in R</i> Organiser: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT)	18–20 July 2018
Assistant tutor for 1 st year introductory statistics R practicals Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT)	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

Research assistance

Field assistant for sampling <i>Schoenus</i> spp. (Cyperaceae, tribe Schoeneae) Specimens were used for genome-size analyses and taxonomic study Supervisor: Dr T.L. Elliott (Masaryk University) & Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	2018
Laboratory assistant for <i>Schoenus</i> spp. (Cyperaceae, tribe Schoeneae) hydroponics pilot study Supervisor: Dr T.L. Elliott (Masaryk University) & Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	2018
Data processing assistant for assessing the current available data for the soils of the GCFR 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)	June 2016–
Field assistant for monitoring <i>Mimetes</i> spp. & <i>Leucospermum</i> spp. (Proteaceae) Populations were on the Cape Peninsula With Ms L.M. Wootton Supervisor: Dr J.A. Slingsby (UCT, SAEON Fynbos Node)	January–February 2017
Laboratory & field assistant for legume symbiotic rhizobia culturing Also involved plant collections & literature-derived rhizobial collection data processing Supervisors: Dr M. Dludlu (University of Swaziland) & Prof A.M. Muasya (UCT)	December 2015

Workshops

Organised, lead <i>Data wrangling & manipulation in R</i>	1–3 July 2019
Presenter at workshop <i>Biodiversity & Environmental Change in the Cape Floristic Region</i> 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)	24 January 2017
Attendee at workshop <i>Spatial Point Process Modelling for Ecological Survey Data with inlabru</i> Instructors: Prof D.L. Borchers, Dr J.B. Illian (CREEM, St Andrews University) & Dr F. Bachl (University of Edinburgh)	11–13 January 2017

⁸UCT Centre for Statistics in Ecology, the Environment & Conservation
⁹UCT Schools Development Unit

¹⁰Further Education & Training (grades 10–12 in South Africa)
¹¹NRF Applied Centre for Climate & Earth Systems

Conferences

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 ¹² Early Career Biogeographers Conference	22–24 October 2021
Presenter & candidate at iDiv ¹³ Online Joint Recruitment Symposium	31 August–1 September 2020
Presenter at the 45th Annual SAAB, AMA & SASSB Joint Congress	9–11 January 2019
1 st oral presentation: <i>Environmental turnover predicts plant species richness & turnover</i> Based on my then BSc Hons work, later published in <i>Journal of Biogeography</i>	9 January 2019
2 nd 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 I presented my then preliminary results for my MSc on the role of genome size in shaping Cape schoenoid sedge physiology	30 November 2018
Attendee at satRday Cape Town (https://capetown2018.satrdays.org)	17 March 2018

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 Pint of Science Cape Town 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

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

Languages

English, Afrikaans
R, bash

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: Prof A.G. West (UCT)	August 2016
Selected to give student feedback for <i>Biology: How Life Works</i> (2 nd 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 Director, Bolus Herbarium, UCT	tony.verboom@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 3398
Prof M.D. Cramer Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	michael.cramer@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 2444
Prof A.G. West Department of Biological Sciences, UCT	adam.west@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 3628
Associate Prof R. Altwegg Department of Statistical Sciences, UCT Head, SEEC, UCT	res.altwegg@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 5750
Prof T.A.J. Hedderson Department of Biological Sciences, UCT Bolus Herbarium, UCT	terry.hedderson@uct.ac.za, (+27) 21 650 4037