

Ruan van Mazijk, Curriculum vitae

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MSc candidate in Biological Sciences at the [Dept. of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Town](#), South Africa



I have broad interests in plant and animal phylogenetics systematics, community ecology, plant ecophysiology, climate change biology, statistical ecology, and computational and model-based methods. Striving for a career in research, academia and teaching.

@ruanmazijk on [Twitter](#) and [GitHub](#)

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[LinkedIn](#) [ResearchGate](#) [Mendeley](#)

Education

- **MSc candidate in Biological Sciences** *Cape Town* 2018–present
 - Dissertation title: *Genome size effects on plant hydraulic ecophysiology, habitat and phenology in Cape Schoenoid sedges (Cyperaceae: Schoeneae)*
 - Principle supervisor: Associate Prof A.M. Muasya
 - Co-supervisors: Associate Prof G.A. Verboom and Associate Prof A.G. West
- **BSc Hons in Biological Sciences** *Cape Town* 2017
 - Dissertation title: *Relating vascular plant species richness and environmental heterogeneity across spatial scales in the Greater Cape Floristic Region and the Southwest Australia Floristic Region*
 - Supervisors: Prof M.D. Cramer and Associate Prof G.A. Verboom
 - Graduated with distinction
- **BSc in Ecology & Evolution, Applied Biology** *Cape Town* 2016
 - Distinction in both majors and the degree as a whole
- National Senior Certificate, Fairmont High School, Durbanville, South Africa 2013
 - Bachelor's Pass with honours and six distinctions

Publications

Popular articles

- Elliott, T.L., Laidler, G., Muasya, A.M., Muthaphuli, N. and **van Mazijk, R.** (In review). Foregrounding sedges: bringing the neglected Cape Schoenoid sedges to the forefront of genomic research. *Veld & Flora*.

Peer-reviewed articles

- Cramer, M.D., Wootton, L.M., **van Mazijk, R.** and Verboom, G.A. (In review). Improved spatial soil data confirms dependence of vegetation distribution on edaphic properties in the Cape biodiversity hotspot. *Diversity & Distributions*.
- **Van Mazijk, R.**, Cramer, M.D. and Verboom, G.A. (In prep.). The role of environmental heterogeneity in determining plant species richness in the Greater Cape Floristic Region & the Southwest Australia Floristic Region. To submit to *Journal of Biogeography*.
- **Van Mazijk, R.**, Smyth, L.K., Weideman, E.A. and West, A.G. (2018). Isotopic tracing of stormwater in the urban Liesbeek River. *Water SA*, 44(4):674–679. DOI: [10.4314/wsa.v44i4.16](https://doi.org/10.4314/wsa.v44i4.16).

Professional affiliations

- Southern African Society for Systematic Biology (SASSB) council member
Student Representative 2019–present
- SASSB student member 2018–present
- South African Association of Botanists (SAAB) student member 2017–present
- Golden Key International Honour Society member 2015–present

Funding & awards

Travel grants

- UCT Conference Travel Grant to attend the 45th Annual SAAB, African Mycological Association (AMA) and SASSB Joint Congress, 2019 (R3,819) 2018

Scholarships & bursaries

- Department of Science and Technology (DST) and National Research Foundation (NRF) Innovation Masters Scholarship (R90,000) 2019
- UCT Masters Research Scholarship (R30,000) 2019
Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of DST-NRF Innovation Masters Scholarship
- UCT Bursary Top Ups (R6,000 total) 2019
from Associate Prof A.M. Muasya, Associate Prof A.G. West and Associate Prof G.A. Verboom
- SAAB MSc Student Bursary (inaugural recipient) (R20,000 p.a.) 2018, 2019
- UCT Dept. 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
- DST-NRF Innovation Honours Scholarship (R60,000) 2017
- SAAB Honours Scholarship (R10,000) 2017
- UCT Council Honours Merit Scholarship (R20,000) 2017
Awarded but not reimbursed due to award of DST-NRF Innovation Honours Scholarship
- UCT Science Faculty Scholarship (R15,000 p.a.) 2015, 2016

Awards & honours

- SASSB Best MSc Presentation, at the 45th Annual SAAB, AMA and SASSB Joint Congress (three-way tie, shared with with Zaynab Shaik (UCT/SANBI) and Devon Main (UJ)) January 2019
- UCT Dean's Merit List 2014–2016
- UCT Dick & Dorothy Borchers Prize for the highest standard in 2nd year biology (R1,000) 2015
- Top of the class at UCT for:
 - 3rd year evolutionary biology 2016
 - 2nd year botany 2015
 - 2nd year zoology 2015
 - 2nd year marine biology 2015
 - 1st year biological diversity 2014

Leadership experience

- Southern African Society for Systematic Biology (SASSB) council member
Student Representative 2019–present
- UCT Dept. of Biological Sciences Postgraduate Committee member October 2018–present
- UCT Departmental Representative for the Dept. of Biological Sciences 2016.
- Class Representative at UCT for:
 - 3rd year evolutionary biology 2016
 - 3rd year ecology 2016

Teaching

- Teaching and field assistant for second year ecology and evolution February 2019–present
 - Convenor: Associate Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)
- Teaching assistant for second year angiosperm diversity practicals October 2018
 - Lecturer: Associate Prof G.A. Verboom (UCT)
- Tutor for second year study design and data analysis for scientists 2017–present
 - Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT)
- Assistant tutor for short course *SEEC-ACCESS Introduction to statistical modelling & data analysis* 18–20 July 2018
 - Organiser: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT)
- Assistant tutor first year R practicals 2016–2018
 - Convenor: Associate Prof R. Altwegg (UCT)
- Hot-seat tutor for first year mathematics for biology, earth and environmental sciences undergraduates 2015
 - Convenor: T. van Heerden (UCT)
 - Hot-seat organiser: Dr R. Moolman (UCT)

Research assistance

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

Workshop & conference attendance

- Presenter at the 45th Annual SAAB, AMA and SASSB Joint Congress 9–11 January 2019
 - First oral presentation:
Environmental turnover predicts plant species richness & turnover,
on my BSc Hons dissertation work and publication in prep. 9 January 2019
 - Second oral presentation:
Larger genome size constrains water-use efficiency and phenology in Cape Schoenoid sedges,
on my MSc work 11 January 2019

- Presenter at *UCT BioDay* 30 November 2018
 - I presented my preliminary results for my MSc on the role of genome size in shaping Cape Schoenoid sedge physiology
- Attendee at *satRday Cape Town* 17 March 2018
- Presenter at workshop *Biodiversity and Environmental Change in the Cape Floristic Region* 24 January 2017
 - with L.M. Wootton
 - We presented a progress report on “Development of soil atlas for the Greater Cape Floristic Region”
 - Organiser: Associate Prof L. Gillson (UCT)
- Attendee at workshop *Spatial Point Process Modelling for Ecological Survey Data with “inlabru”* 11–13 January 2017
 - Instructors: Prof D.L. Borchers, Dr J.B. Illian (CREEM, St Andrews University) and Dr F. Bachl (University of Edinburgh)

Press releases & science communication

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

Skills

- Extended experience with:
 - Apple macOS
 - Microsoft Windows
 - Microsoft Office
 - R, RStudio, RMarkdown and related packages, “tidyverse” packages
 - Git, GitHub
 - Statistical modelling, GIS (in R)
- Fluent in:
 - English
 - Afrikaans
- Animal Ethics Course certified by South African Veterinary Council April 2017
 - Completed as part of BSc Hons general coursework

Miscellaneous

- Open Day volunteer for the Dept. of Biological Sciences 21 April 2018, 22 April 2017
- Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc) member 2017–present
- UCT Wine & Culture Society member 2016–present
- UCT Birding Club member 2016–2017
- Selected to give student feedback for curriculum-restructuring within the Dept. of Biological Sciences August 2016
 - Related to roles as Class/Dept. Representative—see above
 - Selected by: Associate Prof A.G. West (UCT)
- Selected to give student feedback for *Biology: How Life Works* (2nd edition) May 2016
 - Morris et al., 2016. W.H. Freeman & Co., Macmillan Education
 - Selected by: Dr R. Kelly-Laubscher (University College Cork)
- Cape Wine Ambassador qualification 2016

- Conferred by: Clive Torr
- UCT Biological Society member
- Two Oceans Aquarium *Young Biologist* Volunteer

2015
2013–2014

References

- Associate Prof G.A. Verboom tony.verboom@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 3398
 - Dept. of Biological Sciences, UCT
 - Bolus Herbarium, UCT
 - Prof M.D. Cramer michael.cramer@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 2444
 - Dept. of Biological Sciences, UCT
 - Associate Prof A.M. Muasya muthama.muasya@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 3725
 - Head, Dept. of Biological Sciences, UCT
 - Director, Bolus Herbarium, UCT
 - Associate Prof A.G. West adam.west@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 3628
 - Dept. of Biological Sciences, UCT
 - Associate Prof R. Altwegg res.altwegg@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 5750
 - Dept. of Statistical Sciences, UCT
 - Head, Centre for Statistics in Ecology, the Environment and Conservation (SEEC), UCT
 - Prof T.A.J. Hedderson terry.hedderson@uct.ac.za, +27 21 650 4037
 - Dept. of Biological Sciences, UCT
 - Bolus Herbarium, UCT
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