



Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

Department of Wildlife, Fish
and Environmental Studies

Movement activity and space use – what happens with moose when the tourists come?

Behavioral and physiological studies on stress on wild animals are novel and at forefront. Humans gradually encroachment into wild animals' habitats affects animals' ecology and increases the number of human-animal interactions. Yet, we still do not fully understand the anthropogenic impact on the ecology of wild animals. Anthropogenic activities that induces stress in wild animals may influence the sink and source dynamics for those populations, and may even create ecological traps if attractive habitats provide higher stress levels. In wild animals, anthropogenic activities affect behavior (e.g., space, use, movement activity, and thus energetic expenditures).

Concrete examples are the island Öland in southern Sweden (latitude 57) and Nikkaluokta in the far north (latitude 67), near Kebnekaise. Both areas experience intensive seasonal touristic activities; in summer on Öland and in winter in Nikkaluokta. To study the possible ecological impact of those peaks in anthropogenic activity on free-ranging moose, we are therefore looking for a student who is interested in analyzing moose movement behavior, space use, and habitat selection in relation to touristic activity on Öland and/or in Nikkaluokta. The student will use the existing dataset on moose GPS-positions and will link them to digital maps about landscape features, as well as to data on touristic activity as an index of the intensity of anthropogenic activity in the area.

Requirements: A motivated student that has good knowledge in GIS, R and statistics. The project will be a desk-based study. The project is expected to generate a peer viewed publication in an international journal.

Extent: 60 or 30 credits

Supervisor: Wiebke Neumann

To apply: please send a letter of interest to Wiebke Neumann (Wiebke.Neumann@slu.se) explaining your suitability for the project.