Title of the training period:

Taxonomic and functional composition of ant communities along a Mediterranean altitudinal gradient

Keywords:

Altitudinal gradients, ants, community ecology, functional traits

Summary:

The trainee will:

- (1) compile a data base of the ant species that could be found in the center of the Iberian peninsula, to develop a (1a) list of the potential species that could be found in the sampling that will follow after the trainee's work, and (1b) a list of their main functional traits and (1c) their phylogenetic relationship (or at least a rough guide on this).
- (2) help to develop working hypotheses on the distribution of both those species and their functional traits and phylogenetic relationships along the altitudinal gradient, according to the relevant knowledge on ecological biogeography (particularly on niche conservancy).
- (3) by perusing scientific papers, grey literature (local reports, zoological records) and browsing web-based resources (such as GBIF, biodiversidad virtual, AIM web).
- (4) Also, the trainee will help with the actual sampling of the ant species, which includes (4a) doing field work to set and recover pitfall traps and (4b) help to handle the samples to both conserve and identify the specimens in the laboratory.

Activities (1) to (3) are expected to be done during March to May, while activity (4) will be done in May to July.

Two references bibliographics:


Technique developed:

- Sampling with pitfall traps (for terrestrial insects)
- Qualitative meta-analysis

Particular skills required:

- Language skills (both Spanish [reading, speaking] and English [reading])
- Best if having driver's license