

Out- of- School experience "Biology of alpine organisms": a concept for a week- long field excursion for secondary School."

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In cooperation with the Naturpark Kaunergrat a program and a handbook for a week-long fieldtrip for students of secondary school has been designed. It is a modular program which includes flora, fauna and ecological topics concerning the alpine region. There is no central-European habitat which displays the geological and ecological relations as well as high- altitude mountain. In the program the students get to know adaptations of animals and plants to the alpine environment and learn how species survive even in the nival zone. They learn about the characteristic species and typical plant communities of the high mountain region. In addition, the students get familiar with general ecological concepts. The method of enquiry- based learning is applied, so that the students are introduced in scientific research methods. They learn to use simple methods of collecting and evaluating data, such as measuring climate data measurements to understand the hypsometric changes, plant mapping by using advanced field guides, working with pit- fall traps for the epigaic species or using the transect methods to analyze the biodiversity in birds, butterflies and bumblebees.

Working outside in the field and practicing scientific methods are memorable experiences and the learned contents have a higher significance for the students.

The handbook is provided for the employees of the Naturpark Kaunergrat and enables them to use different modules in an independent way and in different constellations.