

Herbivory Network Meeting 2016

The Herbivory Network is a collaborative research initiative that investigates the role of herbivory in Arctic and alpine ecosystems (<http://herbivory.biology.ualberta.ca>). The HN was established in 2014, as the first global initiative to start coordinated research on this topic. The goal of HN is to foster collaborations within and across disciplines, to facilitate multi-site comparisons, and to assist in understanding the complexity and variability of responses of tundra ecosystems to herbivory.

The upcoming Herbivory Network 2016 meeting (September 15-16, 2016) will consolidate what began as a grass-roots initiative, and will establish strategies for enhancing steering, coordination and research collaboration within the network. The meeting will provide an overview of activities developed so far, discuss research priorities and define new initiatives of interest to the Arctic research community. We especially welcome ideas for new collaborative projects and strengthening ongoing efforts.

Context

Ongoing changes in the composition of plant and herbivore communities are likely to have a large impact on the dynamics of Arctic and alpine ecosystems and their ability to respond to changes, including social, cultural and economic interactions with people living in these environments. Beyond its ecological relevance, herbivory is an important topic for many northern communities, as the main Arctic herbivores are herded (e.g. reindeer), tended as livestock (e.g. sheep) or hunted (e.g. caribou, geese and ptarmigan). The knowledge gained and methods developed in the Herbivory Network will ultimately benefit land use management and conservation around the Arctic.

Aims of the meeting

The objectives of this 1.5-day meeting are:

- ✓ To form strategies for steering and research collaboration within the network;
- ✓ To establish research priorities for the network and a strategic research plan;
- ✓ To strengthen ongoing projects and initiatives and launch new collaborative projects, through the organisation of parallel thematic workshops.

Expected outcomes

This meeting will bring together relevant experts from different Arctic and alpine regions and connect researchers with different backgrounds and expertise, in order to consolidate the Herbivory Network. The meeting will strengthen ongoing research activities (e.g. updated drafts of the pellet count study, study designs in herbivory and background invertebrate herbivory project) and promote new initiatives (e.g. development and implementation of a soil protocol trial, and coordinated data collection for analysing the chemical composition of vertebrate herbivore diets), and will lead to the development of an implementation strategy plan for the Herbivory Network.

CALL FOR WORKSHOP PROPOSALS



In addition to general discussions, the meeting will host thematic workshops led by experts on each topic. 2 and 3 hour slots are available on Friday September 16. The workshops will split participants into smaller working groups according to their interests and expertise. A summary of the activities of each working group will be presented to the larger group at the end of the meeting. If you are interested in organizing a workshop, please contact us at herbivory.network@gmail.com by **April 15, 2016**

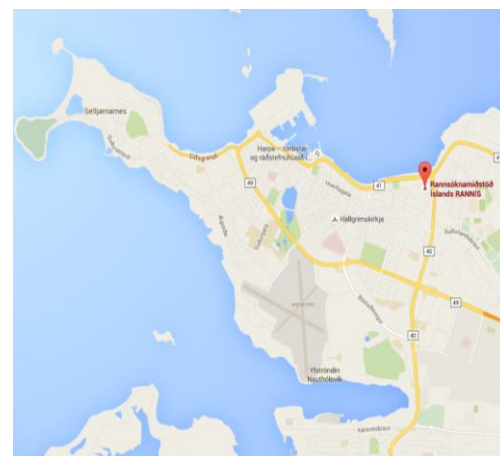
Preliminary agenda

Thursday Sept 15, 2016	
15:00-15:15	Welcome and roundtable introductions
15:15-16:30	Overview and update of ongoing projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITEX herbivory protocol (Ingibjörg Svala Jónsdóttir) • Measuring vertebrate herbivore loads in tundra -- pellet counts (Virve Ravolainen) • Study designs in herbivory (Virve Ravolainen) • Background invertebrate herbivory (Sarah Rheubottom) • Herbivore diversity follow-up projects (Isabel C Barrio)
16:30-17:00	Coffee break
17:00-18:00	HN strategy and workplan – overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies for steering and organization of the network • Strategic research plan
Friday Sept 16, 2016	
9:00-12:00	Parallel workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil working group (led by Maria Väisänen, Maria Tuomi and Guillermo Bueno) • Chemical composition of vertebrate herbivore diet (led by Jennifer Forbey) • <i>[open for other topics]</i>
12:00-13:00	Lunch
13:00-15:00	Parallel workshops – continued or new topics, as required (max 3 parallel sessions)
15:00-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-16:30	Summaries of workshops and general discussion
16:30-17:30	HN strategy and workplan – discussion
17:30-18:00	Concluding remarks and further steps

Dates, venue and registration

The meeting will be organized in **Reykjavík, 15-16 September 2016**, following the conference *Grazing in a Changing Nordic Region* (<http://www.nordicgrazing2016.org/>). The HN meeting will be hosted by Rannís (6th floor, Borgartún 30, 105 Reykjavík).

Registration is **2,500 ISK** to cover lunch and coffee, and documentation. Dates and procedure for registration will be announced shortly. If you are interested in attending the meeting, please send us a line at herbivory.network@gmail.com. Meeting participants are expected to pay their own travel costs; however, a contribution for costs for early-career scientists and students has been requested.



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