

Prof. Dr. Thomas Schmitt



Research Interests

My main research interests are the dynamics of distribution ranges as well as ecology, evolution and conservation biology. As model organisms, I mostly use butterflies and burnet moths, but also other insect groups as well as occasionally scorpions, amphibians, reptiles or plants. In my research, I try to understand the influence of Pleistocene climatic fluctuations but also other geological events on the distribution dynamics of different biogeographical groups with a focus on Europe and the Mediterranean, but also the entire Eurasian continent. In addition, my group analyses the biology of butterfly species and the ecology of communities by intensive field studies, just around the corner in Brandenburg, but also in remote places like forest fragments in East Africa or the Arctic. These data allow important conclusions how to mitigate the prevailing decline of insects. My research is based on intensive work in the field applying a larger set of techniques, molecular analyses, and modelling.

Professional Experience

- Since 2021 Director Senckenberg German Entomological Institute Müncheberg and University Professor of Entomology and Biogeography (W3) in Potsdam
- 2014 - 2021 Director Senckenberg German Entomological Institute Müncheberg and University Professor of Entomology (W3) in Halle (Saale)
- 2009 - 2014 University Professor of Molecular Biogeography (W2) in Trier
- 2003 - 2009 Junior Professor of Molecular Biogeography (W1) in Trier
- 1999 - 2003 Postdoc in Mainz and Trier
- 1996 - 1999 PhD (Zoology) in Mainz
- 1989 - 1996 Studies of Biology and Romanistics in Saarbrücken and Lisbon