

# Island Ecology: Natural History of the Azores

Summer field course 2-30 June 2018  
(limited enrollment, application deadline 30 March)

## Summary:

A 4 week, 3-credit course for students of all disciplines who are interested in environmental studies and island ecology. The course will include a substantial field component and introduce the geology, biology, and oceanography of this unique biogeographic zone consisting of volcanic islands and the surrounding marine



*Field work in the rocky intertidal zone*

environment. Designed for students of any major, with no prerequisites, small group projects will allow students with different levels of scientific preparation to work on simpler or more complex projects to challenge themselves.

Taught in English at the main campus of University of the Azores (UAç) in Ponta Delgada on the island of São Miguel, it is designed to complement the concurrent course *Azorean History, Literature and Culture*. Portuguese language training is also available at beginner and intermediate levels.



*Coastal cliffs showing sequence of lava flows*

The Azores are lush, volcanic islands located on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge in open ocean waters between Portugal and the United States and provide an astonishing variety of interesting environments in a small region, including exposed and protected rocky and sandy beaches, shallow and deep waters, hydrothermal features, coastal plains and steep volcanic slopes with lakes and dense forests. The islands have been called the "Galapagos of the Atlantic", and they harbor a variety of endemic species. The region is an excellent model system for teaching concepts of adaptation, biogeography, and biodiversity, as well as geology and plate tectonics.



*Corn being cooked in boiling water at one of the island geothermal features*

Lead instructor Dr. Erik Zettler has done research and taught field courses in oceanography, biology, and geology for over 20 years, and this program will also incorporate local experts from the faculty at University of the Azores. In addition to lectures and discussions, the program will include numerous field trips to a variety of habitats from seashore to the mountains, including an overnight trip to the island of Santa Maria to explore differences between islands. Laboratory sessions will provide opportunities to catalog and describe in more detail what we see and collect in the field.



*Students explore the geology and biology of an underground lava tube cave*

*Ecology of the Azores Islands* is a 6 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System; 3 US credits equivalent) course accredited by UAç as part of SiPN (the "Study in Portugal Network"). It can be taken alone or integrated with one of two

concurrently offered courses:

"Azorean Literature, History and Culture" (also in English)

"Portuguese Language" (beginner and intermediate levels available)

Costs (includes tuition, lodging, field trips, and fees)

\$2800 for 1 course (3 credits)

\$3550 for 2 courses (6 credits)

Lodging is in a modern hostel across the street from the University campus, and a low-cost meal plan is available at the University.

To learn more about SiPN and apply, see: <http://www.studyinportugalnwork.com/academics/> -select "Build Your Program", then "Build Your Summer", and scroll down to "SiPN June Summer Programs in the Azores, Sao Miguel Island". For any questions about this course please contact lead instructor Dr. Erik Zettler ([erik.zettler@nioz.nl](mailto:erik.zettler@nioz.nl)) directly.

**\*Limited scholarships are available; apply directly to instructor [erik.zettler@nioz.nl](mailto:erik.zettler@nioz.nl)\***