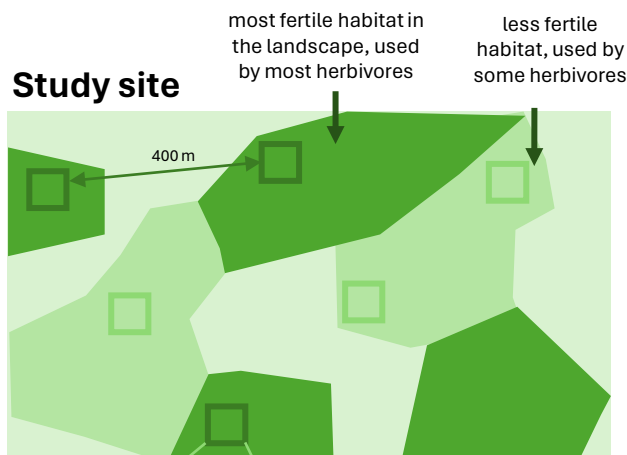


Observational study protocol overview

Study site



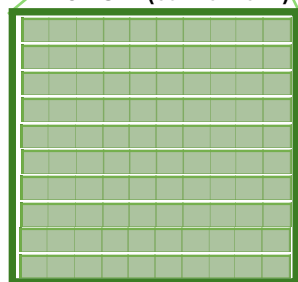
Sampling using this protocol will be conducted **once** (i.e. no need for permanent marking of plots) during the **peak of the growing season**

1. Select two common habitat types at your study site (one habitat is used by most herbivores, the other used by some herbivores)

2. Select three patches in each habitat

- patches (ca. 10x10 m) should be relatively homogeneous, and ideally ca. 400 m apart

Patch (ca. 10x10 m)

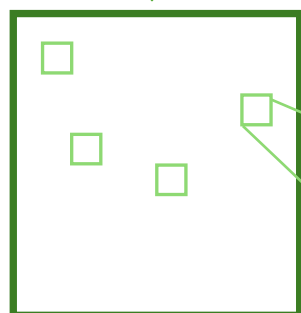


3. Estimate herbivore diversity at the patch level

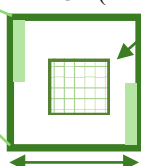
- set up ten 10 m transects, side by side (covering an area ca. 10 x 10 m)
- each transect has 10 1m² plots
- record **presence/absence** of pellets of large and small herbivores and other signs of herbivore activity in each 1m² plot (take up to 10 sec to look for pellets of large herbivores, 10 sec for pellets of small herbivores and 10 sec for other signs of herbivory)
- collect ca. 3 g of pellets of each herbivore species detected in the patch (as fresh as possible); keep pellets in a coffee filter, inside a Ziploc bag with silica gel.

4. Estimate plant biomass (and composition) at the plot level

- select randomly 4 homogenous 1 m² plots within your patch
- harvest biomass in **two** 10 x 50 cm strips along the edges of the four plots; keep each strip in a separate, labelled paper bag
- [OPTIONAL: assess plant community composition with a 25 point intercept frame in the middle of the plot]



Plot (1x1m)



point intercept frame (if doing plant community composition)

biomass harvest strips

5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 for each patch

6. Prepare samples for shipping

- **Oven-dry plant biomass harvests** (60°C, 48h); if you do not have access to an oven, air dry as much possible so that samples do not mould and let us know.
- If you have access to a scale, please weigh the biomass samples.
- If you have access to a ball mill, please grind ca. 10 g of the pooled biomass samples for each patch.
- Make sure **pellets are as dry as possible** (check and replace silica gel as needed; silica gel can be regenerated in an oven 120°C for 1hr).
- **Enter the data** into the database; make **copies of the field sheets** and include them in your package.
- **Send the package no later than September 2024** to:

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