

## Valais Excursion on 12 – 13 June 2020

**The 1½ day full excursion is leading us from Zurich to the canton Valais, into the center of the Swiss Alps, providing an insight into the extreme environmental conditions and functions of Alpine forest ecosystems.**

On Friday 12 June, we will travel by bus from Zurich to the Long-term Irrigation Experiment within the Pine forest nature reserve Pfyn.

On the nearby [ICP Forests Level II plot Visp](#), *Pinus sylvestris* is heavily affected by drought, leading to tree mortality up to over 50% since 1996.



Figure 1. View on the Pine forest nature reserve Pfyn, located on a debris cone (Foto: Schmitt, WSL)

At the [Long-term Irrigation Experiment in Pfyn Forest](#), the natural precipitation of approx. 700 mm is doubled on 4 replicates since 2003 to investigate drought effects on *Pinus sylvestris* and gain a better understanding of the pine decline.



Figure 3. Nature Reserve Center Villa Cassel (Foto: ©Pro Natura Zentrum Aletsch)

On Saturday 13 June, we will take the cable car to Riederalp, located at 1'925 m a.s.l., in the center of the [UNESCO World Heritage](#), the Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch. We will visit the [Nature Reserve Center Villa Cassel](#), enjoy a splendid view on the [Aletsch, the largest Alpine glacier](#) and hike through one of the oldest high alpine forests, the [Aletsch Forest](#). The development of the stone pine (*Pinus cembra*) forest under climate change and the harsh environmental conditions will be discussed.



Figure 2. Irrigation system of the Long-term Irrigation Experiment in Pfyn Forest. (Foto: M. Schaub)



Figure 4. View on the Aletsch glacier from the Aletsch Forest (Foto: ©Pro Natura Zentrum Aletsch)



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## Programme

### Friday 12 June

13:00 Departure from WSL Birmensdorf by bus (ca. 3.5 hrs)  
WSL – Brünig – Interlaken – Lötschberg tunnel (car transport) – Leuk  
17:00 **Long-term Irrigation Experiment Pfyn forest**  
19:00 [Golfhotel Riederhof](#), Riederalp

### Saturday 13 June 2020

07:30 Departure from Brig  
Brig – Mörel (cable car) – Riederalp – ½ hour walk to – Villa Cassel  
08:30 **Aletsch Forest**  
12:00 **Villa Cassel**  
Villa Cassel – ½ hour walk – Riederalp (cable car) – Mörel  
15:00 **ICP Forests Level II plot, Visp**  
16:00 Anticipated Departure from Visp to Zürich  
20:00 Arrival Zurich main station



Figure 6. One of 9 scaffolds in Pfyn forest, allowing access to the top of the canopy for intensive measurements (Foto: C. Hug)

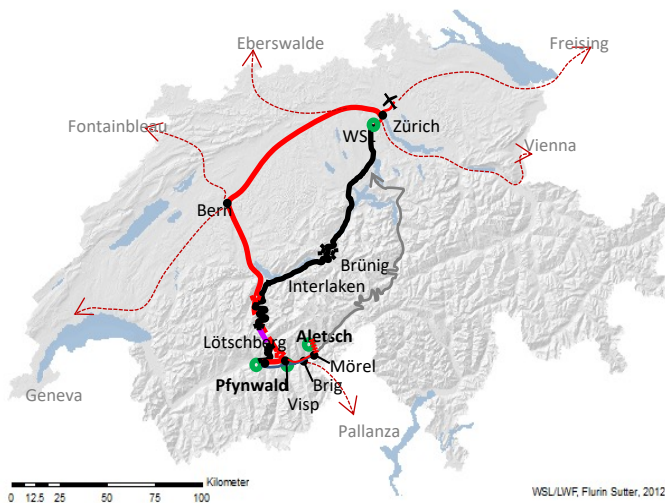


Figure 5. Map of excursion from WSL Birmensdorf into the Valais

## Mandatory equipment

- Solid and water proof hiking boots. No sneakers! We will walk through snow!
- Backpack with extra cloths, rain coat, rain pants, sun protection utilities, your own drinking bottle, specific personal first aid utilities. The weather may be cold and eventually rainy.
- Separate luggage for overnight stay in hotel.

## Travelling options & costs

The places for the excursion are limited to max. 20 participants. For costs, covering transportation with WSL buses, hotel (shared rooms) and meals, we offer the following options ([see registration](#)):

- A. All inclusive, regular: CHF 200.-
- B. All inclusive, students: CHF 100.-

## Contact

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