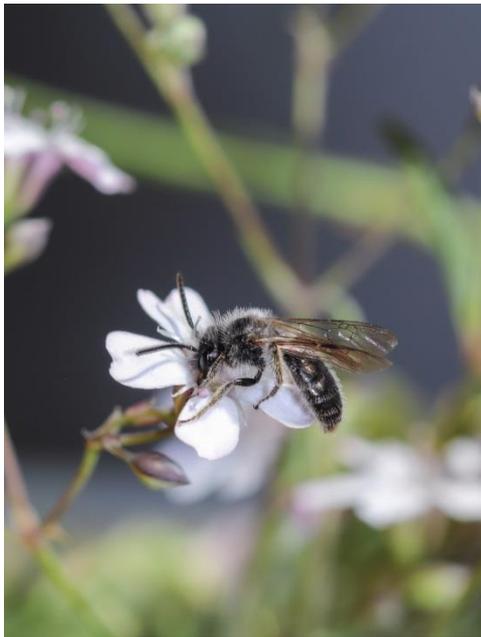


A new wild bee from the Alps, species of the year of the Swiss Systematics Society



Although much of the biodiversity still to be discovered is hidden in the tropics, new species are still being described from Europe. This is the case in *Andrena amieti*, the species chosen as an emblem by the Swiss Systematics Society (SSS) in 2020. This wild bee, described last year by Christophe Praz of the University of Neuchâtel and his colleagues from Zurich and France, belongs to the large genus *Andrena*, or mining bees, which includes more than 1,300 species. *Andrena amieti* is a high-altitude bee distributed over the entire Alpine arc, in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France and Italy. Adults are active from early spring to autumn, with two successive generations. Surprisingly, this species is widely distributed and common in the Alps. How could it have gone unnoticed despite more than 100 years of systematic work on bees in Central Europe? The answer probably comes from the fact that this species can be considered "cryptic": only the combination of genetic tools and morphological study has

facilitated this discovery. "*Andrena amieti* is only the tip of the iceberg" concludes Christophe Praz, and at least 5 new species still had to be described in this group in the rest of Europe. At a time when pesticides and the degeneration of natural habitats threaten not only wild bees, but insect species in general, the SSS joins the discoverers of *Andrena amieti* in suggesting that the taxonomic research on our fauna is in need of additional resources.

For more information on *Andrena amieti* : Dr. Christophe Praz, InfoFauna, Neuchâtel. Tel : 032 718 31 48, christophe.praz@unine.ch

Photo legend (free of rights with mention of the author) :

Andrena amieti , species of the year 2020 of the SSS © Christophe Praz

For more information on theSSS : see text below and the website www.swiss-systematics.ch

Contacts : Email : swissystematics@yahoo.com

Dr Seraina Klopstein (Deutsche Schweiz). Naturhistorisches Museum Basel. Tel : 061 266 55 80, seraina.klopstein@bs.ch

Dr Alice Cibois (suisse romande). Muséum d'histoire naturelle de la ville de Genève. Tel : 022 418 63 02, alice.cibois@ville-ge.ch

About the SSS:

Since 2005 the Swiss Systematics Society (SSS) brings together researchers who study the diversity of living things, a science called systematics. Its purpose is to make an inventory of all animal and plant species (extant and extinct, including fossil species), to describe them, to give them a name and classify them, and to study their relationships over time (phylogeny) and in space (biogeography). The SSS presents on its web pages the list of species described by researchers working in Swiss institutions since 2015: [New Species Switzerland](#).

The SSS is a member of the Biology Platform of the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences.