

25th Workshop on Sawflies, Cerová vrchovina Highland, Slovakia

Dear sawfly enthusiasts,

We invite you to the traditional meeting of entomologists dedicated to this beautiful group of Hymenoptera. After many years, we are returning to Slovakia, which, in the heart of Europe, is home to an impressive array of plant and insect biodiversity. In this cover letter, you will find all the basic information you need to prepare for your trip to the venue.

When: April 27 – May 5, 2026

The event begins on Monday, and you may arrive at the venue on Sunday, April 26, or join the group on Monday. We understand that many of you are traveling from afar, and we will be happy to assist with your transfer upon request.

Where: The Cerová vrchovina Highland in the southern part of central Slovakia.

Why: The site is part of a unique volcanic region, often called a "geological open-air museum." The area features well-preserved volcanic cones, carved craters, and lava flows (Pohanský hrad). The forested landscape, covering over 60% of the territory, consists mainly of thermophilic oak forests with rich flora (approx. 1,250 species) and rare rocky steppes. All these landscape features have been preserved in a mosaic of cultural landscapes, where people still practice traditional farming. The various transitional stages of biotopes thus offer biodiversity levels found in only a few remaining places in Central Europe. Sawflies are poorly known in the area, but recent studies by A. Balázs and A. Haris indicate that it hosts diverse fauna, including rarities like *Pseudocephaleia praeteritorum* (Semenov, 1934).

How to get here:

The area is quite remote from main highways and airports (Bratislava, Košice, and Budapest). We recommend either renting or using a car. The main venue is located in **Jesenské**.

If you are traveling by car, use this address:

Ascona Club, Poľná 344, 980 02 Jesenské, Slovakia

[Ascona club reštaurácia](#) 48.30408, 20.069272

Public transport connections from Bratislava:

Train from Bratislava to Zvolen at 5:52, 7:52, 9:52, 11:52, 13:52, and from Zvolen to Jesenské at 9:30, 11:30, 13:30, 15:30, and 17:30

Where to find accommodation:

The region offers a limited selection of accommodation. However, here is a list of places we recommend, mainly for their reasonable prices and convenient access (short distances) to field trip locations.

The main accommodation option is **Ascona Club in Jesenské** (see above for details). Capacity is 24 people. There is a restaurant on site that includes breakfast with the accommodation, a lunch menu, and the option to order dinner in the evening. Guests may stay and sit until 8:00 pm, or a bit longer if beer is being served. Accommodation prices range from €24 to €42 per room per night, depending on the number of guests and the number of beds. Seven rooms with three beds are available.

Link in Slovak:

<https://www.uby.sk/ascona-club-restauracia-a-penzion-jesenske-okres-rimavska-sobota--2>

This site is not on Booking.com, so let me know if you would like to stay there.

We have reserved 21 beds.

Optional accommodation in Jesenské and nearby:

<https://www.booking.com/Share-6pH03bb>

<https://www.booking.com/Share-U0FGAn>

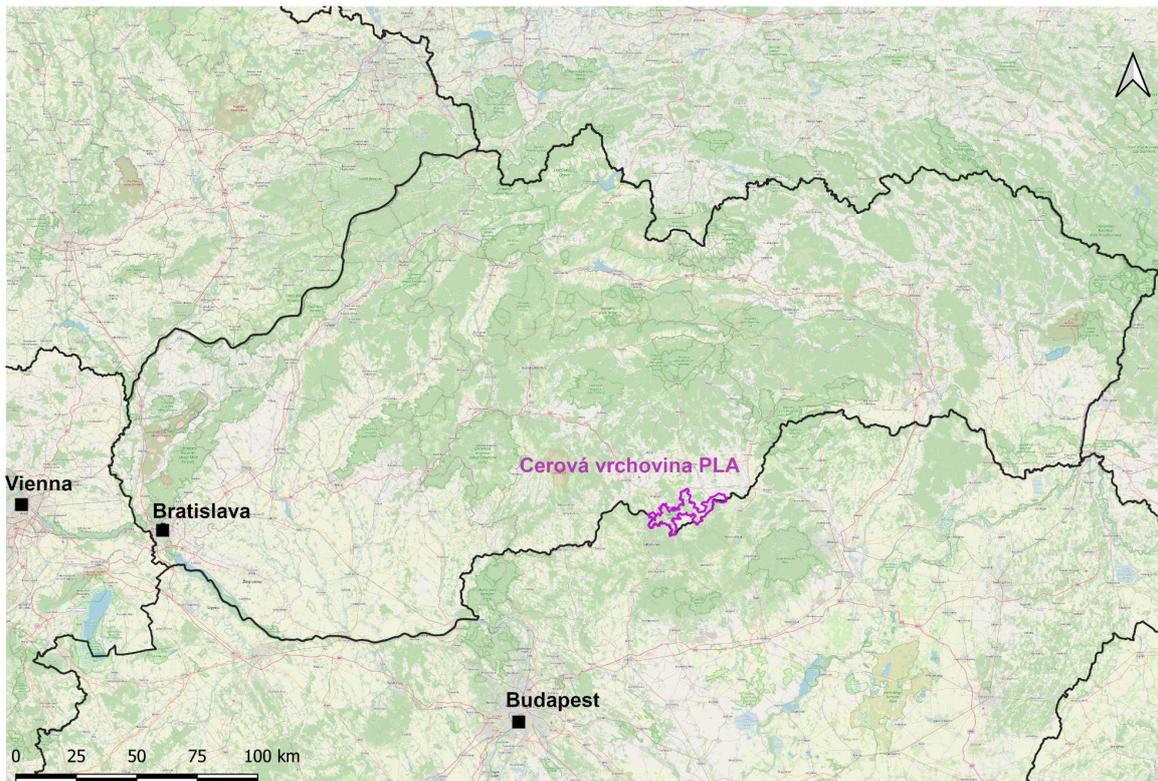
<https://www.booking.com/Share-bPu3zb>

<https://www.booking.com/Share-V7UrDK>

What we need from you in advance, immediately after you book accommodation:

1. Please let us know if you require a seminar booklet, proceedings, or other workshop reports to support your business trip.
2. This workshop is typically dedicated to field trips and informal discussions. Stereomicroscopes will be available to assist with sawfly identification. Please let us know if you are interested in giving a lecture.
3. To facilitate access to the field trip sites, please let us know if you will be coming by car and how many participants you can transport between the sites.

Location of 25th Workshop on Sawflies:



What places will we visit?

Together, we will visit a variety of locations where pastures, light forests, wet meadows, and xerothermic meadows grow on different substrates. We will mainly visit the areas around Jesenské, Chrámec, Drňa, and Hajnáčka. All locations are within approximately 20 minutes by car from the Ascona Club accommodation.





Views of the scenic landscape of the Cerová vrchovina Highlands. A pasture with various microhabitats at the Beležír site (above) and an interesting biotope with European ground squirrels at the Jesenské site (below).





The dynamic sandstone landscape in the eastern part of Cerová vrchovina contains various vegetation types within relatively narrow basins (see above), resulting in higher biodiversity in a small area. Watercourses with riparian vegetation of willows and alders, or inundated grasslands, are typically found at the bottom of the basins, surrounded by intensively grazed mesophilic pastures. Extensive or recently abandoned pastures with xerothermic steppe grasslands on steeper slopes form a mosaic of different successional stages dominated by junipers, blackthorns, and hawthorns, or represent the early phase of Turkey oak or downy oak forests and forest steppes (see below).



We hope we have sparked your interest in this meeting and look forward to seeing you in Slovakia.

Organisers