

Péter Szabó

Institute of Botany, Czech Academy of Sciences

A historian by training, P. Szabó has been working at the Institute of Botany of the Czech Academy of Sciences since 2008. His work mainly focuses on Central European forests (and people working in and thinking about those forests) within the frameworks of historical ecology and environmental history. Between 2012-2016 he led the interdisciplinary project LONGWOOD (www.longwood.cz), financed by the European Research Council (ERC), which studied the history of Czech forests through the past eight millennia. In 2017-2019 he served as the President of the European Society for Environmental History (ESEH).

Historical ecology: why and how to connect the natural sciences and the humanities

This presentation will focus on historical ecology as a tool to bridge the divide between the humanities and the natural sciences. I will explain what historical ecology is, what sources and methods it uses and why historical knowledge matters in ecological research. I will use some examples from my own research to illustrate the theoretical framework presented. I will then shortly describe the history of historical ecology and round the presentation up with describing current developments in historical ecological research.