



Workshop 6: Introduction to Diatoms of Forensic Importance

12 – 15 May 2026

TalTech – Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn, Estonia

Särghauer – Earth Science Centre

This four-day workshop provides an introduction to diatoms with a focus on their relevance in forensic investigations. The programme combines lectures, hands-on sampling, practical workshops, and field activities, offering participants both theoretical knowledge and applied experience in a natural setting.



Tallinn University of Technology



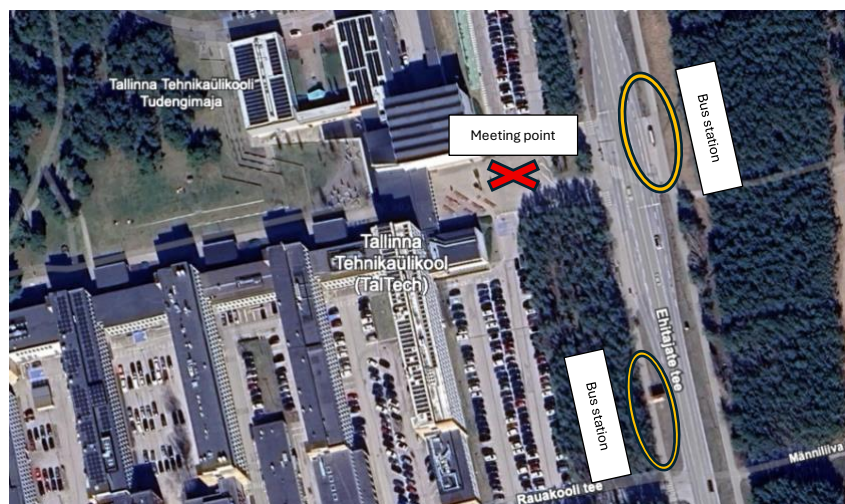
Särghaua Earth Science Centre

Programme Overview

Tuesday, 12 May 2026

Location: Tallinn University of Technology (Ehitajate tee 5, Tallinn, Estonia)

- 08:45 - Meeting at the car park in front of Tallinn University of Technology (main entrance) (<https://maps.app.goo.gl/uBRr8TRoham8zCMu7>)



Aerial view of Tallinn University of Technology showing the meeting point and bus station

- 9:00 - Departure/Transfer to Särghaua (Särghaua, Kurgja village, Pärnumaa)
- 11:00 - Arrival in Särghaua, room allocation and introduction to the location
→ Welcome snacks and chat
- 12:30 - Lunch
- 13:30 - Welcome talk (Atko Heinsalu)
- 13:45 - Lecture: Merle Dorsch, TalTech: *Introduction to the World of Diatoms*
- 14:15 - Atko Heinsalu, TalTech: *Diatoms as indicators in fisheries-related crimes*
- 14:45 – Representative of Estonian Forensic Science Institute
- 15:30 - Coffee break
- 16:15 - Sirje Sildever, TalTech: *What Can DNA Tell Us About Diatoms? (via Teams)*
- 17:00 - River sampling, preparation of samples for diatom analysis
- 18:30 - Dinner



Wednesday, 13 May 2026

Location: Särghaua, Estonia

- 09:30 - Breakfast
- 10:30 - Philippe Lunetta, University of Turku: *Corpses Found in Water: Medico-Legal Investigations*
- 11:30 - Jan Weckström, University of Helsinki: *Diatoms and Other Siliceous Microorganisms as Forensic Tools*
- 12:30 - Lunch
- 13:30 - Preparation of samples for diatom analysis, online microscopy
- 15:30 - Coffee break
- 16:15 - Guided walk through the surrounding area
- 18:30 - Dinner

Thursday, 14 May 2026

Location: Särghaua, Estonia

- 09:30 - Breakfast
- 10:30 - Cleaning rooms/packing bags
- 12:00 - Departure back to Tallinn
- 14:00 - Arrival at the Institute of Geology, TalTech

Friday, 15 May 2026

Location: To be announced

- 11:00 - Guided tour of Tallinn Old Town (approx. 1.5h)



What to bring

- Rainwear: waterproof jacket and sturdy footwear
- Anti-Mosquito spray
- Swimwear (sauna available), warm clothes (might still be cold in May)
- Personal equipment
- Equipment to take notes (if you want)
- Spare shoes etc. (you'll need to take off your outdoor ones in the lecture room)

General information: Accommodation, Catering and Transport

- Accommodation will be provided during the stay in Särghaua
No accommodation needs to be booked for the nights from 12–14 May 2026
 - Participants will be accommodated in shared rooms; bed linen and towels are included
- Catering will be provided as follows (vegan option available):
 - 12 May: lunch and dinner
 - 13 May: breakfast, lunch and dinner
 - 14 May: breakfast
- Transport from Tallinn to Särghaua and back will be organised
- The guided Old Town tour in Tallinn (Friday, 15 May) is free of charge