

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 43 (2016)
Heft: 5

Vorwort: When the sky is lost to us
Autor: Lehtinen, Marko

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 22.01.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

- 5 Mailbag
- 6 Focus
Fighting light pollution with a star park
- 10 Economy
Brexit's impact on Switzerland
- 12 Politics
Geneva fights for international organisations
The new power constellation in the Federal Palace
Nuclear power vote of 27 November
- 17 Literature series
Jürg Federspiel in New York

News from around the world
- 18 Culture
An interview with Lovebugs singer Adrian Sieber
- 20 Area for the Swiss Abroad
The meeting point in Brunnen
- 22 OSA news
- 25 news.admin.ch
- 28 Images
Tinguely's musical works of art
- 30 Books
Alberto Nessi
- 30 Sounds
Peter Schärli Trio
- 31 Echo
- 31 Top Pick

When the sky is lost to us



I can vividly recall the most star-lit sky of my life. We were travelling in a rickety night bus in the high plains of Bolivia when our vehicle broke down around 3 am in the middle of nowhere. We used the involuntary break to exercise our legs. And there it was: the most remarkable star-lit sky I had ever seen. We stood in the absolute darkness of the night-time wilderness while a sea of stars, the likes of which we

had only known from melodramatic Steven Spielberg movies, stretched out above us.

When I look at the sky at home on a clear night, I can undoubtedly see a few bright stars and may even be able to make out something that resembles the Milky Way. But in contrast to the firmament in the wilds of Bolivia, it is a misty haze. Admittedly, I live close to a light-filled city. Yet even in the Swiss nature the view of the night sky does not compare with the incredible beauty of the skies above the Andes.

My recollection is not clouded. Densely populated Switzerland is now so flooded with light that the stars can only be seen in their full splendour in the most remote corners of the country. This is illustrated by a recent light pollution map produced by an organisation called Dark Sky Switzerland. And it is not just stargazers and astronomers who have started campaigning to protect the night and the right to darkness in recent years. Medical science has now also identified the consequences that permanent light pollution can have on people's health.

So there is much more to it than simply the beauty of the night. I am, however, very much looking forward to the latest Swiss initiative in the fight for darkness. The Gantrisch Nature Park in the foothills of the Bernese Alps – an exceptionally dark spot in the Swiss landscape – is to become the nation's first certified star park. The International Dark Sky Association has already declared 37 regions worldwide official oases of darkness. To these a Swiss one will be added shortly. And I will be one of the first people to pay this park a night-time visit in the hope of again seeing a star-lit sky like the one in Bolivia.

MARKO LEHTINEN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Cover photo:
Adrian Sieber of Lovebugs
(Photo: Keystone)