CONGRATULATIONS

Ashley Jones, Benjamin Schwessinger (Schwessinger group, PS), Scott Ferguson (Borevitz group, PS), Jo Birch (University of Melbourne), and Todd McLay (Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria) have been awarded $25K in Bioplatforms sequencing funds from the Genomics for Australian Plants initiative to sequence the genome of the grasstree Xanthorrhoea australis. Also, Jemimah Hamilton, Ashley Jones, Ben Schwessinger (Schwessinger group, PS) Pieter Arnold, and Adrienne Nicotra (Nicotra group, E&E) have been awarded another $25K in Bioplatforms sequencing funds to sequence the genome of the bluebell Wahlenbergia ceracea. Ashley Jones and Benjamin Schwessinger will also be collaborating with Rose Andrews (University of New England) on Phebalium stellatum, which was also awarded $25K. The initiative aims to develop genomics resources to enhance our understanding of the evolution and conservation of the unique Australian flora.

Plant-based vaccine research collaboration


A new research collaboration between CEAT and Medicago R&D Inc., aims to develop new methods and tools to non-invasively monitor the growth and performance of plants used in the production of Virus-Like Particles (VLPs). This research will help to optimise the biotechnology for plant-based vaccine development. A five-year collaboration agreement between ANU and Medicago has been signed, consisting of multiple projects, starting with a $1M project to take place over 14 months.

In this initial project, the APPF’s Plant Phenomics Group at ANU – including Tim Brown and Richard Poire-Lassus (Brown group, PS) - is contributing its full range of facilities and expertise in phenomics, bioinformatics, and data visualisation, as well as access to state-of-the-art equipment and infrastructure such as hyperspectral scanning, and sophisticated controlled environment growth chambers.

Bridge Hub Water Challenge Team

The ‘AquaporinSolutions’ team, consisting of Group Leader Caitlin Byrt, Annamaria De Rosa and Samantha McGaughey (PS), is one of just eight Australian and New Zealand teams selected from 100 applicants to participate in the Bridge Hub 2020 Water Challenge. The team is in contention for a share of up to $250K in prize money and investment. Read more in this CEAT article.

Cal Bryant (PhD student, Ball group, PS) was awarded a Holsworth Wildlife Research Endowment ($6.37K) from the Ecological Society of Australia (ESA) for the project, ‘Death follows – processes of drought-induced tree mortality’.

New orchid field guide

Tobias Hayashi (Peakall group, E&E), along with colleagues Jean Egan and Roger Farrow, have recently published a photographic field guide, entitled ‘Field Guide to the Orchids of the Southern Tablelands of NSW, including the ACT’. The book covers all 181 species of native orchid found in the greater Canberra region. In mid-October, Tobias and Jean led several orchid walks on Black Mountain to showcase some of the incredible native orchid diversity to the general public - read more in his blog with photos of the Black Mountain orchids.

PHDS SUBMITTED

Eve Cooper (Kruuk group, E&E). ‘The age-old question: evolutionary causes & ecological consequences of ageing in the wild’.
PHDS APPROVED

Christiana McDonald-Spicer (Moritz group, E&E). Refugia in the Australian Monsoonal Tropics: stability and what it means for northern Australian lizards.

Jessica Fenker Antunes (Moritz group, E&E). Evolution of reptile diversity in tropical savannas - a study across scales and continents.

OUTREACH

National Press Club presentation

On the 29th of September, Caitlin Byrt (PS) was in a panel presenting at the National Press Club, as part of the launch of The Official Reference Guide to Agricultural Biotechnology and GM Crops. Caitlin’s talk was entitled ‘Welcome to the Agricultural Biotechnology and GM Crops.’

FAREWELL

Hilary Stuart-Williams (Farquhar group, PS) came to the Farquhar group in 2001 to baby the mass spectrometers and supervise their usage. Over the years his relationship with them has gradually evolved to weathered tolerance. Following the move to a shack for the duration of the Robertson refurb, the machines developed separation anxiety. This was made worse by the arrival of several isotope lasers, for which Hilary has devoted unconscionable time and supervision. As well as having a relationship with them, he has also had to deal with the arrival of several isotype lasers, for which Hilary has devoted unconscionable time and supervision. During the course of this – 20 year ongoing battle with equipment several papers have emerged, typically with a readership into them. Now Hilary has been at RSB during the course of this ~20 year ongoing battle with equipment several papers have emerged, typically with a readership into them. Now Hilary has been at RSB

PAPERS

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