

Canadian Phytopathological Society – British Columbia Regional Meeting 2024

The Canadian Phytopathological Society British Columbia regional group had their annual symposium and AGM on November 18-19, 2024 at the Michael Smith Laboratories at the University of British Columbia (UBC), located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. This year's lively and successful meeting was organized by Dr. Richard Hamelin, Dr. Samuel Holden, and PhD candidate Brian Duarte from UBC. The two day event included two excellent plenary speakers: Dr. Monika Fischer (UBC), with her presentation, "Rising from the ashes: how fungi survive and thrive following fire," and Dr. Jared LeBoldus (Oregon States University), presenting, "*Sphaerulina musiva* mediates microbiome assembly in poplar trees by inhibiting Succinate dehydrogenase in fungal community members."

Complementing the plenaries, the days were rounded out with 11 additional interesting and diverse presentations from the 36 registered attendees, a group dinner at the new Gallery Patio & Lounge, the regional annual



A last minute group shot at the close of the meeting of the BC regional group at the Michael Smith Laboratories at the University of British Columbia.



The winners of the student oral competition, Berni van der Meer (1st place; centre right) and Djihane Damoo (2nd place; centre left), along with Dr. Richard Hamelin (left) and Dr. Samuel Holden (right).

general meeting, and a photo competition. This year's photo competition had three categories, submitted and voted on in advance: "Lab," "Microscope," and "Field." In addition, a first place and second place student oral presentation were decided upon.

The first place winner of the student oral competition was Berni van der Meer for her presentation, "Sampling and sequencing butternut canker *Ophiognomonia clavigignenti-juglandacearum*," and the second place winner was Djihane Damoo for her presentation, "A *Ustilago maydis* effector targets chloroplast functions during infection." Congratulations to all our student presenters, and thank you for your contributions!

Next year, the national meeting will be at UBC in Vancouver, and we look forward to hosting you in our

home province! The regional meeting will resume in 2026 in the Okanagan Valley.

All the best,

Jesse MacDonald, regional representative for CPS-BC

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The photo competition winners, from top left to bottom right: Lab category - 1st place: Dijane Dammo "Compatible *Ustilago maydis* strains mating on charcoal plates," 2nd place: Sydney Houston "Coniferiporia *weirii* mycelium beginning to colonize greenhouse western redcedar seedling roots post artificial fungal inoculation." Microscope category - 1st place: Brian Duarte "The decisive moment: *Cronartium ribicola* basidiospore entering whitebark pine stomata," 2nd place: Leah Rettenbacher "SEM image of *Cronartium harknessii* aeciospores on lodgepole pine." Field category - 1st Place: Kathleen Furtado "Morning mist The Dew-Kissed Fungi of Fomitopsis," 2nd Place: Berni Van Der Meer "Heart rot."