

The weekly newsletter from the Botany Department at Trinity College Dublin

News

▪ Following a four weeks naming competition on social media, Trinity's first queen bee has been named **Queen Medb** - a reference to a strong female leader in old Irish mythology. Head to [Trinity News](#) for more explanations on the name, other popular name suggestions from the contest and interesting pollinator facts!



▪ **HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco** joined a diverse gathering of Irish businesses, beekeepers and researchers for a **Biodiversity Forum**, which addressed the value of biodiversity and its role in environmental and economic sustainability as those gathered discussed how to tackle current biodiversity loss. More information on [Trinity News](#).

▪ **Trevor Hodkinson** hosted 45 staff and students from [Teagasc, Ashtown, Food Research Centre](#), who visited the Botany Department on Thursday 29th June to view facilities, learn about the Herbarium and see the Physic Garden.

Grants & funding

▪ **Brian Murphy** and **Trevor Hodkinson** have won funding from **Enterprise Ireland (EI)** for commercialising their endophyte crop technology under the EI Commercialisation Fund. The project, "**E-Seed: a sustainable cereal seed endophyte treatment to reduce agricultural chemical costs**", will start on 1st September and will further validate our successful crop treatment technology. The project will culminate in the creation of a start-up company to bring the product to market. We are very excited about the potential for our technology as it will significantly reduce the economic and environmental costs associated with agricultural crops.

▪ A new **€12m EU research project** led by a team from Trinity is looking to help stem the effects of pollution by turning cities from concrete jungles into places with nature at their heart. The "**Connecting Nature**" project will see 37 organisations from 19 countries work together to establish Europe as a global leader in this area. Leading the project is **Dr Marcus Collier**, assistant professor in Botany at Trinity's School of Natural Sciences. See [Silicon Republic](#) and [Dublin Live](#) for more information.

Conferences & Outreach

▪ **Laura Russo** gave a talk on "Pollen protein drives bee community preference for an invasive thistle" at the **Ecological Society of America Meeting**, Portland, Oregon, USA.

▪ **Mike Williams** offered advice, in the *Echo* newspaper, on the avoidance and treatment of giant hogweed burns following recent incident of Dublin girl, aged 14, who suffered third degree burns. [Click on the photo to access the article.]



Upcoming event: SUSTAIN



Botany is organising an international conference on endophytes, **SUSTAIN: Endophytes for a Growing World**, on **28-29 August 2017**.

The two-day conference will be centred on the core themes of manipulating the plant microbiome for sustainable plant production in a changing world. The conference will highlight cutting-edge research using endophytes and will synthesise the most promising approaches to endophyte supported plant production. Further information may be found on the conference website [click on the banner above to access it].

Publications

▪ **Anna Trias-Blasi** (a former Ph.D. student and now a staff member of the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew), **John Parnell** & **Mark Watson** have just published a paper in *Taxon*. *Taxon* has one of the highest impact factor ratings for plant taxonomy: currently 2.45.

Anna Trias-Blasi, John A.N. Parnell & Mark F. Watson (2017). Nomenclatural notes on species of Asian Vitaceae. *Taxon* 66: 718-733.

▪ **Brian Murphy** has just had two research articles published, one with **Trevor Hodkinson** and the other with colleagues in Cairo:

- Murphy BR, Hodkinson TR, Doohan FM. 2017. A fungal endophyte consortium counterbalances the negative effects of reduced nitrogen input on the yield of field grown barley. *The Journal of Agricultural Science*. 1-8.

- Hegazi NA, Sarhan MS, Fayez M, Patz S, Murphy BR, Ruppel S (2017) Plant-fed versus chemicals-fed rhizobacteria of Lucerne: Plant-only teabags culture media not only increase culturability of rhizobacteria but also recover a previously uncultured *Lysobacter sp.*, *Novosphingobium sp.* and *Pedobacter sp.* *PLoS ONE* 12(7): e0180424.

▪ **Laura Russo** has recently published two articles:

- Russo, L., Park, M.G., Blitzer, E.J. and Danforth, B.N., 2017. Flower handling behavior and abundance determine the relative contribution of pollinators to seed set in apple orchards. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment* 246: 102-108.

- Russo, L. and Danforth, B., Pollen preferences among the bee species visiting apple (*Malus pumila*) in New York. *Apidologie*: 1-15.

PHYTOBYTES needs your input, yes you!

Whether you are student or staff, please send any news you have, big or small, to Anne (dubearna@tcd.ie) with the subject heading Phytobytes. Let's share the latest news and always be aware of what is happening at Botany!