

Dear AMS Community,

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2023! Your AMS Council has been busy this year so far, planning lots of exciting opportunities in mycology in Australasia. A number of big changes have taken place on your AMS council in the last few months and we would particularly like to thank Dr Tracey Steinruken for her wonderful leadership as President over the last three years. Tracey has contributed enormously to the current success of the society with many new initiatives. Thanks Tracey – you will be missed! In her place, Associate Professor Jonathan Plett will take over as the interim President until the next election.

The AMS will be continuing with our Virtual Seminars in 2023, and we will be bringing you news about new discoveries and cool fungi spotted across the year. So, make sure your membership is up-to-date so you can continue to take advantage of all these opportunities in 2023. We look forward to continuing ever forward with all of you this year!

Warm regards,

Anna Hopkins

Australasian Mycological Society Councillor

Website: <https://www.australasianmycologicalsociety.com/>

Facebook: [AMSstudents](#) and Twitter: [@ausmysoc](#)

## Membership Renewal

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# RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

It's 2023! Renew your membership by visiting:

<https://www.australasianmycologicalsociety.com/membership>

Access the recorded webinar series, social events, the upcoming conference, and apply for our research grants. Your contribution supports those research grants, fungal conservation efforts and mycology education and students.

**Help us support the  
next generation of  
mycologists!**



This year you will receive  
the EXCLUSIVE member's  
pin with a new 2023  
design!

**JOIN BEFORE MARCH 31<sup>st</sup>**



Want to check your membership status? Email [ausmysoc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:ausmysoc.treasurer@gmail.com)

## AMS Virtual Seminar Series 2023

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Drawing from the success of the last two years and the feedback we receive every month from attendees, we have decided to continue the delivery of this series and are now putting out the call to all of you! Our seminars occur generally on the last Wednesday of the month at 12:00pm Sydney time. Talks are 30 minutes long and are followed by 15 minutes of questions from the audience. Please write to Jonathan ([ausmysoc.president@gmail.com](mailto:ausmysoc.president@gmail.com)) if you're interested in presenting.

This month's seminar is on **Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March at 12pm AEDT (2pm NZ time)**

**Professor Ian Dickie**, Professor of Microbial Ecology,  
University of Canterbury



### **“Ripples in the net: Vegetation change and fungal networks”**

Co-occurrence and interaction networks of plants and fungi are key drivers of ecosystem function, but human-driven changes in land-use and vegetation are disrupting these networks. In this talk, I will focus on how changes in co-occurrence networks of plants and fungi through land-use change and biological invasions are altering interaction networks, as shown by a number of studies by students and collaborators. In a study of land-use change impacts, we show that while species diversity of all taxa shows idiosyncratic effects with land-use intensification, rarity (an indicator of specialisation) is consistently reduced with land-use change. Plant pathogens are present in all ecosystems, but increase dramatically with land-use change, largely driven by plant community composition. Plant invasions also represent major changes in community composition, and show somewhat similar impacts on specialisation and on pathogen networks. I present recent data on how invasive pines are altering communities of mycorrhizal and saprotrophic fungi, and the implications of this for soil nutrient cycling and legacies. I then consider how the dominance of ecosystems by exotic species, and concomitant changes to interaction networks, lead to pathogen spillover, potentially amplifying exotic species invasions. These examples show consistent trends: a loss of uniqueness and rarity, with more generalist species interactions. Pathogen spillover, driven by exotics that accumulate but tolerate high levels of generalist pathogens, is likely to be an ever-increasing driver of future ecosystem dynamics. More generally, a broad understanding of network interactions provides a valuable tool to understand changing ecosystems.

Registration link here: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_ljp\\_EssTOGMoRSLfYng2Q](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ljp_EssTOGMoRSLfYng2Q)

### **Upcoming seminars:**

Save the date for the following speakers:

**26<sup>th</sup> April: Professor Bernard Slippers** - FABI, University of Pretoria, South Africa

**25<sup>th</sup> May: Dr Anna Hopkins** - Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

**28<sup>th</sup> June:** You, your colleague or your student?! Contact us at [ausmysoc@gmail.com](mailto:ausmysoc@gmail.com) if you want to nominate!

**26<sup>th</sup> July: Dr Hagai Shemesh** - Tei-Hai College, Tel-Hai, Israel

## Introducing our **\*New\*** interim AMS council members!

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As you may be aware, Dr Tracey Steinruken stepped down as AMS President in January 2023 for personal reasons. In line with our constitution, one of our current council members, Assoc Prof. Jonathan Plett will take on the role of interim President until the next election.

Jonathan Plett currently is an Associate Professor at Western Sydney University in plant-microbe interactions. Jonathan did his PhD at Queen's University in Canada followed by a post-doctoral research position at L'Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA), France. One of the main aims of his research is to functionally characterize the protein-based language that coordinate symbiosis between soil-borne mycorrhizal fungi and plants – an interaction that is essential for the continued health and productivity of

forests and agriculture. Jonathan specializes in combining a range of different techniques from molecular biology and biochemistry to achieve his research goals. The outcome of this research will be a better understanding of the biological mechanisms used by fungi that ultimately benefit plants that can be leveraged in future to mitigate the negative effects associated with climate change.

You can contact Jonathan at: [ausmycsoc.president@gmail.com](mailto:ausmycsoc.president@gmail.com)

### **\*New\* interim councillor**



Taking Jonathan's place as an AMS councillor, we welcome Dr Camille Truong. Camille is a Research Scientist at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria and Honorary Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne. She did her PhD at the University of Geneva and was a postdoc/research fellow at Duke University, University of Florida and the National Autonomous University of Mexico. In parallel to her graduate studies, she worked as Assistant Curator in the fungal collections of the Botanical Gardens of Geneva in Switzerland, her home country. Her research integrates natural history

collections with state-of-the-art molecular tools to unravel the diversity of fungi and their interactions with other organisms. Her initial interests focused on lichen-forming fungi, and now consider how ectomycorrhizal fungi play important roles in the establishment, growth and health of trees and other vascular plants. She has been conducting field expeditions in temperate and tropical forests of Europe, the Americas, Africa and Australasia, and was the recipient of a Maxwell/Hanrahan Awards in Field Biology in 2023. Camille is dedicated to build capacity in her field and founded the video blog [What we are reading](#) for the South American Mycorrhizal Research Network. She also acts in the research award committee of the Mycological Society of America. Outside of work Camille enjoys riding her bicycle and climbing mountains.

You can contact Camille at: [Camille.Truong@rbg.vic.gov.au](mailto:Camille.Truong@rbg.vic.gov.au)

For more information about the composition of the council, please see our website.

## Upcoming Mycology Events – Announcements and Changes

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### The 3rd Global Soil Biodiversity Conference

13 – 15 March 2023 | Website | Dublin

The 3rd Global Soil Biodiversity Conference to be held in Dublin (Ireland) in 2023 will expand on previous GSBI conferences and convene the world's leading experts in this interdisciplinary field of soil biodiversity science to present and discuss recent advances addressing the urgency of meeting global challenges which link to human, animal and plant health and a more sustainable world.

### Moorabool Mushroom Festival

15-16 April 2023 | Website | Ballan, Victoria

Join FungiMap for a celebration of all things fungi in Ballan in April 2023, for what we hope will be our first annual Moorabool Mushroom Festival! This 2-day festival will be looking at all aspects of fungi including: ecology, citizen science, cultivation, foraging, food, medicine, mycoremediation and mycomaterials. As part of this we will have talks, workshops, nature walks, art, a social event, and a market. Confirmed speakers for the event are Alison Pouliot, ecologist, photographer and author-extraordinaire; Ecologist Sapphire McMullan-Fisher who has special interest in the conservation of biodiversity, particularly the macrofungi and mosses; Margaret Ross, a consultant clinical psychologist and the clinical lead in Australia's first ever psychedelic clinical trial; Sophie Green, the coordinator of FungiMap and keen citizen scientist; and Amanda Morgan who leads the Research and Development of Fungi Cultures to tackle challenges of waste management and ecosystem rehabilitation For more information and details about how to get on the mailing list, visit the MYCommunity Website: <https://myco.org.au/fungi-festival/>

### Ecological Society of Australia Annual Meeting: Plant-Soil Symposium

3-7 July | Website | Darwin

The ESA Plant-Soil working group is organizing a symposium at the next ESA meeting: **Unravelling the underground: new insights into plant-soil ecology from diverse fields.**

The symposium will synthesize knowledge from distinct sub-disciplines advancing the understanding of plant-soil ecology. This represents a unique catalytic occasion that will bring together researchers working across disparate components of plant-soil ecology. Building on the successful succession of plant-soil symposia that have been held at ESA conferences from 2016-2022, this symposium will showcase the forefront of research being carried out and advance our understanding of plant-soil interactions. Speakers will showcase the latest research across the fields of microbial ecology, fungal biology, biogeochemistry, plant ecophysiology, agronomy, and others. In doing so, the synthesis will offer a new and unique understanding of the underground, from the basic to the applied.

### 12th International Congress of Plant Pathology

20-25 Aug 2023 | Website | Lyon, France

Plant pathologists and plant health researchers from around the world will meet to discuss their latest research as well as current and future issues facing plant health experts. The theme for the congress is, "One Health for all plants, crops and trees" and will consider the integral nature of plant health with human, animal and environmental health. In addition to an excellent program of keynote talks, concurrent sessions, poster presentations, and networking opportunities, there will be several satellite events before the meeting dates to provide opportunities for deeper discussions into several topics.

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If you have anything you'd like to contribute to the next edition, or if you would like to have your research or event featured, please contact our Secretary Johanna Wong ([ausmycosoc@gmail.com](mailto:ausmycosoc@gmail.com)) or Jonathan Plett ([ausmycsoc.president@gmail.com](mailto:ausmycsoc.president@gmail.com)). We're after content highlighting your latest research, profiles on mycologists from your network, mycological events and news, career and scholarship opportunities, and photos of new or interesting fungal species.

We hope you enjoyed the March 2023 edition of the AMS Newsletter. Thank you for your continued support of our society!

Stay Safe and all the best

**Anna Hopkins**, AMS Councilor