

Life Sciences Newsletter

Imperial College London

June 2015

[Departmental Seminar Programme](#)

[Committees and Initiatives](#)

[Your Newsletter Archive](#)

WELCOME TO ALL NEW STAFF

Academic & Research

Marc Dionne – Senior Lecturer.

Research Assistants: **Isaac Brockman**, supervised by George Christophides; **Siobhan Mc Mahon**, supervised by Michael Stumpf.

Research Associates: **Nicholas Fyson**, supervised by John Pinney; **Dipankar Ghosh**, supervised by Patrik Jones; **Bo Gustav Lindberg** and **Mathieu Vanderstraete**, supervised by Marc Dionne.

Research Technicians

Holly Matthews, supervised by Jake Baum and **Guled Osman**, supervised by Michalis Barkoulas.

APPOINTMENTS

Denis Wright has been appointed Chair, Agricultural and Forestry Sciences Grants Panel, Foundation of Science and Technology, Portugal, 17-19 June 2015, Lisbon.

Giorgio Gilestro joined the panel for the ERC / Marie Curie RISE grants.

Vincent Savolainen has been appointed to the Life Sciences Committee of the National Research Foundation in France and will attend their panel meeting on 15-17 June 2015.

ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS RESULTS

Cristina Lo Celso: promotion to Senior Lecturer

Karen Polizzi: promotion to Senior Lecturer

Alfonso De Simone: promotion to Senior Lecturer

Martin Bidartondo: promotion to Reader in Molecular Ecology

Gloria Rudenko: promotion to Professor of Molecular Microbiology

Guy Woodward: promotion to Professor of Ecology

USEFUL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

[Working at Imperial](#) – family friendly benefits, equality and diversity, financial benefits and more...

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

[Learning & Development Centre Newsletter](#) – don't miss out on useful learning interventions!

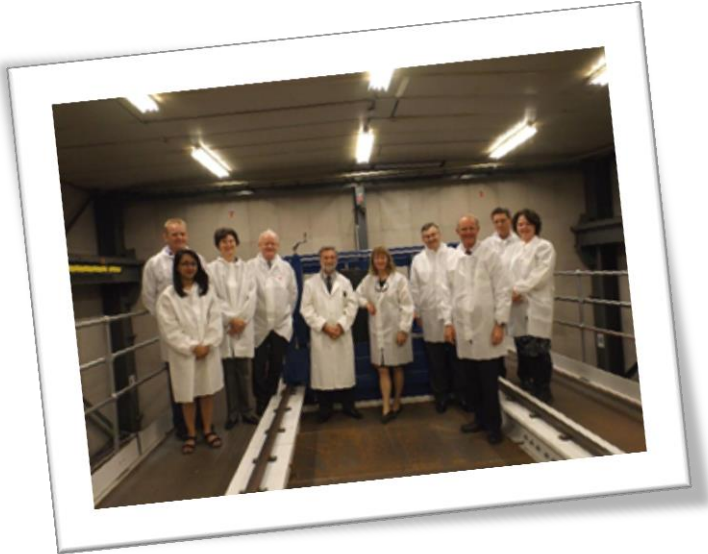
[Postdoc Development Centre](#) - provides tailored support for postdocs and fellows working at Imperial College London.

[Female Academics' Development Programme](#) - next programme to run in Jan 2016 – register now!

Many congratulations!

EVENTS/VISITS

[Bugs! Day](#) 10 July 2pm-6pm, Silwood Park!



Alice Gast and James Stirling visited Silwood Park on the 25 June. The visit was described as wonderful and inspiring!

SUPPORT & OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

[Coaching at Imperial](#) - Coaches work with their clients on a 1-1 basis, to help them address specific work-related challenges around people or projects, or issues relating to career development. Essentially, they help to resolve, prevent or forecast challenging situations. Coaching is a confidential and voluntary process that enables individuals to manage workplace issues in a more constructive and confident manner.

[Advice and Counselling for staff](#) - all College staff and members of their family living with them can get free, confidential professional, help from Confidential Care, the College's new Employee Assistance Provider, 24 hours per day, by telephone or via the web.

Mentoring is a widely used development tool that has proved to have a beneficial impact on effectiveness, confidence and career advancement. Find out more about [Mentoring at Imperial](#).

TALKS

Masahiro Ono was an invited speaker at the 114th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Dermatological Association, 29th May, Yokohama.

Jon Lloyd gave his inaugural lecture on 'Going brown or getting greener?' on 10 June.

Jamie Jones was an invited keynote speaker at the Imperial College event, "Mobile Pathogens in a Changing World."

Simon Dures (PhD) has been asked to talk about his research at 'Safari in the City' at London Zoo on the 12th June.

Doryen Bubeck was an invited speaker at the Prato Conference for Pore Forming Proteins held in Prato, Italy, 11-14 May.

Marion Pfeifer has been invited to present at the two forthcoming conferences (2015): "Patterns and processes in tropical forest ecology", 13th European Ecological Federation (EEF) Congress in Rome and "Forests", Remote Sensing and Photogrammetry Society (RSPSoc) 2015 Annual Conference in Southampton.

TECHNICAL STAFF NEWS

Technicians' Meeting 16TH June 2015 - about 20 DoLS research funded, teaching and departmental technical support staff met for the first time at a discussion/lunch, together with the Faculty Head of Health and Safety, Stefan Hoyle. We looked at the introduction of a 'lab monthly checklist' as a reminder in the lab about good lab practice as well as a chance to meet informally. Thanks to all of those who attended.

Further regular meetings will be held to discuss any other topics the technical staff would like to raise such as troubleshooting techniques, purchasing issues, safety and staff development.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

From the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Prof Stephen Curry:

I am pleased to announce the following prize awards which recognise many extremely valuable contributions to our teaching activities by staff across the board. It is great to be able to recognise their dedication to providing a rich learning environment for our UG and PG students.

Congratulations to [Anita Hall](#) who has been awarded one of the College's President's Prizes for Excellence in Teaching.

Congratulations also to **Karen Polizzi**, **Magda Charalambous**, **Anita Hall** and **Tim Simpson** who have been awarded Faculty or Departmental awards for excellence in Teaching and to **Hugh Brady** and **Pietro Spanu**, who have won Departmental awards for Excellence in Pastoral Care.

And congratulations are also due to the following people who have won Faculty awards for Supporting the Student experience: [James Andrewes](#), [Lucy Barron](#) (née York), [Serophena Morgan](#), [Susan Wryter](#), [Gabriele Micali](#), [Nikola Ojic](#) and [Patricia Paracuellos](#).

Congratulations to Postgraduate Research Students **Alexander Byrne** and **Rebecca Johnson** for winning the Student Prize for Excellence in Health and Safety!

Sarah Butcher, Head of the Imperial College Bioinformatics Support Service was awarded an Award for Research Support Excellence, in addition she was also awarded the President's Medal for her ongoing contribution to research support. [The Awards for Research Support Excellence](#) aim to recognise the contribution of Research Support staff at Imperial, including the beneficial effects their support has given to Imperial research and the innovative approaches/good practice they bring to a project. Of the five award winners, Sarah was one of three to have also been selected to receive the President's Medal for Research Support Excellence.

Many congratulations to the winners of [DoLS Travel Awards](#): **Jackie Cheung** (Gloria Rudenko), **Andrea Fantuzzi** (Bill Rutherford), **Isabel Fenton** (Andy Purvis), **Ville Friman** (Thomas Bell), **Mathilde Gendrin** (George Christophides), **Marius Kaucikas** (Jasper van Thor), **Cecilia Larrosa** (E.J. Milner-Gulland), **Dave Uygun** (Bill Wisden), **Sietse van der Linde** (Martin Bidartondo) and **Rachel Vaux** (Murray Selkirk). Each winner will provide a short report and these will be made available for our staff and students to access through our website.

Lily Le (PhD Student) received funding from the Greta Stevenson Fund to go to the University of California.

Alain Filloux has been awarded the "BBSRC Taiwan-UK international partnering award" to exchange with the laboratory of Erh Min Lai (Taipei, Academia Sinica)

Dr Laura Preiss (former PhD student and now Postdoc in **Thomas Meier's research group**) wins the Otto-Hahn Medal 2015 in the Biological-Medical section awarded by the Max-Planck Society for her outstanding work done on the structure and function of the bacterial ATP synthases. The recently published paper (please see below) is one of the outcomes of Dr Preiss' PhD thesis. The price will be awarded on June 18 at the General Assembly of the Max-Planck Society in Berlin, Germany.

Jamie Jones was awarded the Margo Wilson Prize for the best paper of 2014 by the Evolution and Human Behavior Society for the paper: Jones, James Holland, and Rebecca Bliege Bird. 2014. The marginal valuation of fertility. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. 35 (1):65-71.

Courtney Boyd, a BBSRC DTP PhD student in the Bubeck lab, won a poster prize at the Prato Conference for Pore Forming Proteins. She also was the recipient of the Centenary Prize For Structural and Molecular Biology at the graduation ceremony this spring.

Burak Kabasakal (PhD student) was awarded the Stanford University Bio-X Travel Award to attend the RapiData 2015: X-ray Data Collection and Structure Solving Course which was held from 3-8 May, 2015. Burak also got the runner-up poster prize for the best poster at the Centre for Structural Biology Open Day 2015 on 28th May 2015.

Howard Morris has been awarded an Honorary D.Sc. by the Court of the University of Leeds, which he will receive at a ceremony in July.

Luke Roberts won a prize at the away day for students on The Wellcome Trust 4-Year PhD Training Programme in the Molecular & Cellular Basis of Infection on 01.05.15 for his talk entitled: 'Non-neuronal cholinergic signalling and the type 2 immune response'

Simon Dures gave an invited talk about his research at 'Safari in the City' at London Zoo on the 12th June.

POSTDOC NEWS

Reminders

...to access the advice/specific guidance on grant applications by DoLS pool of volunteers all Postdocs should contact Lenne Lillepuu (l.lillepuu@imperial.ac.uk) in the first instance **at least 6 weeks before their application deadline**.

Have you had/scheduled your PRDP?

Equipment – use & cost & who to contact - the Department is currently working on producing a database with available equipment, including cost and who to contact. This will take some time to finalise. Meanwhile, all Postdocs can contact the Senior Laboratory Technician, Fiona May (f.holt@imperial.ac.uk) in the first instance, and she will be able to help with any equipment enquiries.

RESEARCH GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

Svetlana Khoronenkova (University of Oxford) has been awarded a Wellcome Trust Sir Henry Dale Fellowship (£801,207) to join DoLS, sponsored by **David Mann**, and will take up the award later in the year.

Kostas Beis has been awarded a two year International Exchange grant from The Royal Society (2015-2017). This grant will allow bilateral visits between his lab and the University of Tokyo.

Alain Filloux has been successful in securing two new Marie Curie fellows - Patricia Bernal (Spain) and Laurent Dortet (France).

MEDIA/OUTREACH ACTIVITIES/EVENTS BEING HOSTED

E.J. Milner-Gulland was featured in the article "Mysterious die-off sparks race to save saiga antelope" Nature (1 June), and has been frequently interviewed by the press on this subject, examples include [BBC](#), [Nature](#), [If Science](#), [Radio Free Europe](#).

Simon Dures (PhD student) work in Africa Geographic was featured in the article [Unravelling the mystery of Mmamoriri – the maned lioness](#).

Stephen Curry's piece "[Say hello to your inner molecules](#)", was published in The Guardian, 8 June and "[If I were VC for the day...](#)" in the Times Higher Education, 11 June.

Anita Hall has been asked to contribute to a mental health and wellbeing and transition support programme for one of the 'big four' audit and professional services firms. This may lead to further interactions between the firm and our undergraduate careers advice around a discussion of modern working practices.

Steve Cook has been running a short course - "An introduction to evolution" - at the Royal Institution over the past 6 weeks.

Mobile pathogens in a changing world: impacts on ecosystem, human and wildlife health 11 June, Huxley Building, South Kensington. Exciting and well attended event, with speakers: Professors Jamie Jones and Matt Fisher and Dr Thomas Churcher, Imperial College, and Prof Mark Brown, Royal Holloway. Chaired by Dr Ben Raymond.

Mick Crawley was quoted in the article "[Bumper bloom for British poppies](#)" The Daily Telegraph.

On the 1 July, **Stephen Curry** will be chairing the Expert Advisory Group which have been convened by the Europe PMC Funders Group to review applications for the contract to run Europe PubMed Central.

As part of HEFCE's Independent review of the role of metrics in research assessment, **Stephen Curry** will be participating in the launch of the review groups' report at the Wellcome Trust on 9th July.

PUBLICATIONS

Preiss L, Langer JD, Yildiz Ö, Eckhardt-Strelau L, Guillemont EG, Koul A & **Meier T**. Structure of the mycobacterial ATP synthase Fo rotor ring in complex with the anti-TB drug bedaquiline. *Sci. Adv.* (2015) 1: e1500106.

Marin van Heel et al 'A posteriori correction of camera characteristics from large image data sets' *Nature, Scientific Reports 5*, Article number:10317doi:10.1038/srep10317

Miliara X, Garnett J, Tatsuta T, Abid Ali F, Baldie H, Perez Dorado I, Simpson P, Yague E., Langer, T and Stephen Matthews (2015) Structural insight into the TRIAP1-/PRELI-like domain family of mitochondrial phospholipid transfer complexes, *EMBO Reports*, ISSN: 1469-221X

Accurate encoding and decoding by single cells: amplitude versus frequency modulation. **Micali G, Aquino G, Richards DM, Endres RG.** *PLoS Comput Biol* 11: e1004222 (2015).

“A novel multiple-stage antimalarial agent that inhibits protein synthesis” published in *Nature* on the 18th of June. First author is Baragaña et al. Authors from Imperial are: **Andrew M. Blagborough, Andrea Ruecker, Leanna M. Upton, Katarzyna A. Sala, Sara E. Zakutansky, Michael J. Delves, Robert E. Sinden** who together provided some of the key data demonstrating the multi-stage efficacy of this latest exciting antimalarial drug, MMV and Gates are certainly very excited about the drug and there is every possibility it will lead to a real antimalarial drug, treating and saving lives.

Pfeifer M, Lefebvre V, Turner E, et al. 2015. Deadwood biomass: an underestimated carbon stock in degraded tropical forests? *Env Res Lett* 10: doi:10.1088/1748-9326/10/4/044019. Paper demonstrating that partially-logged tropical humid forests are emitting more carbon than assumed due to the high proportion of dead wood. The paper was released 28/04/2015 (Pfeifer et al. 2015 *Environmental Research Letters*, Impact factor 4:09) and featured on [Nature](#) (Research Highlight), [Mongabay](#) News and [BBC News](#).

STUDENT'S NEWS

Five life scientist undergraduates have been selected as finalists in this year's 'FoNS Make a Difference' programme (<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/natural-sciences/study/fons-mad/>). Their details are: Working to develop a Waterborne Schistosoma mansoni detector: **Ezra Kitson, Henry Lloyd-Laney, Adam Mills and Ivan Zheludev** (all first year Biochem and Biology) and A qualitative in-field test of Rift valley fever using antibodies conjugated to nano-particles: **Cameron Doughty** (first year Biology).

Anne Petzold (PhD Student) was nominated by the Dept for the Summer Symposium Poster Competition.

And finally – it's been an incredible year for our Department.
Thank you to all staff for their contribution, effort and engagement!
Wishing you a wonderful summer time