

# CONNECTIONS

Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology Newsletter



## Greetings from your Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology

This final installment of the newsletter for 2023 will provide you with just a glimpse of the many good things happening in our Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology. The year has presented several substantial changes and important losses of personnel, but our staff, faculty and students have continued working at a high level to learn and to serve. We anticipate some big changes in the coming year. In January, Dr. Jeff Edwards will take over as the new Dean of the Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences. At the same time, Dr. John Anderson will take on the role of Director of Cooperative Extension.

We are currently conducting a search for a new faculty member, working in the area of soil-borne plant pathogens, which we hope to complete in early 2024. It's an exciting and hopeful time to be a part of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and the Bumpers College.

Best wishes,

Ken Korth  
Department Head  
kkorth@uark.edu

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## Support our mission here: [bit.ly/UAEntomology](https://bit.ly/UAEntomology)

As friends and alumni of our department, it is likely that you share in our mission and core values. Through study and application of entomology and plant pathology, we strive to promote human, animal, and plant health, environmental sustainability and food security.

To achieve our goals, we rely on financial support for enhancement of student opportunities and program growth. Your generous contributions can help as we strengthen learning activities and dissemination of our research and extension.

Click on the link here [bit.ly/UAEntomology](https://bit.ly/UAEntomology) or scan the QR code to donate today.

Thank you from all of us in the University of Arkansas Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology.



Ken Korth

# Recent Events

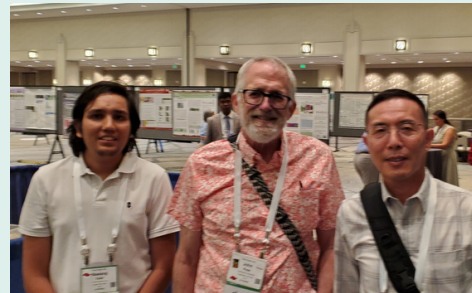
## APS Meeting

In August, our department had strong representation at the annual Plant Health meeting of the American Phytopathological Society (APS) in Denver, CO. Students and faculty shared their research via posters and oral presentations. It was also a valuable time to network with colleagues from around the world and catch up with departmental alumni and friends.

M.S. Student Andrea Sierra Mejia with her advisor Dr. Ioannis Tzanetakis at APS



Alumnus Nawaraj Dulal with Dr. John Rupe and Bo Liu at APS



ENPL Group at APS



ENPL Group at APS

## New and Junior Faculty Mentoring Retreat

In October Dr. Fiona Goggin organized a mentoring retreat for new and junior faculty, to discuss the promotion process, important resources, and potential collaborations. The event was held at Petit Jean State Park. Attendees included Drs. Clay, Jones, Kud, Nicolli, and Zawislak and special guests JF Meullenet, Nathan McKinney, and Aaron Cato (a departmental alumnus who is an assistant professor in horticulture), as well as Goggin and Korth.



New and junior faculty meeting



New and junior faculty retreat

# Recent Events cont.

## Hatch Meeting

The weekend of October 26th-28th, Dr. Rupesh Kariyat attended a meeting for the Multistate Research Project at Rutgers EcoComplex. The project name is “Harnessing Chemical Ecology to Address Agricultural Pest and Pollinator Priorities.” Featured in this photo is also one of our alumnae, Beth Ferguson, who received her Ph.D. in Entomology from our department.



Hatch meeting attendees

## ESA Meeting



ENPL Group at ESA meeting



Dr. McDermott lab at ESA



Dr. Kariyat lab at ESA



Dr. Biddinger and Lilia Stemet at ESA

In November, entomologists gathered at the National Harbor Convention Center near Washington, DC for the Entomological Society of America (ESA) annual meeting. We were well represented at the meeting and held an alumni and friends mixer.

# Recent Events cont.

## ESA Meeting Contd.



M.S. Student  
Parker Mullins  
presenting at ESA



Former department head Dr.  
Robert Wiedenmann with his wife  
Luann, and Dr. Ken Korth at ESA

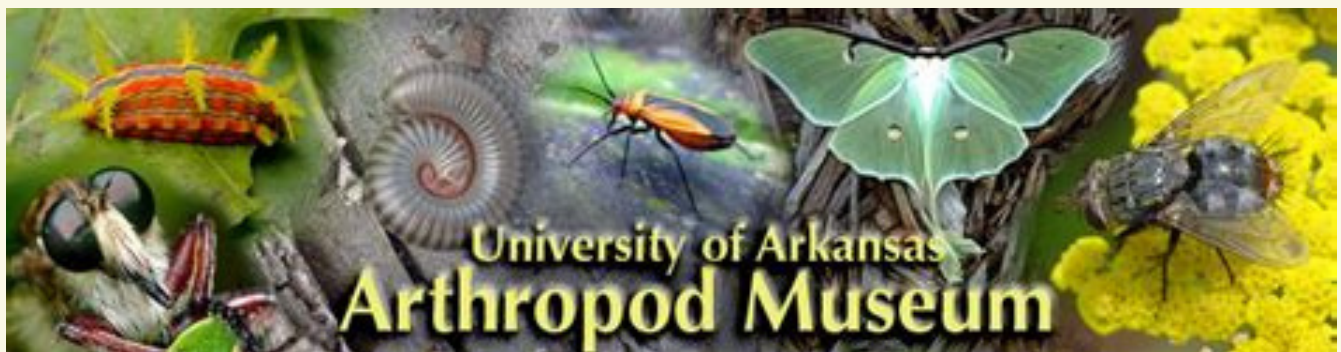


Ph.D. Student  
Devi Balakrishnan  
presenting at ESA

## Welcome Dr. David Bowles



We have been very fortunate to have Dr. David Bowles join our department as an adjunct faculty member and volunteer working in the ENPL Arthropod Museum. David has extensive experience as an aquatic biologist. He earned his Ph.D. in our entomology program, before embarking on a career as a medical entomologist in the U.S. Air Force. David has recently retired and re-located to the Fayetteville area. He has been working very hard in the Museum to ensure that it is organized, and that the collection specimens are well maintained.



## Recent Events cont.

### Onam Festival Celebration

In September, members of the Kariyat lab and others celebrated the Onam Festival in Bentonville. Onam is a harvest celebration, and it is the biggest and most important festival held each year in the Indian state of Kerala. Dr. Rupesh Kariyat and his wife, Dr. Lekshmi Sasidharan, both come from Kerala and we were able to join them in this fantastic celebration of food, culture and traditional entertainment.



Celebrating Onam Festival



Dr. Kariyat and Dr. Lekshmi Sasidharan



More Onam Festival celebration

### Alumni Visitor from Taiwan

We were honored to host visitors from the National Chung Hsing University (NCHU) in Taiwan, on November 8-10th. Three faculty scientists were here to meet with University of Arkansas researchers, especially in the Poultry Science Department. The group met with several of our faculty during their visit. Dr. Yu-Chan Chao is a graduate of our program, having earned a Ph.D. in Entomology in 1984 with Dr. Seth Young as his advisor. He continues to conduct impactful research with viruses that infect arthropods. Also visiting were Dr. Shuen-Ei Chen and Dr. Hsu-Chen Cheng. Dr. Chen conducts research in poultry nutrition and physiology, and Dr. Cheng has extensive experience in the areas of microbiology and poultry development. Dr. Chao's wife, Dr. Su-May Yu, also received her degree in our Plant Pathology program, working under the guidance of Dr. George Templeton.



Visitors from NCHU enjoyed meeting with Seth Young, Professor Emeritus, at his home. Pictured here are Shuen-Ei Chen and Hsu-Chen Cheng (back row, left to right), and Ken Korth, Yu-Chan Chao, and Seth Young (seated).

# Recent Events cont.

## Pumpkin Art and Potluck!



In October we were reminded that our department is full of fantastic cooks from all over the world. A large group assembled for a potluck dinner and fellowship. It turns out we also have many talented pumpkin carvers and decorators within the group. Many special guests joined in the fun, including retired faculty and staff. We were especially honored that the parents of Dr. Camila Nicolli were able to attend the event. Laurindo and Leonida Nicolli were visiting from Brazil, and toured Fayetteville with Dr. Nicolli and her husband Dr. Rodrigo Pedrozo.



Left to Right: Laurindo and Leonida Nicolli, Dr. Camila Nicolli, and Dr. Rodrigo Pedrozo



# Awards and Recognition

## ENPL Faculty Receive Awards



Dr. Kud receiving award

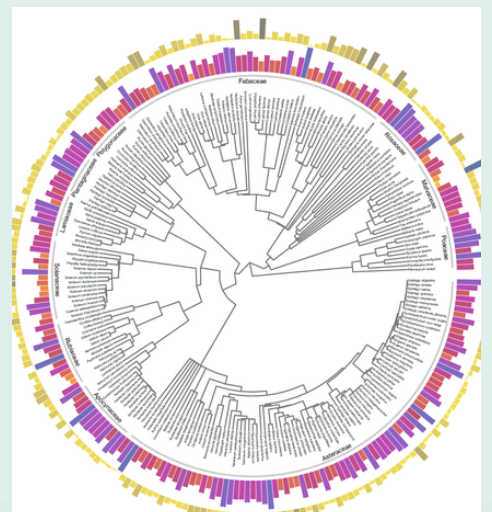


Dr. Kariyat receiving award

On September 26th, Drs. Asia Kud and Rupesh Kariyat were each recognized at the annual University of Arkansas Faculty Teaching Awards ceremony. Both received a New Faculty Commendation for Teaching Commitment. Our faculty recognize that teaching is hard work, and they are committed to improving their own performance in the classroom. Congratulations Drs. Kud and Kariyat!

## ENPL Faculty Co-Authors Paper

Congratulations Dr. Rupesh Kariyat, who co-authored a paper just published in *Science*. Rupesh is a member of the Herbivory Variability Network consortium, a group which was responsible for organizing and writing up the work. The researchers surveyed global data to understand how herbivory patterns vary by latitude, size of plants, and plant phylogeny.



[For the full paper, see here.](#)

## Awards and Recognition cont.

### ENPL Students Join Plant Pathology Board

This fall the Young Editorial Board of the Journal of Plant Pathology was officially established. A few of our students had the honor of being founding members. The list of students is as follows:

- Quirong Fan
- Rinalda Proko
- Andrea Sierra Mejia



### ENPL Student Defends PhD

Dr. Audra Rogers successfully defended her Ph.D. dissertation in September. She is shown here with her advisor, Dr. Martin Egan. Also celebrating Dr. Rogers were her husband, Aaron, and departmental friend and alumna Lacy Nelson.





# Awards and Recognition cont.

## ENPL Faculty Featured in News

Dr. Payal Sanadhya and Abeer Alnasrawi working in Dr. Goggin's Lab



[For the full article, see here.](#)

Soybean yield loss in the United States is a major concern, primarily due to soybean cyst nematode and root-knot nematode.

To combat this issue, Professor Fiona Goggin at the University of Arkansas collaborated with researchers from the University of California-San Diego, Washington State University, and Purdue University. They found that treating soybean seeds with soybean plant elicitor peptides reduces nematode infection without harming root growth or seed development. They also explored using rhizobacteria to deliver these peptides for long-term impact and cost savings.

This research has the potential to develop a new pathogen management system that can address both soybean cyst nematode and root-knot nematode, which collectively cause substantial economic losses exceeding \$1.4 billion in the United States.

## ENPL Faculty Featured in News contd.



Drs. Khoa Luu and Ashley Dowling

A project to develop an AI-powered smart insect trap has received a new round of funding with a grant from the National Science Foundation Small Business Innovation Research program. SolaRid AR, an Arkansas-based ag-tech company, is the primary recipient of the \$981,168 award, with roughly \$340,000 of this award going to Arkansas researchers Ashley Dowling with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture and Khoa Luu with the University of Arkansas.

For the full article, see [here.](#)

# WHAT WE STAND FOR



The Department is a global leader in entomology and plant pathology; promoting human, animal, and plant health, environmental sustainability and food security.

### Our Mission:

The Department serves science and society through discovery, translation and dissemination of knowledge and resources to promote human, animal, and plant health, environmental sustainability and food security.

*Authored and adopted by the faculty, March 2021*

If you would like to contribute to the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, please visit us at: [bit.ly/UAEntomology](https://bit.ly/UAEntomology) or scan the QR code to the right.



SCAN ME

## CONNECT WITH US

Alumni, we would love to hear from you! Reach out to us with updates or let us know how you are using that ENPL degree at [enpl@uark.edu](mailto:enpl@uark.edu). We would love to feature you in our department newsletter.

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