# Mycorrhizal colonisation

* Methodology
  + New biochemical and molecular tools are useful but costly, time consuming to train in and time consuming
  + Staining techniques aren’t the standard any more in favour of new quantitative and qualitative molecular methods, but was done here because of practical reasons
  + Staining techniques are (in theory) more time efficient, but existing techniques are mainly optimised for lab-ground homogenous samples
  + There are many possible staining techniques, but trypan blue was chosen here because of expertise in the Crop Science Centre, and the (in theory) small learning curve
  + Trypan blue binds most strongly to phenolic-like materials in hyphal walls but also stain plant cell walls with lignin, and any residual cell contents
  + There are some AMF taxa which aren’t responsive to staining such as *Acaulospora* and *Paraglomus* species (Morton, 1985), which we weren’t able to consider
  + Didn’t use ink because of time restraints
* Sample selection
  + From Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve
  + From five functional guilds, root samples from the species with the highest coverage from each guild were dug up
  + Lignified and too thick roots were excluded due to difficulties in clearing and staining
* Sample preparation
  + 12x1cm root sections of correct diameter randomly cut from root stock
  + Only 10 used due to loss
* Clearing
  + Experimented, two weeks of pilot tests in KOH from 15mins to 1hour 10% KOH at 96C
  + Lignified roots, didn’t have time to selectively treat with hydrogen peroxide
  + Didn’t work so switched to dataset with less lignified roots
  + More pilot studies, settled on 48h 10% KOH at room temperature, which seemed to work for most species
  + Washed with dH20 and HCl (30%) before moving onto staining
* Staining
  + 10/12 root sections were chosen
  + Roots were stained with 0.05% trypan blue, and incubated in 96C for 8mins
  + Removed and placed in acidic glycerol (50% glycerol, 50% HCl) for 48h
* Microscopy
  + Mounted on slides
  + Light microscope at 40X
  + If staining/clearing unsuccessful, recorded why and moved on
  + If staining successful, ten equally spaced focal areas, identification of six types of fungal structures were recorded
  + Ten measurements per root section, 10 root sections per sample

# Root Architecture

* Scanned using a Canon flatbed scanner
* Analysis on RhizoVision

# Statistical Analysis