Special Event Award: Ontario Ecology, Ethology, and Evolution Colloquium (OE3C 2025)

About the Blog Author

Marrissa Miller, Megan Raposo, and Katherine Di Iorio are PhD candidates in the Sherratt lab at Carleton University. Marrissa studies dragonfly migration, Megan studies katydid mimicry, and Katherine studies mathematical biology. More information about them and their work can be found on the <mark>Sherratt lab website.</mark>

Blog Text

From May 15-17, 2025, Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, proudly hosted the 51st annual Ontario Ecology, Ethology, and Evolution Colloquium (OE3C). This prestigious three-day event welcomed researchers from across the province, including undergraduate and graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and university faculty members. As one of Ontario's longest-standing biological meetings, OE3C continues to provide a platform for early-career researchers and students to share their work in a supportive and scholarly environment.

This year's colloquium featured an exciting agenda filled with intellectually stimulating activities, including immersive field trips, captivating keynote addresses, and a remarkable array of presentation and research posters. These diverse offerings fostered lively discussions, encouraged academic networking, and inspired new avenues for interdisciplinary collaboration.

This year, amid the financial challenges facing many students, the OE3C organizing committee made a concerted effort to enhance accessibility by expanding its financial support initiatives. Thanks in part to generous contributions from the American Genetic Association (AGA), the committee offered a robust suite of awards and grants. These included 13 category-specific presentation awards, three travel grants, and a special grant designed to support students with disabilities—uniquely offered without the requirement of presenting research. This crucial financial assistance helped lower barriers to participation and ensured that a broader and more inclusive cohort of students could engage fully in the conference experience.

Each day of the conference was launched with a keynote address by a distinguished biologist, setting an inspiring tone for the discussions that followed. This year's keynote speakers included Dr. Christina Caruso, Dr. Rassim Khelifa, and Dr. Thomas Hossie, each of whom brought unique expertise and perspectives to the stage. Their talks spanned a wide spectrum of timely topics, from cutting-edge research in genetics and evolutionary biology to critical conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion in scientific practice.

The student-led presentations and poster sessions showcased a rich tapestry of research spanning numerous subdisciplines of biology, including but not limited to biochemistry, conservation science, evolutionary theory, and mathematical biology. The diversity of topics

reflected the evolving nature of ecological and evolutionary studies and underscored the power of cross-disciplinary collaboration. Attendees had the opportunity to witness firsthand how researchers from varied academic backgrounds can come together to tackle complex biological questions in innovative ways.

In sum, the 2025 OE3C was a vibrant celebration of scientific curiosity, academic excellence, and community spirit. The conference not only reinforced Ontario's strong legacy in the fields of ecology, ethology, and evolution but also nurtured the next generation of scientists who are poised to lead with creativity, compassion, and a commitment to inclusivity.

Hyperlinks:
Sherratt Lab website - https://sherrattlab.weebly.com/people.html

Figure Legends

DiIorio_figure 1: OE3C volunteers (left to right) Top: Marcus Gauthier, AJ Deneka, Emilie Gagnon, Mel Beaudin, Caroline Grela, and Matthew Coffey. Bottom: Isaac Finkelstein, Charlotte Galloway, Katherine Di Iorio, Marrissa Miller, and Megan Raposo.

DiIorio_figure 2: Some of the poster and presentation award winners from this year's colloquium. The award winners were Erin Huang, Ronni Prince, Olivia Demetrakopoulos, Anjalie St-Louis-Hodgins, Tang Tang Guo, Erin Ford, Anna Farley, Irataqa Arif, Alise Griffiths, Kehinde Osijo, and Brent Holmes.

DiIorio_figure 3: Some of the conference attendees and volunteers before the closing ceremonies and dinner.