



ORGANIZATION OF NEMATOLOGISTS OF TROPICAL AMERICA

ONTA NEWSLETTER

<http://www.ontaweb.org/>

December 2023

54th ONTA ANNUAL MEETING & 39th CONGRESSO BRASILEIRO DE NEMATOLOGIA

FOZ DO IGUAÇU, BRAZIL, 2024



Fig. 1. Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil. (Images: C. Dias A.)

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Fig. 2. The Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America (ONTA) in collaboration with the Brazilian Society of Nematology (BSN) will meet in Iguaçu, Brazil, from 2nd to 5th September, 2024.

54th ANNUAL MEETING ONTA
FOZ DO IGUAÇU, BRAZIL, 2024

First Announcement



Fig. 3. A, B: Grand Carimã Resort. Brazil will host the 54th ONTA Annual Meeting from 2nd-5th September 2024 with the theme “Nematology beyond the Mercosur border”. (Images courtesy of C. Dias A.)

Dear friends of ONTA,



Fig. 3C: Claudia R. Dias Arieira

We are happy to announce that the next **54th Annual Meeting of the ONTA will take place together with the 39th Brazilian Nematology Congress in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil**. The event will be held at the **Grand Carimã Resort** between the 2nd and 5th of September 2024 and has as its **Organizing Committee Drs Claudia R. Dias Arieira (President, Fig. 3C), Janete A. Brito (Vice-President), Fernando Godinho de Araújo (Treasurer) and Santino A. Silva (Secretary)**. The scientific committee is led by doctors **Andressa C. Zamboni Machado** and **Tristan T. Watson**.

The conferences will have the theme **“Nematology beyond the Mercosur border”** and some relevant topics have already been defined in the program, including: Update knowledge on plant – nematode interactions; Plant – nematode – soil fungi interactions; *Aphelenchoides* in the Americas: emerging

problem; Perspectives for new bionematicides; Soil – plant –nematode relationship; Nematodes of economic importance in the Americas: potatoes, bananas, coffee and other crops; and Quarantine nematodes on the Mercosur/NAFTA borders.

On the last day of the event, a Symposium on nematode management in soybeans will be held, which will aim to provide updated information on the subject, in addition to promoting a great debate regarding the main nematological problems in the Americas.

We highlight that, in addition to the scientific content, the host city is considered one of the most important tourist attractions in Brazil and is located on the triple border, together with Paraguay and Argentina.

The place has an extensive hotel network, as well as attractions that will please all participants. Therefore, we invite everyone to bring their families and enjoy a pleasant week during and after the event.

The event website will soon be online, and we will return with updated news, and don't forget: **SAVE THE DATE**.

Claudia R. Dias Arieira

From the ONTA Past-President



Fig. 4. Dr Fahiem EL-Borai.

Dear ONTA Family,

On behalf of the organizing committee for the joint meeting of the **Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America (ONTA)** and the **Egyptian Society for Agro-Nematology (ESAN)**, it was our great pleasure to welcome you to **Cairo** to participate in the 53rd ONTA Annual meeting. Because this meeting was the first to be held outside of Europe or the Americas, I haven't the words to thank all those who supported our hosting of the gathering, and each of you who travelled across the world to be with us. Since ICN 2022 in France, when Egypt was selected, we never stopped planning and working to create a memorable ONTA meeting one that I hope met your expectations. The six days of the meeting provided an opportunity to share discoveries in nematology and related fields. They provided students, scientists and industry professionals the opportunity to exchange ideas while making new friends and establishing new collaborations. The meeting also allowed many to visit Egypt for the first time, to learn a little about its ancient history and its modern culture. I hope the memories were good ones for you and your family and I look forward to seeing you again. Thanks to each of you who have sent touching messages

since then. Your appreciation of our efforts is an honor for me and all those colleagues who worked before, during and after the meeting.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all the program sponsors for their overwhelming support that allowed the conference to take place. I also extend special thanks to the ONTA Executive and ONTA Foundation board members, scientific committee members, keynote speaker, and speakers who combined to make this a memorable meeting.

Finally, a few meeting facts that the organizing committee should be proud of – the meeting consisted of one keynote speakers, two plenary sessions, two symposia, 10 oral sessions, 56 posters, 75 oral talks, 131 foreign delegates and accompanying persons, 120 Egyptian delegates (from sponsors, university and research institutions, government entities), a field day with 100 participants and a cultural exchange day with 90 participants.



Now, as the holiday season approaches, I wish you and your families a wonderful holiday and a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year.

Past-President,

Fahiem EL-Borai

Fahiem EL-Borai Kora



Fig. 5. Dr Sanaa Haroon (Fayoum University, Egypt), Co-Chair of the Organizing Committee, Egyptian Society for Agro-Nematology. (Images Figs 4, 5: Eman [E.] Mokhtar).

From the ONTA President



Fig. 6. Dr Ernesto San Blas.

Dear colleagues and friends of ONTA,

We want to express our sincere gratitude to all of you for your continued support and commitment to our organization. In particular, we extend a very special thank you to our Past-President, Fahiem EL-Borai, for his dedication and excellent organization of the congress held last September. Likewise, we recognize and thank all the people who contributed tirelessly to make this successful event possible.

Great news! Next year an exciting meeting awaits us on the American continent. We are pleased to announce that our next meeting will take place in Foz de Iguazú, Brazil. It will be a unique opportunity to continue learning, share knowledge and strengthen the collaboration network in our community and the Brazilian Society of Nematology.

Very soon we will be immersed in the election process to select the new secretary of the ONTA. It is essential to have your active participation and commitment in this important process.

Finally, on these special dates, we want to wish all of you happy holidays and a prosperous 2024. May this new year be full of success, personal and professional growth for each of you and your loved ones.

Let's continue working together for the advancement and development in our fields of action!

With gratitude and best wishes,

Ernesto San Blas
ONTA President

From the ONTA Vice-President



Fig. 7. Dr Tristan T. Watson.

Dear Members and Colleagues,

Season's greetings from the Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America (ONTA). We hope this newsletter finds you in good health and high spirits this holiday season. It was a pleasure seeing many of you at the ONTA 53rd Annual Meeting that occurred in Cairo, Egypt, from September 24th to 29th,

2023. The joint meeting between ONTA and the Egyptian Society for Agro-Nematology was a great success and highlighted cutting-edge research in nematology from both societies. A huge thank you to the local organizing committee for putting on such a great meeting and hosting us in Egypt!

Planning is already underway for the ONTA 54th Annual Meeting, which will occur jointly with the Brazilian Nematological Society in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil from September 2nd to 5th, 2024. Our societies are actively working together to develop an engaging scientific program at this beautiful venue. We aim to bring you updates on leading nematology research from our members from across the Americas. We look forward to welcoming you at the ONTA 54th Annual Meeting!

Warm regards,

Tristan T. Watson
ONTA Vice-President



Fig. 8. Rosa H. Manzanilla-López.*

Dear ONTA members:

It is a pleasure to be with you and share the news from ONTA officers, colleagues and ONTA friends. We would like to start this Newsletter's issue by acknowledging the formidable work made by the **Local Organizers Committee**, integrated by officers of both **ONTA and ESAN** (Egyptian Society for Agro-Nematology), to organize the 53rd Annual Meeting in Cairo, Egypt (24-29 September 2023). It is worth mentioning that **Drs Renato Inerra and Julia Meredith** deserve a special acknowledgement for their strong and tireless commitment to ONTA organizing this meeting in Cairo.

It is not possible in a few highlights and in a short space, like this, to present the many nematology topics covered at the meeting. The scientific program, field trip visit and cultural aspects were excellent. A large

number of worldwide delegates attended the meeting and ONTA has expanded and strengthened links between the Americas, Mid-East and African nematologists. Some delegates even had the opportunity, either before or after the meeting, to visit legendary archaeological sites or take a cruise along the Nile and enjoy Egyptian hospitality.

Next year, **ONTA's 54th Annual Meeting** will take place in the Americas, together with the **39th Brazilian Nematology Congress in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil**. The event will be held at the Grand Carimã Resort 2nd-5th of September 2024.

In this issue, we have received contributions by **Inge Dehennin** and **Dora Scott** from the **Nematology Coordination Office at Ghent University (Belgium)** about the **PANEMA** third workshop and the **2024 call to apply for the graduate Nematology program at Ghent University** in Belgium.

As we celebrate new appointments and graduations of ONTA members we also remember our dear colleague and friend Erwin Aballay who passed away on 11 September 2022.

Next year will be plenty of scientific meetings to attend as you can find in the ONTA's Agenda section. We hope to meet you at the **ONTA's 54th Annual Meeting**.

Finally, we wish you a happy reading, a Merry festive season and a Happy New Year 2024!

Rosa H. Manzanilla-López
Newsletter Editor

(*Image: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)

Highlights LIII (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt

Joint Meeting ONTA and Egyptian Society of Agronematology

Rosa H. Manzanilla-López

The registration of delegates attending the 53rd Annual Meeting ONTA-Egyptian Society of Agronematology (ESAN) at the Sheraton Hotel started on Sunday 24. Registration was followed by a welcoming reception on board the **Pharaoh Dinner Cruise** (Figs 9-10). The evening spent by delegates on board the cruise was an unforgettable experience as they had first-hand experience of Egyptian hospitality, the regional cuisine, music and dances while surrounded by the ambiance of Pharaoh's cruise decoration based on archaeological representations while enjoying Cairo's night scenery along the river bank of the Nile'.



Fig. 9. Registration. A: Welcoming reception display, B: Rodayna Hossam Sharawy, C: Registration desk with Rodayna Hossam helping in registration (Dr Mostafa Hamam), D: Ahmad Sabry, Rodayna Hossam with Dr Fawzia Abdelrhamn and Dr Mostafa Hamam at the ONTA registration desk (images: E. Mokhtar).

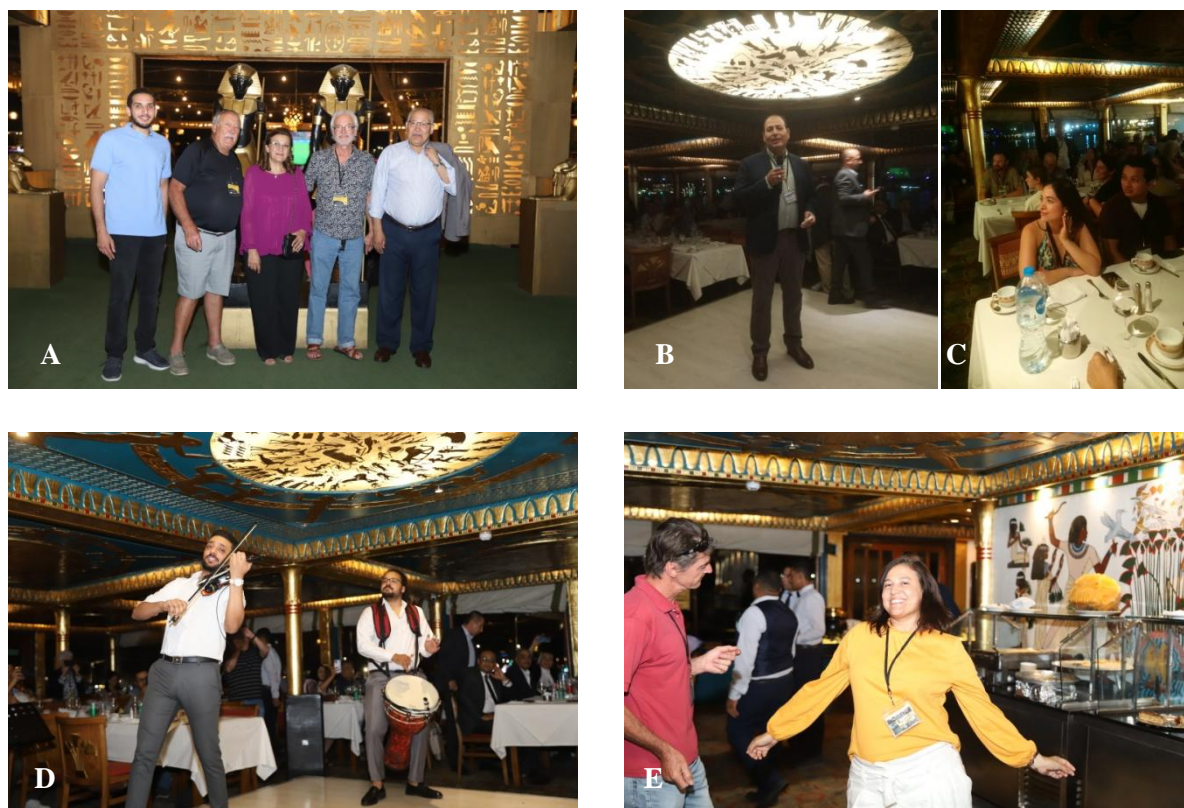
Highlights LIH (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt (cont.)

Fig. 10. Nile Cruise. A: Drs J. Noling and Larry Duncan accompanied by Ambassador Ezzat Saad Elsayed, his wife Shereen Eldaly and his son Mohab Ezzat, B: Fahiem EL-Borai welcoming delegates, C: Helen Delgado and Lester Núñez-Rodríguez, D: Violinist and drummer musicians, E: Danny Coyne and Karla Medina. (Images: E. Mokhtar [A, D, E], R. H. Manzanilla-López [B, C].)

A warmth welcome to delegates was given on behalf of ONTA and the ESAN on Monday 25 by ONTA President Dr Fahiem EL-Borai Kora. He was joined by distinguished Egyptian officials representing the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (**Prof. Dr Mohamed Soliman**, head of Agricultural Research Center and representing the minister of Agriculture [Fig. 11A]), the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (**Prof. Dr Yaser Abdelfattah**, the deputy minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research [Fig. 11B]) and the President of the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (**Prof. Dr Mahmoud Saker** [Fig. 11C]) who pointed out the importance for agriculture, education and research in Egypt of hosting the international ONTA-ESAN meeting. Dr Fahiem pointed out the great opportunity that this meeting offered to delegates to come across ‘the newest discoveries in nematology and interdisciplinary fields’ within a professional and friendly environment, which encouraged the interchange of ideas, and new scientific collaborations. Dr Fahiem also expressed his appreciation to sponsors, local committee, exhibitors, ONTA-Executive and ONTA-Foundation boards, keynote speaker (**Dr Gregory S. Noland**) as well as all speakers participating in the oral sessions of the scientific program.

Highlights LIH (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt (cont.)

Fig. 11. Egyptian Ministers. A: Prof. Dr Mohamed Soliman, B: Prof. Dr Mahmoud Saker, C: Prof. Dr Yaser Abdelfattah (images: E. Mokthar).

The scientific program theme was ‘**Nematodes and Food Security: urgency, discovery and Global Exchange**’. The first plenary session was opened with the ‘**Symposium I: Tropical Parasites and Human Health**’ and it was chaired by Drs J. Brito and M. Saker. The symposium’s first talk was entitled ‘**Onchocerciasis (river blindness) elimination in the Americas and in Africa-progress and perspectives**’ and it was given by keynote speaker Dr G. S. Noland (Fig. 12) from the Carter Center (Atlanta, Georgia, USA).

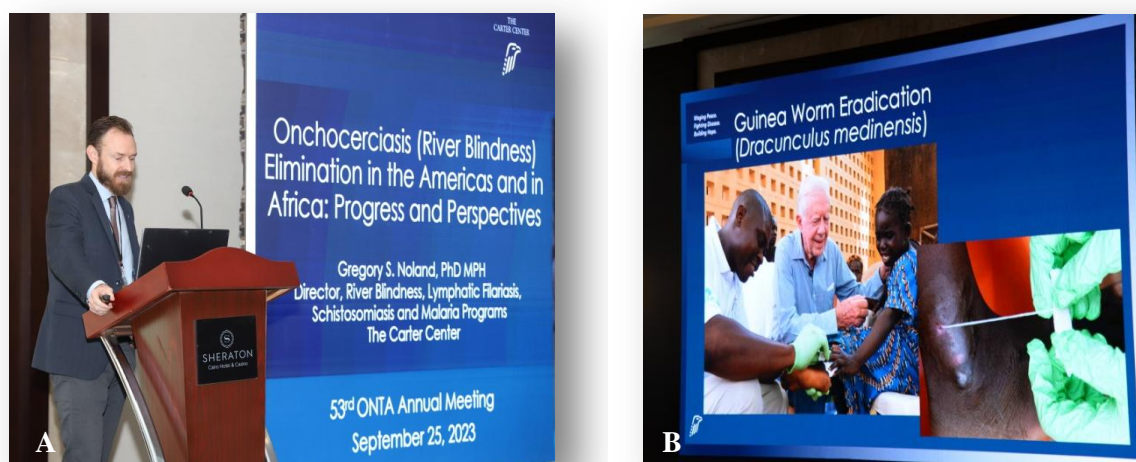


Fig. 12. Keynote speaker. A: Dr G. S. Noland from the Carter Center (Atlanta, USA), B: Guinea worm eradication project. (Images: E. Mokthar [A] and R. H. Manzanilla-López [B].)

The second talk ‘**Schistosomiasis control: Theodor Bilharz Institute’s contributions**’ was given by Dr Sanna Botros (Fig. 13A). The disease known as ‘schistosomiasis’ is caused in humans by *Schistosoma mansoni*. This species of ‘platyhelminth’ (trematode) was included in the symposium due to its health importance in Egypt, Africa and some countries of the Americas (Mexico, Guatemala). The next talk dealt with an invasive snail and intermediary host of an animal-parasitic nematode: ‘**Giant African land snail, *Lissachatina fulica*, eradication for programs in Florida, USA and detection of the rat lungworm, *Angiostrongylus cantonensis***’ by Drs Jason Stanley (Fig. 13B), R. N. Inserra and H. A. Noah. The last talk was given by Dr Claudia Riegel (Fig. 13C) on the ‘**Distribution and educational programs designed to reduce the impact of animal-parasitic nematodes; rat lungworm, *Angiostrongylus cantonensis*, raccoon roundworm, *Baylisascaris procyonis*, and heartworm, *Dirofilaria immitis* in New Orleans, Louisiana, United States**’. This was the first time that a symposium on animal-parasitic nematodes of human and veterinary importance and zoonosis was included as part of the scientific program of an ONTA meeting.

Highlights LIH (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt (cont.)

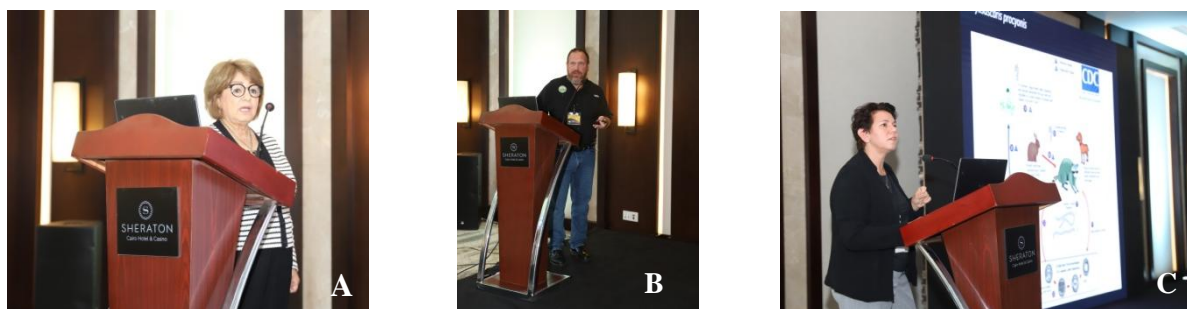


Fig. 13. Symposium I: Tropical Parasites and Human Health. A: Dr Sanna Botros, B: Dr Jason Stanley, C: Dr Claudia Riegel. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

The **Symposium II** was focused on one of the main export crops of Egypt. The symposium ‘**Strawberries and nematode management**’ was chaired by **Drs Fahiem E. Kora** and **J. Desaeger** and it was sponsored by **Cal-Pacific Egypt, EMCO CAL, Fresh All Green, Galina AgroFreeze** and **Nile International**. Presentations at symposium II included: ‘**Florida strawberries beyond the United States: how Egypt became a global leader in strawberry production**’ by Drs F. E. Kora, P. H. Ballew, G. P. Hantke and V. M. Whitaker; ‘**Plant-parasitic nematodes in Florida strawberries - a constant battle**’ by Dr Johan Desaeger (Fig. 14A); ‘**Pest and pesticide movement: causes for nematode management inconsistencies in sandy soils**’ by Drs Joe Noling (Fig. 14B) and J. Desaeger; ‘**Plant-parasitic nematode diseases in intensive strawberry crops of southern Spain**’ by Dr Miguel Talavera (Fig. 14C); ‘**The newcomer: current situation of *Aphelenchoides fragariae***’ in Chile by Dr E. San Blas (Fig. 15A). After the two symposia, the program was continued with the two concurrent oral sessions: **Integrated Nematode Management I** (chairs: S. Hafaz and Lester Núñez-Rodríguez [Fig. 14B]), and ‘**Taxonomy and Systematics**’ (chairs: Sergei Subbotin and H. Zafar).



Fig. 14. Symposium II: Strawberries and nematode management. A: Dr Johan Desaeger, B: Dr Joe Noling, C: Dr Miguel Talavera (images: E. Mokthar).

Highlights LIH (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt (cont.)

Fig. 15. Symposia and oral sessions chairs. A: Ernesto San Blas, B: Lester Núñez-Rodríguez, C: Bill Crow. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

The talk '**Nematodes and agriculture in ancient Egypt**' was given by Dr M. El-Sherif at Plenary session II (Tuesday 26). He covered topics such as ancient agricultural practices (Fig. 16) and the search for *Anguina tritici* in corn samples taken from excavated ancient tombs. Dr El-Sherif also made a short remembrance of the late Dr B. A. Oteifa (1921-2007) and the beginnings of the laboratory of nematology at the Plant Protection Department (Zoology and Agricultural Department).

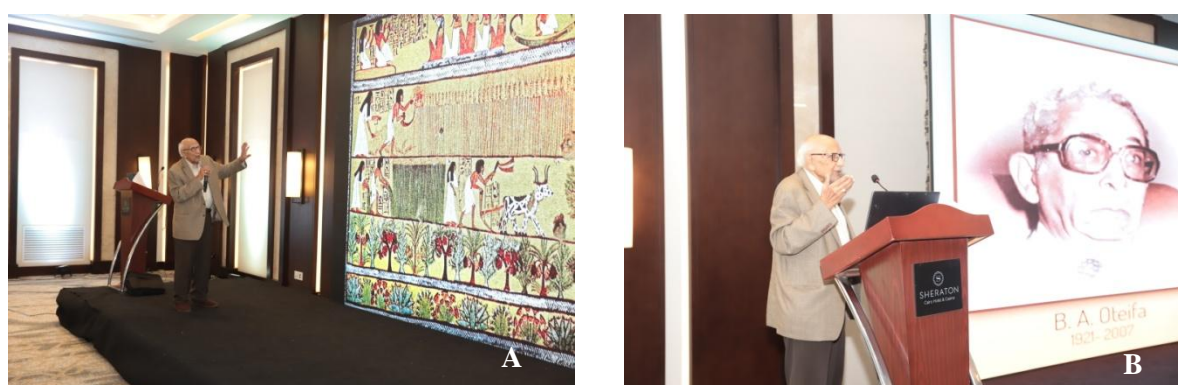


Fig. 16. A: Dr M. El-Sherif at the talk '*Nematodes and agriculture in ancient Egypt*', B: From left to right M. El-Sherif and Dr A. Oteifa. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

Concurrent oral sessions (Fig. 17) included: '**Integrated nematode management II**' (chairs: W. T. Crow [Fig. 15C] and Mara Da Rocha [Fig. 17A]); '**Entomopathogenic nematodes: mass production development and optimization of novel applications systems**' (chairs: Raquel Campos-Herrera and Patricia Navarro [Fig. 17B]); '**Biological control of nematodes**' (chairs: Federico López-Moya and Rosa H. Manzanilla-López); '**Education and training**' (Tristan T. Watson and A. Yassin). The poster session in the afternoon was very well attended by delegates. Students participating in the **Rod Rodríguez-Kábana Best Poster Competition** presented their poster to the judges panel.

Highlights LIH (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt (cont.)



Fig. 17. Oral sessions chairs: A: Dr Mara Da Rocha, B: Dr Patricia Navarro, C: Dr Tristan Watson. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

On Wednesday 27, Dr Mieke Daneel gave the talk ‘**Nematodes in South Africa-the past, the present and the future**’ at Plenary session III. Dr Daneel (Fig. 18A) pointed out the changes that have occurred through time in plant-parasitic nematodes control strategies ranging from an intensive chemical control to more environmentally friendly approaches, the latter increasingly being adopted by farmers in order to alleviate the crop damage caused by the nematodes with an emphasis on soil health and soil nematode communities as indicators. The concurrent oral sessions included: ‘**Ecology and free-living nematodes**’ (chairs: Deb Neher [Fig. 18A] and F. H. Abdel-Rahman); ‘**Plant microorganism-nematode interactions**’ (chairs: Claudia Gleason [Fig. 18B] and Louise-Marie Dandurand [Fig. 18C]); ‘**New discoveries for nematode control**’ (chairs: H. Monir and T. Thoden); ‘**Nematology in the Nile basin and reclaimed lands**’ (chairs: S. Abdel Momen and Larry Duncan [Fig. 18D]). The activities of the day concluded with the ONTA Business meeting and ONTA gala (Fig. 19).

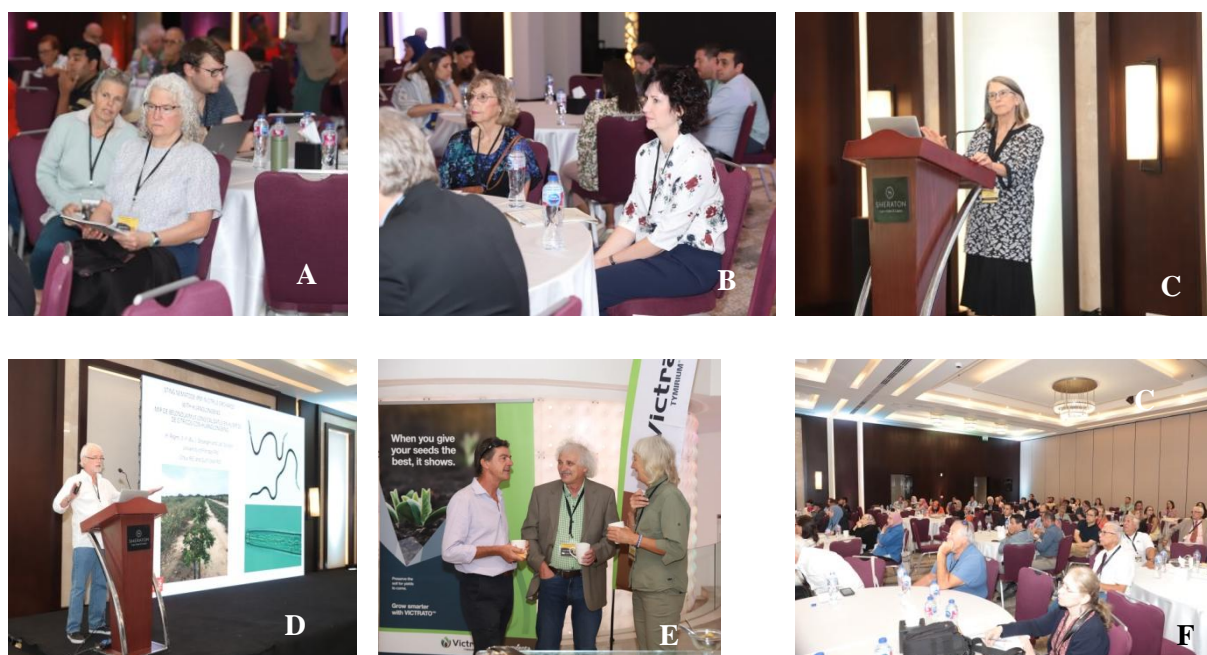


Fig. 18. Chairs, speakers and delegates. A: Mieke Daneel (left) and Deb Neher (right), B: Dr Claudia Gleason (right), C: Dr Louise-Marie Dandurand, D: Larry Duncan, E: Drs Danny Coyne, Sergei Subbotin and Solveig Haukeland, F: Delegates attending one of the plenary sessions. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

Gala and ONTA Awards Ceremony



Fig.19. Gala and ONTA awards ceremony. A: Larry Duncan presenting the ONTA Past-President plaque to Fahiem EL-Borai, B: Fahiem giving ONTA's flag to the new ONTA President Ernesto San Blas, C: Janete Brito, Fahiem EL-Borai and Tristan Watson (center) with the winners of the Rodrigo Rodriguez Kabana best poster competition and travel awards, D: Fahiem joining the 'Tahtib' (traditional stick-fighting martial art) Egyptian folk dancers, E: 'Whirling Dervish', G: Delegates joining the dancing. (Images: E. Mokthar.)

On Thursday 28 delegates enjoyed the field trip to Syngenta's Kaha research station and Egyptian farms (Figs 20-22) and Friday's activities were focused on cultural activities (Fig. 23).



Fig. 20. Field trip. A-G: Visit to Syngenta's research station and nematology lab at Kaha, H-J: MAFA farm. The visit included an introduction to the farm history (H), fresh dates from the farm plus refreshments (I), and a guided tour of the farm facilities and crops (J). (Images: R. H. Manzanilla-López [A-G, I, J] and E. Mokhtar[H].)

Field trip (cont.)



Fig. 21. A: Field station of the strawberry breeding program (carried out in collaboration with the University of Florida), B: Fahiem (center) explaining to delegates the management of nursery strawberry plants. (Images: R. H. Manzanilla-López [A], E. Mokhtar [B].)



Fig. 22. Field trip delegates (image: E. Mokhtar).

Scientific and Cultural Exchange



Fig. 23. Cultural visit. A: Fahiem El-Borai, Karla Medina and Johan Desaegeer at Giza pyramids, B: Larry Duncan, C: Visit to the Giza temples; D: James Kisaakye and Solomy Nakimera at the Great Sphinx, E: The National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, F: Abu Simbel temple, G: Philae temple complex, H: Nubian village. (Images: E. Mokhtar [A-E], R. H. Manzanilla-López [F-H].)

Helminth Parasites were Highlighted in the 2023 ONTA Meeting Keynote Address and Symposium

Larry Duncan and Janete Brito

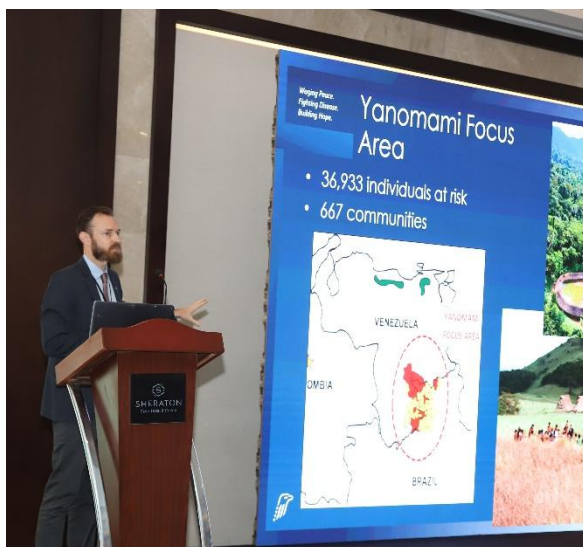


Fig. 24. Keynote speaker Dr Gregory Noland.
(Image: E. Mokhtar.)

The ONTA 2023 Keynote address “**Onchocerciasis (River Blindness) Elimination in the Americas and in Africa**” was given by Dr Gregory Noland (Fig. 24), Program Director for Elimination of River Blindness, Lymphatic Filariasis, Schistosomiasis, and Malaria at the Carter Center, Atlanta, USA. The final slide in the presentation (“*It’s kind of fun to do the impossible*” – Walt Disney) could have been the first. The enormity of the decades-long, sustained effort to eliminate River Blindness was brought home by the statistics Dr Noland [https://www.cartercenter.org/about/experts/greg_noland.html] presented. More than half a billion doses of Mectizan, the drug that kills

the microfilaria and sterilizes adult worms in the body, have been administered with Carter Center support since 1996. Programs covering all the necessary populations in 18 countries have been initiated, and are completed in 11 additional countries, four of which are now verified to be free of River Blindness by the World Health Organization. More than 32 million people no longer require treatment for the disease due to its local elimination. Those achievements required previously unimaginable levels of cooperation between the local, national, and international health organizations in some of the most difficult to access areas of the world. Gregory Noland remained to participate actively during the entire meeting – a gracious, humorous, and accomplished colleague who certainly broadened horizons in ONTA.

The keynote address complemented the first-ever parasitology symposium “**Tropical Parasites and Human Health**” at an ONTA meeting featuring speakers addressing bilharzia (*Shistosoma mansoni*), rat lungworm (*Angiostrongylus cantonensis*), and a unique program to reduce the impacts of rat lungworm, raccoon roundworm (*Baylisascaris procyonis*), and dog heartworm (*Dirofilaria immitis*) in New Orleans. Janete Brito and Claudia Riegel (Figs 22-23) are due special thanks for their insight, persistence and hard work that resulted in a long-sought-after goal to prominently feature important topics in parasitology and other related disciplines at ONTA meetings!

Highlights XLIII (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting Keynote address (cont.)



Fig. 25. Drs Janete Brito, Gregory Noland and Fahiem EL-Borai Kora.



Fig. 26. Dr Gregory Noland at the symposium discussion (A) and talking with Dr Raquel Campos (B).
(Figs 24-26 images: E. Mokhtar.)

Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana Student Poster Competition

ONTA Foundation Chair Dr Janete Brito



Fig. 27. Dr Janete Brito.

Thirteen students participated in the **Annual Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana Student Poster Competition** during the 2023 ONTA Meeting in Cairo, Egypt. This year, we had student representation from: Brazil (2), Egypt (5), Portugal (1), South Africa (1), Turkey (1), Uganda (1), and United States (2).

We want to acknowledge all students for their presentations in the Poster Competition and participating in the Conference. It was again an excellent opportunity for them to share the results of their research findings, exchange ideas, as well as acquire the latest information in plant nematology.

Table 1. Winners of the Poster Competition.



Osameh Atiya, Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, Nigde, Turkey

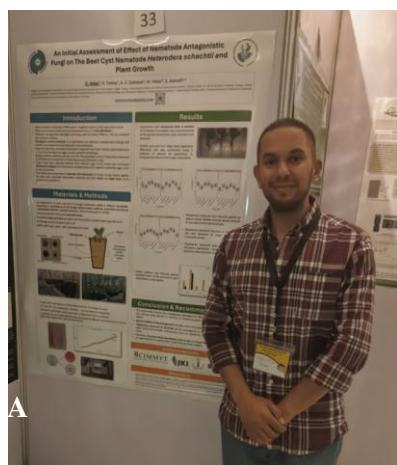


James Kisaakye, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa.



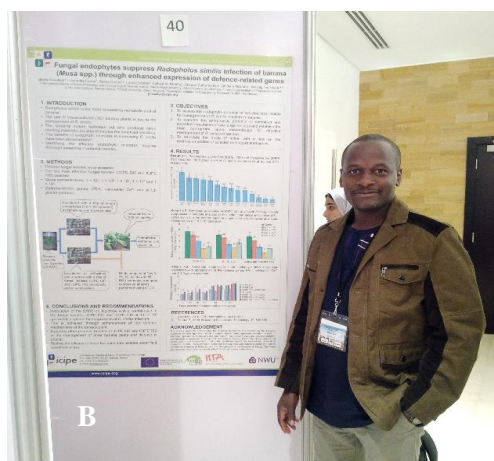
Maria J. Camacho, Mediterranean Institute for Agriculture, Environment and Development (MED), University of Évora, Évora and the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária (INIAV, I. P.), Oeiras, Portugal.

Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana Student Poster Competition (cont.)



A

Osameh Atiya presented a poster focusing on “An initial assessment of effect of nematode antagonistic fungi on the beet cyst nematode Heterodera schachtii and plant growth”.



B

James Kisaakye presented a poster focusing on “Fungal endophytes suppress Radopholus similis infection of banana (Musa spp.) through enhanced expression of defense-related genes”.



C

Maria Joao Camacho presenting her poster “FTA-Lamp based biosensor for a rapid in-field detection of Globodera pallida – the pale potato cyst nematode” to the Poster Selection Committee Drs Ernesto San Blas, Janete Brito, Tristan T. Watson, Fawzia Abdel-Rahman, and Bharat Bhojane (not shown).

Fig. 28. Winners of the Rod Rodríguez-Kábana student poster competition. A: **Osameh Atiya**, B: **James Kisaakye**, C: **Maria Joao Camacho** (images Figs 27, 28: E. Mokhtar).

Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana Student Poster Competition (cont.)

Meet the students at the poster session (highlights)



Fig. 29. Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana student poster competition. A: Veronica Casey (center) presenting her poster to the Poster Selection Committee (left to right): Drs Tristan Watson, Ernesto San Blas, Janete Brito, Fawzia Abdel-Rahman, Bharat Bhojane, and Nona Mikaya, B: Egyptian students from Alexandria University with Dr Asmaa A. Morbel. From left to right: Hassan Ali Hassan, Fatma Alaa El-Deen, Tasneem Mohamed Khamis, Dr Asmaa Abd El-Hamid Mokbel, Habeba Khaled Abd, El-Hameed, Alaa Mubarak Gaber Salem, Dr Mohamed Anwar Elsaedy, Fatma Anwar Mahmoud, Yosra Magdy Qassem, Ahd Ashraf Salama, Maha Ashraf Salama, Maya Ghanem Oudeh, and Mariam Mohamed Ali (images: E. Mokhtar).



Fig. 30. A: Drs Noha Abu Shaby and Entsar H. Taha, B: Dr Mohamed Anwar Elsaedy, C: Dr Fawzia Abdelrahman, Dr Fahiem EL-Borai Kora with Bharat Bhojane (images: E. Mokhtar.)

ONTA Foundation Student Travel Grants Competition XLIII ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt



- **Travel Grants Winners.** The ONTA Foundation and ONTA awarded **four Travel grants** to four students to attend the 2023 ONTA meeting in Cairo, Egypt.

- **Himani Sharma** (Fig. 31), a PhD student working under the supervision of Dr Ashock Chaubey at Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, India. She gave an oral presentation focused on the “Prevalence, morpho-taxometric identification and pathogenicity of *Hemicriconemoides rosae* on Indian vegetable crops.



Fig. 31. Himani Sharma and Dr Janete Brito, chair of both the ONTA Foundation and Student Poster Competition (image: E. Mokhtar).

- **Jose Feliciano Bernardes Neto** (Fig. 32), a PhD student working under the supervision of Dr Mara Da Rocha, Federal University of Goias, Goiania, Brazil, participated also in the Student Poster Competition. Bernardes’ research and poster presentation focused on searching for resistance in pepper genotypes to *Meloidogyne enterolobii*.



Fig. 32. Jose F. Bernardes Neto, participated in the Student Poster Competition and presented the poster focusing on the “Reaction of *Capsicum* spp. genotypes to *Meloidogyne enterolobii*” (image: E. Mokhtar).

ONTA Foundation Student Travel Grant Competition XLIII ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt

- **Osameh Atiya**, a PhD student working under the supervision of Dr Halil Toktay, Nigde Omer Halisdemir University, Nigde (Turkey), gave an oral presentation on the effect of nematode antagonistic fungi on the beet cyst nematode *Heterodera schachtii* and plant growth. Osameh won the first place in the Student Poster competition (Fig. 28A).
- **James Kisaakye** received his PhD recently from the North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa, working under the supervision of Dr Driekie Fourie. In addition to participating in the Student Poster Competition (Fig. 28B), Dr Kisaakye also made an oral presentation focusing on “*In vitro* antagonism of chitin-enhanced black soldier fly (*Hermetia illucens*) frass extracts against the root-knot nematode *Meloidogyne incognita*”.



TO ALL STUDENTS

WHO PARTICIPATED

IN THE STUDENTS ACTIVITIES

Fig. 33. A: Mariam M. Ali, Fatma Alaa, Tasneem M. Khamis, Hassan A. Hassan at the poster session (image: R. H. Manzanilla-López), B: Students helping at the delegates registration desk (image: E. Mokhtar).

Dr Federico López-Moya

The LIII Annual Congress of ONTA held in Cairo last September was a unique event in which nematology experts and all associated disciplines met. This meeting was a unique opportunity for me since I was able to act as chair in the Biological Control session alongside Dr Rosa Manzanilla-López. Within this session I was able to present the research work that we are developing at the University of Alicante (Spain) together with Professor Luis Vicente Lopez-Llorca. In this work we address the cellular interactions that mediate the interaction between phytoparasitic root-knot nematodes and their hosts, in addition to analyzing the molecular bases of nematophagous fungi as natural antagonists to nematodes.

Personally, I was able to enjoy countless talks of the highest quality in which different approaches and studies related to basic and applied nematology were presented and I am looking forward to our next ONTA meeting. I would like to thank Dr Fahiem EL-Borai Kora and his team for the magnificent organization of the congress. In addition, I would also like to thank the ONTA Foundation and especially Janete Brito, Julia Meredith and Renato Inserra for granting me support to attend this fantastic event, and Rosa for giving me the opportunity to co-present the Biological Control session.



Fig. 34. Dr Federico López-Moya Chair of the Biological Control session (image courtesy of F. López-Moya).

Dr Fahiem EL-Borai

In honor of ONTA's President, his family invited all EC members and invited guest speakers at our ONTA meeting for a special dinner at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club located on the Nile River where we all enjoyed a great gathering and spent a wonderful time (Fig. 35).



Fig. 35. Dinner at the Egyptian Diplomatic Club (images: E. Mokhtar).

Sponsors XLIII (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting Cairo, Egypt

Our appreciation and deep thanks for **Miss Eman Mokhtar** (Fig. 36A), our **ONTA 53rd Annual Meeting videographer** who was working tirelessly to record every moment during our meeting from day, through the session, field day, tour day till the end of the meeting. Thanks so much Eman for a well done and wonderful job.



Fig. 36. Local Organizing Committee. A: Miss Eman Mokhtar, ONTA 53rd Annual Meeting videographer with Dr Fahiem.

We also would like to acknowledge Dr Abeer Salah Yassin (Fig. 36B) who supported Dr Fahiem in all events, and Dr Sanna Haroon, the Co-Chair of the Local Organizing Committee.



Fig. 36B. Local Organizing Committee (left to right): Dr Abeer Salah Yassin, Dr Fahiem and Dr Sanna Haroon (image: E. Mokhtar).

Industry Sponsors LIII (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting and ONTA Foundation

The overwhelming enthusiasm of our **industry partners** has allowed the **Organization of Nematologists of Tropical America Foundation** to provide a tremendous educational and networking opportunity in Cairo, Egypt. Without the generous support of our sponsors, this event would not have been possible. **Thank you to our Gold, Silver and Bronze sponsors for their generous support (Table 2).**

Table 2. Industry partners sponsorship.



Ekland Marketing Co. (EMCO CAL) introduces competitive strawberry, blackberry, raspberry, blueberry and citrus varieties to producers around the world. Building on over 40 years of experience with nurseries, growers and marketers in over 70 countries, EMCO CAL understands the needs of farmers for varieties that deliver quality and uniform product in the best market window for each country and production area [www.emcocal.com]

Headquartered in Cairo, Egypt, All Green is a grower of high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables for export markets. All Green uses the latest technology to grow and export fresh and frozen strawberries, grapes and other many other fruit and vegetables throughout the world [www.freshallgreen.com]

Galina-Agrofreeze specializes in the planting, processing and producing of fruits and vegetables. Galina's state-of-the-art processing plants supply the highest quality products to their partners and customers worldwide [www.galina-eg.com]

Nile International offers the United Kingdom, Continental Europe and the Far East Egyptian premium quality fresh produce ranging from grapes, strawberries, oranges and sweet potatoes. Nile International distinguishes itself by providing high quality and day-accurate deliveries of fresh produce export services [elzomor@capital-int.com]

Corteva Agriscience is an international company that works with producers and consumers to create an agricultural ecosystem that naturally supports people, progress and the planet [www.corteva.com]

Marmar Farms is one of Egypt's premier growers and exporter companies. It exports a variety of grapes and strawberries grown on their farms. Marmar Farms is dedicated to producing premium quality fruits for worldwide export [www.marmarfarms.com]

Sponsors XLIII (53rd) ONTA Annual Meeting Cairo, Egypt

Table 2 (cont.)



Belco has over 60 years of experience and grows and exports premium quality fruits and vegetables to some of the largest retailers in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East [www.belco.com]



With a broad portfolio of crop protection solutions for organic and conventional production, Certis Biologicals has the answers growers need in today's dynamic agricultural environment. They are a leader in commercializing new product innovations in bio-control to solve tomorrow's agricultural issues [www.certisbio.com]



Since the foundation of the company in 1989, they are committed to the development and improvement of a state-of-the-art production function that would provide sustainable premium quality Egyptian fresh produce to the international and local markets. Their products are exported to over 55 countries [www.agrabi-agriculture.com]



Pico's vision is to be a regional leader in agri-business, recognized in the global markets for safe, innovative, and healthy fresh and processed produce. Vertically integrating world-class technology and advanced value chain methodology to maximize customer satisfaction and environmental protection. Their strategy is based on combining the latest innovative and sustainable practices to ultimately provide our consumer and business partners with the highest quality of produce available in the market [<http://picoagriculture.com>]



Syngenta is a global leader in agri-business and is recognized for safe, innovative, and healthy fresh and processed produce [www.syngenta.com]

Thanks Egypt!



Fig. 37. Egyptian delegates and local organizers of the ONTA-Egyptian Society of Agronomatology (ESAN) Meeting.

See you at the next ONTA meeting (Iguaçu, Brazil, 2024)!



Fig. 38. Brazilian delegates and local organizer of the ONTA-SBN Meeting in 2024. Back row (left to right): Monique Rodrigues, Tatiane Zambiasi, Angelica Miamoto, Andressa C. Zambom, Claudia Arieira (President of the Organizing Committee of the Joint Meeting SBN-ONTA 2024), Angélica Calandrelli, Mara Rúbia Da Rocha. Front row: José Neto (left) and Denner Faria (right). (Images Figs 37, 38: E. Mokhtar.)

President's report

Dear members of the Executive Committee of ONTA,

- I was appointed by ONTA's Executive Committee (EC) as Vice-president after the unfortunate news of the sudden passing of our late colleague Fabio Chaverri Fonseca in October 2021. Although the news was shocking for all of us, since then, I committed to carry out the responsibility as Vice-president of ONTA and serve all ONTA members.
- In May of 2022 at the 7th International Nematology Congress (INC) in France, it was an honor and privilege for me to receive the mandate to carry out as ONTA President from the ONTA Past-president Prof. Martin Augusto Delgado-Junchaya who spent three years serving ONTA (July 2019-May 2022). As ONTA's new President, from May 2022-September 2023, I have been working with you all with pleasure and here is a summary of what has been done through this period.
- During the EC Business meeting at the 7th INC in France in May of 2022, Dr Ernesto San Blas became ONTA Vice-President and Dr Tristan T. Watson Vice-President Elect.
- After the EC Business meeting at the 7th INC in France, I invited Dr Mara Rubia Da Rocha to serve as a member-at-large in the EC and thanked Dr Mayra Rodriguez for her service to ONTA in this role. Also, I invited Dr Danny Coyne to remain serving as a member-at-large in the EC.
- At the INC business meeting in May 2022, intention letters were submitted to the EC from different countries to host ONTA's Annual Meeting in 2023, and Egypt was selected host country with most votes by ONTA members present at the ONTA Business meeting.
- Since the host country selection, the EC members met many times to discuss issues related to *Nematropica*, and the organization of the ONTA 53rd Annual Meeting in Cairo to be held from September 24-29 September 2023. This was the first time that an ONTA Annual Meeting was held in the North Africa and Middle East regions and outside the Americas.
- The local organizing committee, as well as the scientific organizing committee, were selected to carry out the meeting arrangements lead by Fahiem as the Chairman for the local organizing committee and Ernesto as the Chair for the scientific committee. All members did their best to have an excellent scientific program and well-organized meeting.
- I would like to thank very much **Dr Janete Brito** who suggested and took the lead for organizing, **for the first time ever in ONTA history**, a symposium about **Tropical Parasites and Human Health**. Dr Brito invited Professor Gregory S. Noland, the **Program Director for Elimination of River Blindness, Lymphatic Filariasis, Schistosomiasis and Malaria, at the Carter Center, Atlanta, Georgia (USA)** as a **keynote speaker for the meeting** with the topic '*Onchocerciasis (River Blindness) Elimination in the Americas and in Africa – Progress and Perspectives*'. Also, we very much thank our three guest speakers, Drs Sanna Botros, Jason Stanley and Claudia Riegel who contributed each with a great talk at the symposium.

President's report (cont.)

- I would also like to thank both **Dr Janete Brito and Dr Claudia Riegel** for their day and night work helping me to have the scientific program book ready with an artistic design and finish by Dr Riegel. All this hard work could not have been done without a continuous coordination with our Scientific Committee Chair Dr Ernesto San Blas and our forever helper Dr Larry Duncan. The ONTA 53rd annual meeting was jointly held with the Egyptian Society of Agronomatology and had the highest registration and delegate attendance from foreign countries as well as the host country. Special thanks also go to **Dr Julia Meredith and Dr Renato Inserra** (Fig. 39) **who both worked very hard in the preparation of this meeting** with the help of **Mrs Sara McCoy, Jaime Burrow, and Tonya Weeks**. Their dedication and hard work since we started to organize the meeting will never be forgotten. My appreciation goes to Dr Sanaa Haroon and Dr Abeer Yassin from the local organizing committee for their dedication and efforts throughout the meeting.
- We had a six-day meeting starting with a welcome reception and ending with a cultural exchange day, and in between many scientific presentations and discussions during three whole day sessions including one keynote speaker and two plenary talks.
- I would like to express my great thanks to all EC members who devoted their time through my presidency to help me to make our 53rd Annual Meeting from day one to the end a very memorable meeting.
- Finally, my great thanks to all students, professors, industry professionals and all sponsors for supporting and coming from across the world to make this meeting as a great memory for me personally, ONTA family and all Egyptians.

Wish you all a happy and enjoyable holiday season and see you all in Brazil.

President ONTA

Fahiem EL-Borai Kora



Fig. 39. ONTA 2015 Awards (Varadero, Cuba). From left to right: Nahum Marbán-Mendoza, Julia Meredith and Renato Inserra. Julia was awarded the 'ONTA extraordinary service award'. (Image: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)

ONTA Officers Reports (cont.)

Secretary's report

20 September 2023

ONTA's Secretary's Office has experienced a busy year. The annual meeting in Egypt resulted in numerous **new memberships as well as renewal payments from established members. Member payments were acknowledged and receipts issued.**

This year there was much correspondence of general nature and diverse topics, much related to information about the annual meeting. Membership lists were posted on the website. New member information and email addresses of new members and changes of email addresses were sent to Deborah Neher, Listserv Manager, for official correspondence purposes and to Janete Brito, Business Manager, and *Nematropica*.

Starting in May, the Secretary invoiced registrations and hotel accommodations for ONTA's meeting in Cairo that were to be paid by wire, electronic transfer, and check. Some credit card payments were invoiced also. Coordination with Eventbrite, the software program chosen for the event, was optimized to list and clarify persons registered, their status and bookings. Eventbrite was able to accept payment by credit cards only, while ONTA processed payments by credit cards and other means.

ONTA's web payment site was monitored; software updates were incorporated; and additional options for processing and holding currencies were evaluated. In coordination with the Treasurer, Renato Inserra, transfers were made to ONTA's bank account.

Following ONTA's annual meeting, tabulation of expenses incurred and registration details will be completed since at the date of this report, information is not complete.

Respectfully submitted,
Julia Meredith
Acting ONTA Secretary

ONTA Officers Reports (cont.)

Nematropica*'s reportTable 3. Summary of submissions and published manuscripts for Nematropica.*

| Year | Submitted | Published |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 2020 | | 23 |
| 2021 | 27 | 13 |
| 2022 | 17 | 12 |
| 2023 (as of August) | 14 | 9 |

We took over as Editors-in-Chief in 2020. After clearing up the backlog of manuscripts, the journal has seen a decline in submissions and published manuscripts. This is a trend that is being experienced by other journals, due to COVID. We have transitioned to one issue/year instead of two; this allows us to post manuscripts as they are finished.

Cathy Howard continues to be a joy to work with and we were happy that she was able to negotiate an increase in pay for her work on *Nematropica*. Without her continued efforts it is not clear how the journal could continue. We recruited Lesley Schumaker to actively post new manuscripts on twitter (X) which we hope will get more clicks for the journal. We thank the rest of the *Nematropica* Editors (Danny Humphreys, Johan Desaeger, Lesly Schumaker, Travis Faske, and Marcelo Oliviera) for their service.

Consideration:

- How to increase submissions to *Nematropica*
- Few manuscript in Spanish and Portuguese are being submitted
- Need to solicit review articles
- Need to assign DOI to manuscripts
- Financial future of the journal

Respectfully submitted by Editors-in-Chief Louise-Marie Dandurand and Inga Zasada

ONTA Officers Reports (cont.)

Business Manager's report

Total formatting charges for *Nematropica* (2022) Vol. 52, No. 1 amounted to US\$ 915.00. The total number of articles published in this issue was seven, totally US\$ 840.00. The total amount charged for formatting each article was US \$120.00. The other cost of this issue was US\$ 75.00, which reflects the preparation of the Table of Contents (US\$50.00) and Front matter and inside cover (US\$ 25.00).

Total printing charges for *Nematropica* (2022) Vol. 52, No. 2 amounted to US\$ 1,095.00. The total number of articles published in this issue was five, totally US \$1,020.00. The total amount charged for formatting each article was US\$ 204.00. The other cost of this issue was US\$ 75.00, which reflects the preparation of the Table of Contents (US\$ 450.00), Front matter and inside cover (US\$ 25.00).

At present, the total formatting charges for *Nematropica* (2023) Vol. 53, single issue amounted to US\$ 1,836.00. The total number of articles published in this issue as of August 2023 was nine. The total amount charged for formatting each article was US\$ 204.00.

According to the agreement between ONTA Executive Board, including the Editors-in Chief for *Nematropica* and Mrs Cathy Howard, the total amount charged for formatting each article would be increased by 70% starting in October 2022 and it would be also carried over in the following years, October 2023 and 2024.

Respectfully,

Dr Janete A. Brito
ONTA Business manage

ONTA Officers Reports (cont.)

Treasurer Report December 2022-December 2023

Gainesville FL, 9 January 2023.

Dear Colleagues:

I have completed the treasurer's report for transactions incurred in 2023. This report includes the incoming contributions and expenses relating to the 2023 annual meeting in Egypt.

For the first time in the history of the organization, ONTA has been involved directly in the financial and scientific preparation of the meeting. Financial transactions were conducted mainly by me and the Secretary **Dr Julia Meredith** who assorted meeting registrations from memberships. Her dedication and financial skills facilitated my work, especially the collection of meeting registrations transacted through PayPal payments. I congratulate our **Past-President Dr Fahiem El-Borai** for his outstanding financial expertise in raising funds for the meeting. He deserves the gratitude of ONTA members for making the 53rd ONTA Meeting a financial success for ONTA.

I filed electronically the federal tax return for 2022 and the corporation report for the state of Florida for 2023. ONTA FL, Inc. is a tax-exempt 501(c) (3) organization; however, a tax return is required for the previous year and a corporation report must be filed for the current year.

In the 12 months of 2023 covered by this report, ONTA's income increased by **US\$ 22,073.28**. A major portion of this increase was provided by a surplus of funds from the meeting in Egypt. Membership dues collected were **US\$ 3,706.01**. The partial cost for formatting and posting *Nematropica* Vol. 53 was **US\$ 2,523.00**.

I would like to mention that **Dr Luis Payan** (SYNGENTA) has provided consistently his sustaining member contribution of **US\$ 1,000.00**. Our appreciation goes also to **Dr Jared Jensen** (**AGBiome**) who donated **US\$ 700.00**. Their generosity is greatly appreciated.

The efforts of Dr Larry Duncan in adjusting ONTA's website and Dr Deb Neher for managing ONTA's official communications list are greatly appreciated. I thank them for their valuable time, detailed work, dedication and loyalty to ONTA.

ONTA's financial status is solid as it enters 2024.

Please contact me if you need more explanation concerning this report.

Respectfully submitted,
Renato Inserra,
ONTA Treasurer
Renato.inserra@fdacs.gov

ONTA Officers Reports (cont.)

Nominations Committee Chair's report

Dear Executive Committee Members,

Last year we had to call for an earlier election process in order to elect the two new ONTA Vice-Presidents for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 terms. Dr Tristan T. Watson and Dr Ernesto San Blas were the candidates selected by the Nominations Committee to be in the ballots. According to procedures, each candidate sent his biography in both Spanish and English versions, which also included a vision statement for ONTA. The election results were announced at the seventh ICN in Antibes Juan-Les-Pins-France (1-6 May 2022). Dr Ernesto San Blas was elected as ONTA Vice-President for the 2022-2023 term, and Dr Tristan T. Watson for the 2023-2024 term as ONTA Vice-President Elect.

I would like the opportunity to acknowledge Drs Ernesto and Tristan for their enthusiastic participation in the pre-selection and post-selection process.

Respectively submitted,
Rosa H. Manzanilla-López

ONTA Newsletter's editor

A total of two semestral issues of the ONTA Newsletter were published online during the period May 2022 until December 2023, and the first issue of 2023. The corresponding volume and issues were as follows: the first issue of Vol. 52 (1), the second issue of Vol. 52 (2) and the first issue of Vol. 53 (1). They were prepared and posted on the ONTA website (<http://www.ontaweb.org>) for access by ONTA members.

The editor would like to thank all ONTA Newsletter contributors for sending and sharing information and images through the year of 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosa H. Manzanilla-López

Minutes ONTA Executive Board Meeting LIII ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt

ONTA's Executive Board

September 26, 2023

Present: Faheim EL-Borai Kora, Ernesto San Blas, Danny Coyne, Johan Desaegeer, Tristan T. Watson, Larry Duncan, Janete Brito, Deb Neher, Louise-Marie Dandurand, Rosa H. Manzanilla-López, Martin Delgado (Past-President), Mara Rocha.

Called to order: 6:30 pm

Annual Reports

Nematropica

Louise-Marie:

- Down to a single issue per year when we used to have two (June, December)
 - publications are low, 9 published, 14 submitted.
- EB members need to promote the journal, want reviews, first reports. Having a DOI could be an incentive
 - Get the word out to the membership that it is our society journal.
 - Inga and Louise-Marie write message for listserv; announce at Business Meeting.
- Financial – Vol 52(1) June 2022; US\$ 122.00 per manuscript to Kathy Howard; US\$ 204.00 per manuscript since Oct 22 (see Janete's report); 70% adjustment US\$ 346.80 (Oct '23 – Sep '24), 70% adjustment per year (US\$ 589.56); on-line only
 - Kathy makes first cut for Inga and Louise-Marie to quick review;
- If submissions start to increase dramatically, we need to reassess membership fees so the society remains financially solvent; will need more reviewers
 - One proposal was that membership fees could increase to US\$ 70-100 for USA, Canada, Europe but stay at US\$ 40.00 for other countries
 - Larry Duncan will number crunch about budget prospects.

Need to recruit a secretary for ONTA:

- Make announcement at the business meeting soliciting nominations; plan to have a vote this fall with a start date of 1 January 2024.
- Reviewed roles of the secretary.
 - Detailed records of membership (send reminders when dues need to be paid; follow up on members who haven't paid recently; coordinate with Listserv manager, Business Manager and Treasurer for dues payments.

Newsletter editor – Rosa:

- 2 issues of Newsletter Vol. 52 (2) in December 22, Vol. 53(1) in June.

Nominations Committee (Rosa):

- Will collect nominations and request ballot for secretary election.
- Identify candidates for next election of Vice President and President.

**Minutes ONTA Executive Board Meeting LIII ONTA Annual Meeting, Cairo, Egypt
(cont.)**

The proposal for 2024 meeting in Brazil is well developed (September 2-5, 2024); an invitation and overview will be presented at the business meeting, followed by a formal vote from the membership.

Topics for Future Executive Committee

- Membership dues adjustment
- Nomination committee for VP/P

Created an agenda for the Business meeting

- Journal – promote journal
- Brazil Meeting joint between ONTA and Brazilian Society of Nematologists
- Nominations for secretary
- ESN Soledad

Adjourn 7:45 pm

Prepared by Deborah Neher, substitute for the Acting Secretary Julia Meredith

NEMATOLOGY AT UGHEENT



The 3rd Pan-African Nematology Network workshop to be held in Benin, March 2024

Inge Dehennin and Dora Scott from the Nematology Coordination Office at Ghent University (Belgium) sent a kind invitation to ONTA members interested in attending the third Pan-African Nematology Network workshop (Figs 40, 41).

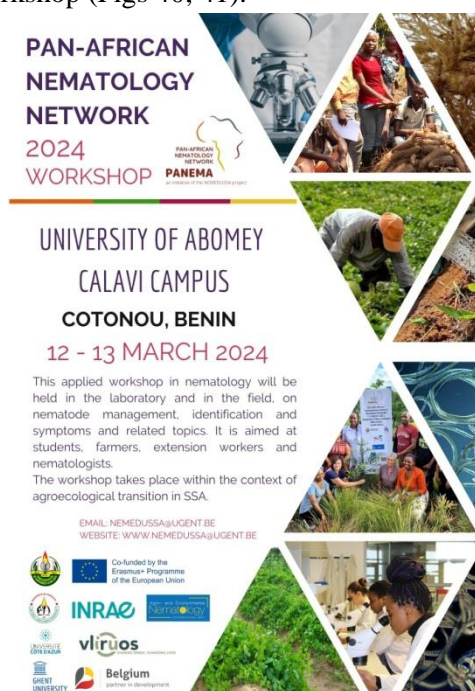


Fig. 40. PANEMA Workshop, Benin 2024.

The third international PANEMA workshop will take place in Cotonou, Benin, from 12-13 March 2024. This 2-day workshop, hosted by the University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin (in cooperation with the Université de Parakou, INRAE, Université Côte d'Azur and Ghent University), will bring together trained nematologists, early-career researchers, students, agricultural extension workers and farmers from across Benin and West-Africa. This event builds on the successes of previous PANEMA workshops, held in Kenya in 2022 and South Africa in

2023, and takes place within the context of agroecological transition in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

PANEMA (Pan-African Nematology Network) was established in 2021 as part of the Erasmus+ project *Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE): Nematology Education in Sub-Sahara Africa* (NEMEDUSSA). The NEMEDUSSA project aims to increase awareness about nematodes and expand educational and research capacities in Higher Education Institutes in SSA on this topic. The project is a joint effort by a consortium of Universities from SSA and Europe, led by the Nematology Coordination Office at Ghent University, Belgium.

The focus of this PANEMA workshop in Benin is to provide additional educational opportunities for those working in agriculture and nematology in a West-African context. This workshop takes a more targeted approach than its predecessors and is specifically designed for French-speaking students, farmers, extension workers and nematologists. This event will include an expert market and roundtable discussions, field visits to local farms as well as scientific training for students and applied training for farmers and extension workers. Participants will receive training in nematode management, identification and symptoms in the field, as well as under the microscope.

For more information about the NEMEDUSSA project and upcoming PANEMA events, please see www.nemedussa.ugent.be. The NEMEDUSSA project is funded with support from the European Commission.

NEMATOLOGY AT UGENT (cont.)

PAN-AFRICAN NEMATOLOGY NETWORK WORKSHOP 2024

Day 1: 12 March 2024
NEMATODE KNOW-HOW IN AGRO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITIONS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
Plenary session

- What are nematodes?
- Managing plant parasitic nematodes in the context of agro-ecological transition in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Interactive session to understand the challenges in nematode management amongst stakeholders

Expert booths
(Informal rotating sessions and discussions between experts and stakeholders)

Booths for extension workers and farmers

1. Symptoms of nematode infections in plants
2. Nematode & disease interactions
3. How to prevent nematode infection + microscopy demonstration of a nematode

Booths for students, technicians, researchers

1. How to start research on Entomopathogenic nematodes
2. Identification of plant-parasitic and beneficial nematodes
3. Your future Nematology lab

Day 2: 13 March 2024
THROUGH THE MICROSCOPE: EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE OF NEMATODES

Specialised training for students, technicians, new researchers

Morphological identification of Plant-parasitic and beneficial nematodes

Entomopathogenic nematodes
infection, screening, inoculation, DNA extraction

PRACTICAL NEMATODE STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE FARMING

Practical training for extension workers and farmers

Hands-on nematology

- Training on nematode symptoms and management strategies
- How to take a sample
- Where to go for analysis

Field visits

- Vegetable production field of the Cooperative Eco-Legumes (Calavi)
- Intensive vegetable production site (Cotonou)

Logos: PANEMA, GHENT UNIVERSITY, UNIVERSITÉ CÔTE D'AZUR, INRAE, Nematology, vliroos, Belgium, Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, www.nemedussa.ugent.be, nemedussa@ugent.be

Fig. 41. PANEMA workshop program. Nematology Coordination Office: Erasmus+ CBHE project Nematology Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (NEMEDUSSA). For more information, reach out to: nemedussa@ugent.be

Dora and Inge sent a short announcement (Fig. 42) inviting students to apply for the **International Master of Science in Agro- and Environmental Nematology (IMaNema)** at Ghent University, Belgium for the next academic year (2024-2025). They welcome applications from Latin America students.

GHENT UNIVERSITY Agro- and Environmental Nematology INTERNATIONAL MSc

INTERNATIONAL MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRO- AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEMATOLOGY (IMANEMA)

www.imanema.ugent.be
nematology.gent@ugent.be

APPLY FOR ADMISSION & SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-2025!
(scholarship deadline 1 Feb 2024)
(admission deadline 1 April 2024)

INTERNATIONAL MSC PROGRAMME IN ENGLISH

2 YEARS 120 ECTS

- GLOBALLY UNIQUE
- SPECIALISED & APPLIED SCIENTIFIC TRAINING
- TAUGHT BY INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS
- FIELD EXPERIENCE, INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS & MOBILITY

PROGRAMA INTERNACIONAL DE MÁSTER EN INGLÉS

2 AÑOS 120 ECTS

¡SOLICITA ADMISIÓN Y BECAS PARA EL AÑO ACADÉMICO 2024-2025!
(fecha límite 1 feb 2024)
(plazo de admisión 1 de abril de 2024)

- ÚNICO EN EL MUNDO
- FORMACIÓN CIENTÍFICA ESPECIALIZADA Y APLICADA
- IMPARTIDA POR EXPERTOS INTERNACIONALES
- EXPERIENCIA SOBRE EL TERRENO, PRÁCTICAS INTERNACIONALES Y MOVILIDAD

Logos: vliroos, Belgium, partner in development

Fig. 42. International Master of Science in Agro- and Environmental Nematology (IMaNema) 2024-2025 call.

CONGRATULATIONS



Fig. 43. Dr Luis Pocasangre Enamorado.

Dr Luis Pocasangre-Enamorado (Fig. 43) was appointed the 27th November 2023 as **the New General Director of CATIE** (Tropical

Agricultural Research and Teaching Center) starting on 1 March 2024. His designation was made by the Superior Council of Ministers of CATIE, after a rigorous selection process. With a Master's degree in plant breeding from CATIE and a doctorate from the University of Bonn, Germany, Dr Pocasangre has a solid background in the field of agricultural research. His experience includes prominent positions in international organizations and renowned universities (Fig. 44). CATIE is one of the most prestigious Agricultural institutes of Costa Rica and Latin America. Luis appointment has been celebrated by CATIE, EARTH and Honduras' Ministry of Agriculture (Fig. 45).



Fig. 44. Dr Luis Pocasangre. A: EARTH University nematology lab, B: Alicante University (Spain), C: Agribiotecnología de Costa Rica S. A., D: Field trip International Biological Control Congress (2018, Costa Rica). (Images: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)



Fig. 45. Media news on the appointment of Dr Pocasangre-Enamorado as CATIE's General Director. (Images courtesy of L. Pocasangre-Enamorado.)

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Laura Mayorga

Laura's thesis defense (Fig. 46) was on 10th October, 2023, at the Gulf Coast Research and education center (GCREC) in Wimauma, Florida (USA). Her project was done under the supervision of Dr Johan Desaeger, and her academic committee included Dr Karla Medina and Dr Peter DiGennaro. Laura did her undergrad at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and during that time she worked with potato cyst nematode. Then she moved to the USA and joined the nematology lab directed by Dr Desaeger to do an internship and thereafter her Master's degree.



Fig.46. Left to right: Dr Johan Desaeger, Laura Mayorga and Dr Karla Medina (image: J. Desaeger).

Efficacy and viability of *Purpureocillium lilacinum* in Florida [Thesis abstract]. *Purpureocillium lilacinum* (*Paecilomyces lilacinum*) is a fungus that parasitizes plant-parasitic nematodes. The efficacy of this fungus is often related to its persistence in soil, which is reported to be low in sandy soils with low organic matter and temperatures above 28°C, which are common conditions in Florida. In this project, we tested (1) the efficacy of *P. lilacinum* in Pasteurized and non-Pasteurized soil, (2) the effect of crab meal amendments and *P. lilacinum* against *Meloidogyne javanica*, and (3) the efficacy and viability of two strains of *P. lilacinum*, PL11 and PL251, against *Meloidogyne enterolobii*. In addition, we evaluated quantification methods of *P. lilacinum* with two different protocols, a media-dependent method and qPCR. Overall, the performance of *P. lilacinum* strain 251 was better in non-Pasteurized soil compared to Pasteurized. There was no interaction between *P. lilacinum* and crab meal. Strain 251 had better control over *M. enterolobii* compared to PL11, however, more research is needed as the strains did not have the same level of spores. In addition, the persistence of each strain was higher in the non-Pasteurized compared to the Pasteurized. Regarding the spore quantification, the values were higher in the qPCR compared to the media-dependent method, however, both methods are suitable for monitoring the spore density from soil.

Chile

Remembering Erwin Aballay (1961-2022)

by Luna Aballay



Fig. 47. Erwin Aballay.

On 13 October, 2023, a commemoration ceremony for my father (Figs 47, 48) was held at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the University of Chile. The event was attended by students, teachers, friends and family. The event was full of emotions. Different speeches were read where Erwin was remembered in his different facets: as a teacher, co-worker, friend and father. After portraying my dad through different visions, the act continued with different photos throughout his life. Filling the room with silence and tears. In all the photos, he looked extremely happy. The event ended with a 'cueca', our folk dance. A couple danced to the song that my dad liked the most,

"tu cinturita" by Víctor Jara. It was a short ceremony, but it managed to capture the entire essence of my dad. "It made us all melancholy and we were able to remember it with a lot of love.



Fig. 48. Luna, Erwin and ONTA members at the Annual Meeting in Costa Rica (2019). Image courtesy of Helen Elizabeth Guardia Casas.

That day, I read a speech that can be found complete at the YouTube link where the ceremony was broadcast (starts at approximately minute 30): Ceremonia Homenaje Profesor Erwin Aballay Espinoza YouTube.com (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gx7KiulgkMw>).

Luna Aballay Fragments of her Speech at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, University of Chile (October 2023)

“Today I come to talk to you about the mountain man. Of a mythical being, half man, half cloud. A man condemned to eternal personal pilgrimages, without a guide, without a religion behind him. Without destiny, without faith. A wandering sailor between melodies. A laboratory poet. A melancholic genius. A man with a wide smile and light laugh. He was, just as the movie says, Aballay, the man without fear.

As a father, he was quite demanding with me. My whole life seemed to prepare me for this moment. But he was a loving dad, who taught me everything he could. I needed to know that I could take flight on my own and I did. He never made me question being a woman, because he always saw me capable of doing absolutely anything I set my mind to. He advised me, protected, helped and accompanied me as much as he could.

Everything I have left of him, all the things he liked, I leave in a small box in my heart. I continue to treasure them, as if he continued to live through me. Plants, nematodes, kittens, music, art, Japanese literature, jazz, science fiction, dancing, singing, dreaming.

My dad, a laboratory dreamer, conquered every corner of this country with his army of nematodes. He inherited a branch that seemed forgotten, he studied it with enthusiasm and taught us one by one who his beloved nematodes were. Finding beauty in those microscopic worms that seem to always be low profile. Those of us who study them can identify with each other, we are so few and we all come from the same teacher. He trained us all to have the same passion as him. I can assure you that the nematodes and plants are mourning his departure, I have even seen through the magnifying glass, if I focus carefully, how each nematode has my dad's name written on it.

And despite the love he had for nematodes and the happiness they gave him in every discovery he had, I think those were the only moments where he seemed to see beyond the horizon, the fullness of life, peace, the sense of belonging. The here and now. The absolute revelation was when the music was playing in the background, the stars were overhead and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves”

Note: Google translation and edited by R. H. Manzanilla-López

Spain

Review of the Second Meeting of Spanish Nematologists

Dr Soledad Verdejo-Lucas

The second meeting of the Spanish Nematologists took place on 24-25 October, 2023 at the University of Alicante (San Vicente del Raspeig) organized by Dr Federico López-Moya and Dr Luis Vicente López-Llorca. The meeting began with an amazing classical music concert by **the Duo “En Clave de Hermanas”** (Fig. 49) that set the mood of the attendees to enjoy the scientific advances presented by each research group. In addition to the oral presentations, a Poster session was organized, a round table on **“Nematology in Spain and in the International context”** and a Debate on the establishment of the bases of the Spanish Society of Nematology (Fig. 50). Likewise, the preparations for the 35th Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists, which will be held in Cordoba from April 15 to 19, 2024, were discussed (<http://esn24cordoba.com>).



Fig. 49. Duo “En Clave de Hermanas”.



Fig. 50. Spanish Nematologists gathered at University of Alicante, Spain (images courtesy of S. Verdejo-Lucas).

ONTA MEMBERS NEWS



Dear ONTA colleagues,

Greetings from the **Local Organization Committee of the 35th Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists**. We cordially invite you to participate in the upcoming ESN2024 meeting [<https://esn24cordoba.com/>], to be held in **Cordoba (Spain) from 15 to 19 April 2024**.

ESN2024 will take place in the Palace of Congresses and Exhibitions of Cordoba [<https://www.turismodecordoba.org/palace-of-congresses-and-exhibitions>], right in front of the world heritage site of the Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba.

Registration is now open. Please, register before 31st January 2024 at [<https://esn24cordoba.com/registration/>] to benefit from the early registration fees. Abstract submission [<https://esn24cordoba.com/abstracts/>] is now open until 15th January 2024. The scientific program of the symposium [<https://esn24cordoba.com/program/>] will include oral and poster sessions on all Nematological subjects and plenary talks given by keynote speakers on the most updated Nematological research and issues <https://esn24cordoba.com/speakers/>.

There are plenty of accommodation options for all budgets nearby. Please have a look to our hotel suggestions at [<https://esn24cordoba.com/accommodation/>] or book through your favorite travel agent. It is advisable to book early due to the high touristic season at the time of the meeting,

Cordoba is a city with an impressive cultural and monumental patrimony. Cordoba holds four inscriptions in the World Heritage List granted by the UNESCO: the Mosque-Cathedral, the historic quarters around it, the Courtyards Festival and the site of Medina Azahara. In addition, it shares the titles of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity awarded to Flamenco (2010) and the Mediterranean Diet (2013) with the rest of Spain.

More Information and registration are available at <https://esn24cordoba.com/>

We look forward to seeing you all and to share the scientific advances that will be presented during the upcoming 35th International Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists in Cordoba, Spain. April 2024.

The Local Organizing Committee



International Congress 100th Anniversary EPN Description

Raquel Campos-Herrera



Fig. 51. Raquel Campos-Herrera.

We are delighted to announce the upcoming congress commemorating the **100th anniversary of the first description of the entomopathogenic nematode *Steinernema kraussei* by Götthold Steiner in 1923 (Steiner, 1923)**. This event will be a unique opportunity to celebrate a century of scientific achievements in the field of nematology and entomology. Join us in celebrating the centenary of the discovery of *Steinernema kraussei* and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and solutions for sustainable agriculture and pest management.

The congress will be held in Logroño (Spain) from **Wednesday 10th April, 2024 until Friday 12th of April, 2024**. Organized

by **Raquel Campos-Herrera** (Fig. 51), this event will take place immediately before the 2024 meeting of the European Society of Nematologists (www.esn-online.org[1]) in Cordoba, providing participants with an opportunity to attend both events and maximize their knowledge and networking experiences. We will bring together renowned experts, researchers, and students from around the world to discuss the latest findings, innovations, and challenges related to entomopathogenic nematodes. Symposia will be organized to include competent experts in the field to summarize existing knowledge and provide valuable insights and perspectives on the history, evolution, and future of nematode research. Poster presentations, workshops and networking opportunities will allow participants to engage with their peers and learn from the best in the field. We look forward to welcoming you to the congress and experiencing an unforgettable celebration of a century of nematology and entomology.

More Information:

[HTTPS://WWW.ICVV.ES/ENGLISH/EPN](https://www.icvv.es/english/epn)

Reference

Steiner, G. (1923) *Aplectana kraussei* n.sp., eine in der Blattwespe *Lyda* sp. parasitierende Nematodenform, nebst Bemerkungen über das Seitenorgan der parasitischen Nematoden. Zentralblatt für Bakteriologie, Parasitenkunde, Infektionskrankheiten und Hygiene, Zweite Abteilung **59**, 14-18.

NEMATOPHAGOUS FUNGI: BIOCONTROL AGENTS OR CELL FACTORIES?



*Beyond the state-of-the-Art
Ad-Hoc Session Workshop*

Friday March 15th 2024: 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm.

Co-chairs: Luis V. Lopez-Llorca,
University of Alicante, Spain
[lv.lopez@ua.es] and Aurelio Ciancio,
CNR, Italy [aurelio.ciancio@ipsp.cnr.it]

*Fig. 52. Aurelio Ciancio (left) and Luis V. Lopez-Llorca (right).
(Images: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)*

Dear colleagues and friends,

Aurelio Ciancio and Luis V. Lopez-Llorca (Fig. 52) are the organizers of the **AdHoc Workshop on Nematophagous Fungi** (Fig. 53) to be held as part of the **32nd Fungal Genetics Conference (Asilomar, CA, USA) program**.

Nematophagous Fungi are a good example of the plasticity of Fungi in natural environments. All main Fungal lineages have examples of groups with nematode-destroying capacities. They differentiate structures (appressoria or traps) and biomolecules (metabolites-including volatile organic compounds [VOCs-], enzymes and others). Nematophagous Fungi are a living proof of coevolution in soil and other complex habitats where nematodes live. Some Nematophagous Fungi have a key role in nematode management, especially with plant and animal parasitic species. *Omics* and Synthetic Biology techniques can help us to exploit Nematophagous Fungi as true cell factories for multiple uses in Agro, Health and other Industry Biotechnological applications.

This Workshop is open to contributors from Academia, Research Institutions and Industry, dealing with these organisms and similar ones.

Luis and Aurelio would like to encourage ONTA members to participate in the workshop and submit your abstract as soon as possible (**deadline 31 January 2024**). Please see details below and visit <https://genetics-gsa.org/fungal-2024/>

Organization

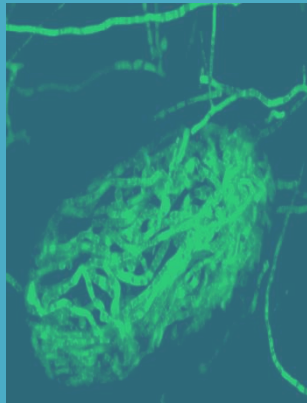
-*Young Researcher* presentations (5min/talk, including questions)

-*Senior Researchers* presentations (10min/talk, including questions)

Talks will be considered as they are received, once the time slot is complete no more talks will be accepted.

Invitation 32nd Fungal Genetics Conference (cont.)

Topics (non-exclusive), will include the following:



- Predatory Fungi
- Endoparasitic Fungi
- Oomycetes and Zoosporic Fungi
- *Pochonia chlamydosporia* and similar egg-parasites
- Systematics and Evolution
- Morphogenesis and Mode of action
- Suppressive Soils and Biological Control
- Plant Growth and Development Promotion
- Plant Priming/Defense induction
- Evasion of Immunity
- Abiotic stress protection
- Secondary Metabolism
- Biotechnology. Inoculum and Metabolite production

Fig. 53. Nematode egg parasitized by *P. chlamydosporia* (image: L. Lopez-Llorca).

Application requests should include: Name, Affiliation, Contacting email and Abstract (less than 1000 characters) and should be sent to both organizers as soon as possible. Talks accepted will be confirmed to proposers, which should register in the 32nd Fungal Genetics Conference for their talk finally be accepted.



Fig. 54. EPN's 100 Anniversary.
(Image courtesy of Raquel Campos-Herrera.)

- 100th anniversary of the first description of the entomopathogenic nematode *Steinernema kraussei* by Götthold Steiner in 1923 (Steiner, 1923). The congress will be held in Logroño (Spain) from Wednesday 10th April, 2024 until Friday 12th of April, 2024. Event organized by Raquel Campos-Herrera. More Information: [HTTPS://WWW.ICVV.ES/ENGLISH/EPN](https://www.icvv.es/english/EPN)

35th Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists



Fig. 55. Cordoba, Spain. (Image: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)

- The 35th Symposium of the European Society of Nematologists will be held in the «Palacio de Congresos» in Cordoba (Spain), from 15-19 April 2024. Information and registration are open at <https://esn24cordoba.com/>



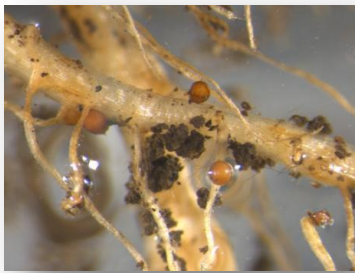
Fig. 56. Havana (historical centre), Cuba. (Image: R. H. Manzanilla-López.)

IX International Seminar of Plant Health. Conventions Palace, Havana, Cuba from 6th-10th May. The Institute of Plant Health Research (INISAV) and National Plant Health Direction (DSV) of Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Cuba, are pleased to invite you to participate in the IX International Plant Health Scientific Seminar 2024, "Plant Health for Life". For further information access the website <https://www.inisav.cu> and email address: seminarioint@iisav.cu



XX International Plant Protection Congress 1-5 July, Athens, Greece.

Fig. 57. Plant Protection Congress (image courtesy of Thomae Kakouli-Duarte).



The **6th Symposium of PCN Management** will take place in **September 2024**.

Further information at

<https://www.aab.org.uk/event/6th-symposium-of-potato-cyst-nematode-management/>.

Fig. 58. Cyst nematode (image courtesy of Matthew Back).



The **8th Symposium of Biofumigation** will take place in **Argentina** on the **21-25 October 2024**.

Information at <https://biofumigacion.ar/en/home/>

Fig. 59. Mustard (image courtesy of Matthew Back).

INVITATION

ONTA
FOUNDATION



Get busy! ONTA Foundation, Inc. status is clear and high. Open your wings and take a flight!

Dear ONTA member,

ONTA Foundation is ready for a campaign to request donations and expand its contributor base in a big way. ONTA Foundation can receive funds through several means: 1) checks made out to the ONTA Foundation and mailed to Janete Brito (Fig. 60); 2) credit card, same information required as for membership

payment; 3) wire transfer. Janete Brito and Renato Inserra have full codes for wiring if requested.

Please give generously to support the activities and projects of the ONTA Foundation.



Fig. 60. Janete Brito.

ONTA NEWSLETTER INVITATION

Dear ONTA member,

Do you have a passion for nematodes and nematology? Would you like to share nematology news and pictures with our ONTA members? If so, welcome aboard!

We would like to extend to you a warm invitation to send or share information for our next ONTA Newsletter issue.

Please contact us. We are looking forward to hearing from you and to learn about your local nematology events and news.

Thanks,

Rosa (ONTA Newsletter editor)



Fig. 61. Rosa H. Manzanilla-López.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ONTA Newsletter editor would like to thank all ONTA Newsletter contributors for sending and sharing information and images through May-December 2023. Special thanks are given to **Miss Eman Mokhtar** for the images of Egypt's ONTA meeting included in this issue.



Fig. 62. Christmas card Courtesy of Walter Peraza (National University of Costa Rica).

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