



NEWSLETTER

International Society of Chemical Ecology

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— Important Dates —

- ◇ **15 April 2026**
Deadline for the Travel Awards applications
- ◇ **20 May 2026**
Deadline for abstract submission to the 2026 ISCE Ithaca, NY, USA.
- ◇ **1 May 2026**
Last day to submit ballots for the 2026 ISCE Officer Election
- ◇ **21-25 June 2026**
ISCE Annual Meeting, Ithaca, NY, USA

2026-2027 ISCE Elections

All members are invited to vote in the 2026-2027 ISCE Elections. This year, the membership will vote to select a vice-president, treasurer, secretary and four councilors. The **vice-president** serves one year in this position and serves as president in the following year. **Councilors** serve a three-year term and act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee. For additional information, please consult [the ISCE bylaws](#). Please [log in to your ISCE account](#) to find an [election ballot](#) to vote.

2026 ISCE Meeting Cornell University, Ithaca NY, USA



The annual meeting of the **International Society of Chemical Ecology** will be hosted by one of the founding institutions of our field, Cornell University, from **June 21-25, 2026**. We welcome attendees from across the world to Ithaca, nestled within the scenic "Finger Lakes" Region of upstate New York, USA. We are planning an exciting week of concurrent sessions, plenary talks and posters along with a new feature, an Early Career symposium celebrating the next generation of Chemical Ecologists. In addition, we are happy to offer mid-conference field excursions and a wine-tasting trip, along with two post-conference analytical workshops. Registration is now open, with "early bird" discount rates available until April 7, 2026. The Call for Abstracts is now open and will remain so until May 20. Additional information related to the conference venue, accommodations, fees and travel details can be found at our conference website:

<https://events.ces.scl.cornell.edu/event/ISCE2026/home>

Spread the word and join us at Cornell this summer!

Robert Raguso

2026 ISCE Officer Elections

All members are invited to vote in the 2026 ISCE Elections. This year, the membership will vote to select a vice president, treasurer, secretary and four councilors. The Vice-president serves one year in this position, becomes President the following year and serves (with the board of councilors) as Past-president in their third year. The **Treasurer** and **Secretary** serves for three years with a possibility to be re-elected for another term. The **Councilors** serve a three-year term and act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee. For additional information, please consult the ISCE bylaws, available online at the society website.

The online ballot is available for all paid members. Please log in to your ISCE account to vote:

<https://chemecol.org/2026-isce-election-ballot/>

After reviewing the biographies below, please vote for your candidates: **ONE (1)** for Vice President, **ONE (1)** for Treasurer, **ONE (1)** for Secretary and **FOUR (4)** candidates for Councilors. Please submit this information via the electronic ballot. **Voting will close at midnight (EDT) on May 1, 2026.**

Candidates for Vice President

Astrid Groot

Astrid Groot investigates how sexual odors in night-active butterflies (moths) evolve and contribute to speciation. Since her PhD (in 2000) at Wageningen University, she aims to understand which environmental and/or physiological factors affect intraspecific variation in sex pheromone signals and responses, and when can and does this variation lead to population differentiation. She is especially interested in translating fundamental insights in chemical ecology and evolution to sustainable pest management practices.

After a postdoctoral period at North Carolina State University with Coby Schal and Fred Gould, she was promoted to research assistant professor upon receiving an USDA grant. In 2007, she became group leader at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology (MPICE) in the department of David Heckel. In 2011, she received a MacGillavry fellowship at the University of Amsterdam, and combined her appointment at UvA with her appointment at MPICE until 2021. In 2018 she became department head at UvA.

Astrid is ISCE member since 1995 and has been active in the society as council member (2014-2018), (co)organized a symposium at the **ISCE meeting (2013)**, published 9 papers in the *Journal of Chemical Ecology*, and has reviewed regularly for this journal. She has also been co-editor of *Frontiers in Ecology and*



Evolution, section Chemical Ecology, was external board member of the Max Planck center Next generation Insect Chemical Ecology (2022-2024), is part of the European Network in Chemical Ecology, organized the Amsterdam Chemical Ecology symposium (2018), was guest lecturer in the International Chemical Ecology course (2019, 2025), and (co)organized the PhD course Chemical communications (2020, 2025). She is also co-editor of the textbook "Introduction to Chemical Ecology", which is expected to come online in 2026.

If elected to vice-president of ISCE, her aim would be to further promote our society and the field of chemical ecology by reaching out to young and established researchers and practitioners within the fields of Biology, Chemistry and pest management, but also in less obvious areas, such as Psychobiology, AI and Molecular and Material design, where chemical ecological principles can be applied.

Almuth Hammerbacher

I obtained my PhD in Biochemistry from Friedrich Schiller University, Germany, in 2011, where I also completed several postdoctoral projects focused on the chemical ecology of bark beetles. I am currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Zoology and Entomology at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, where I have established a research team on chemical ecology in plantation forestry since 2019. My research investigates the chemical interactions among trees, insects, and microbes. In parallel, I manage a dedicated service platform for the South African forestry industry that identifies resistant trees within breeding programmes. Leveraging the extensive phenotypic variation available from these trials, my team studies the metabolic processes and bioactive compounds that underpin effective defence responses. To achieve this, we integrate laboratory, greenhouse, and field assays with advanced analytical and computational approaches, including GC-MS, LC-MS, gene expression analysis, hyperspectral imaging, and AI-based tools.



Should my candidature be successful, I would be honoured to support the Society's ongoing activities, actively participate in annual meetings, and engage positively with the membership. In addition, I would like to increase the Society's footprint in the Global South by helping to facilitate opportunities for capacity building (training events), mentorship (connecting experienced mentors with young chemical ecologists from the Global South), and the establishment of research networks. I believe that strengthening inclusivity, interdisciplinary collaboration, and communication across regions will enrich the entire field. By creating sustainable, long-term structures for mentorship and training, we can empower scientists in underrepresented regions to contribute unique perspectives and discoveries, ensuring a truly global and resilient future for chemical ecology.

Candidate for Treasurer

Christopher S. Jeffrey

Christopher S. Jeffrey is a chemist and Professor of Chemistry whose contributions to chemical ecology focus on connecting chemistry and chemists to address large, integrative questions in the field. His work applies organic synthesis, analytical chemistry, and natural product structure determination as chemical tools to elucidate the molecular basis of chemical signals that shape biological interactions, providing a rigorous chemical foundation for multidisciplinary chemical ecology.



He is the Director and Co-Founder of the Hitchcock Center for Chemical Ecology and serves as the Walter Siebens Chair at Tahoe, roles through which he works to bring together chemists, biologists, ecologists, and environmental scientists to tackle complex problems that cannot be addressed within a single discipline. A central component of this effort is developing resources and opportunities to break down barriers between scientific disciplines, using multidisciplinary research, training, and education to foster collaboration and a shared scientific language across fields.

Professor Jeffrey is an advocate for chemical ecology and for serving the broader community of scientists who contribute to the discipline. He brings particular expertise in fundraising and building industrial connections, and is committed to strengthening the Society's capacity to support meetings, training opportunities, and initiatives that advance chemical ecology and its impact worldwide.

Candidate for Secretary

Pavlina Kyjakova

Pavlina Kyjakova is a research scientist at the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry, Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, in the group of Dr. R. Hanus, pursuing chemical ecology of termites. Pavlina graduated in analytical chemistry at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic, where she applied chromatographic data to determine vapor pressures of pheromone-like compounds. She also spent 6 months in the lab of Prof. J. Meinwald, interpreting GC-FTIR data of pheromonal components under the supervision of Dr. A. Attygale. As a PhD student, using various sampling techniques for volatile organic compounds, she studied interaction of the European oak bark bee-



(*Scolytus intricatus*) with its host tree and associated fungi, under the supervision of Dr. B. Koutek and Prof. I. Valterová. In the area of termite chemical ecology, she studied diversity of chemical defensive compounds in various neotropical species as well as pheromonal compounds including structural elucidation of termite queen pheromones based on interpretation of mass spectrometric and infrared data and enantioselective chromatographic separations.

Her current research interest further involves human chemocommunication, such as uniqueness of human scent signature, olfactory communication between child and mother, the role of odour in mate choice, and volatile chemistry of different emotional states or diseases; primarily applying comprehensive two-dimensional gas chromatography with mass spectrometry detection and metabolomics approaches.

Pavlina is teaching chemistry topics of chemical ecology and natural products at the Charles University and at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem. She is a member of the Czech Mass Spectrometry Society and the Lipidomic section of the Czech Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. She became ISCE member in 1998.

Candidates for Councilors

(in alphabetic order)

Emily Claereboudt

Emily Claereboudt is a marine chemical ecologist (she/her) based at the Michael Sars Centre, University of Bergen, Norway, where she studies chemical communication in marine invertebrates and the role of chemical cues in shaping behaviour, reproduction, and ecological interactions. Her research focuses on benthic marine systems, with a particular interest in echinoderms and other non-model marine organisms that rely heavily on chemosensation. Her work integrates behavioural assays, high-resolution tracking, imaging approaches, transcriptomics, biophysics, and non-targeted metabolomics to link chemical signals with sensory processing and organismal responses.



Emily's path to chemical ecology was driven by a long-standing fascination with marine environments and the often-hidden chemical interactions that structure them. She holds a Master's degree in bioengineering with a major in chemistry and bioindustries, and a dual PhD in bioengineering and biological sci-

ences from the Universities of Mons and Liège, Belgium. Through this training, she has developed a strongly interdisciplinary research profile bridging ecology, analytical chemistry, biophysics, and computational approaches. Her current research aims to identify and characterise conspecific chemical cues and their receptors in sea cucumbers, contributing to a broader understanding of the evolution of chemical signalling in the ocean. In addition to her research, Emily is actively engaged in service to the chemical ecology community. In 2025, she organised the aquatic session at the ISCE annual meeting in Christchurch, New Zealand, with the goal of increasing the visibility of marine chemical ecology and fostering dialogue between aquatic and terrestrial researchers.

Christophe Duplais

Christophe Duplais is an organic chemist whose career bridges fundamental chemistry and modern chemical ecology. After earning his Ph.D. in organic chemistry and conducting post-doctoral research in catalysis, he transitioned to interdisciplinary chemical ecology. As a CNRS principal investigator in French Guiana, he studied insect-microbe symbiosis and wood chemistry. His background as a chemist, still relatively rare within ISCE, brings a distinct molecular and biosynthetic perspective to ecological questions, strengthening the connection between chemical structure, their function and evolution.



From 2017 to 2021, he was an active member of the French Chemical Ecology Consortium (GDR MediatEC) and co-lead the "Experimental Field Station" axis. In this role, he encouraged integrative, field-based chemical ecology research in Amazonian systems. Since joining Cornell University in 2021, Christophe has developed a research program at the intersection of chemical ecology and agricultural chemistry. He combines metabolomics and genomics to study the ecology and evolution of plant toxins, insect detoxification, insect pigments, and insect pheromone. In parallel, he has advanced applied chemical ecology by improving pheromone-based trapping systems and volatile detection tools for sustainable pest management.

He has been an ISCE member since 2014 and has presented at multiple ISCE meetings. He currently serves as co-organizer of the 2026 ISCE conference in Ithaca. As editor of the Journal of Chemical Ecology and an active participant in society activities, he is committed to providing further leadership and strengthening the integration of rigorous organic and analytical chemistry with ecological and evolutionary perspectives within the ISCE.

Alvin Hee

Dr. Alvin Kah-Wei Hee is an Associate Professor of Entomology at Universiti Putra Malaysia. He has contributed significantly to the chemical ecology of *Bactrocera* fruit flies, notably unravelling the role of methyl eugenol in sex pheromone communication that has reshaped global fruit fly management strategies. A Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society, he



leads the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)-funded projects integrating sterile insect techniques (SIT) with semiochemicals for sustainable pest control. One such collaborative project identified the rectal compounds of several species of major pest fruit flies and their volatiles that resulted in a significant global breakthrough in recognising those species as one biological species of *B. dorsalis*. Other successes included the identification of the complementary roles of the antennae and maxillary palps of *B. dorsalis* in detecting methyl eugenol from long and short distance leading to advanced understanding of olfaction. Alvin's recent IAEA-funded projects included development of non-methyl eugenol-responsive strains of male *B. dorsalis* for consideration in application of male annihilation technique (MAT) and SIT in MAT-SIT programmes. He's also currently investigating how gravid tephritid female fruit flies respond to fruit odors. Some of Alvin's work can be found in the following link:

<https://bit.ly/3DYBgSA?r=lp&m=Mn2cnPhR3Wk>

Recognized internationally, Dr. Hee holds visiting professorships at Zhejiang Academy of Agricultural Sciences and Zhejiang Normal University (China), immediate Past Chair of the Tephritid Workers of Asia, Australia and Oceania (TAAO) Steering Committee and a member of the International Fruit Fly Steering Committee (IFFSC) under the auspices of IAEA. With many influential journal publications like *Journal of Chemical Ecology* and *Insect Biochemistry and Molecular Biology*, editorial roles for *Bulletin of Entomological Research* and *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*, plus reviews for journals such as *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA*, his work bridges academic rigor, international collaboration, and public outreach to address agricultural challenges.



María Sol Balbuena

Dr. María Sol Balbuena is an Associate Researcher of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET) of Argentina. She earned a Ph.D. from the School of Exact and Natural Sciences, University of Buenos Aires (FCEN, UBA, Argentina), whose main goal was to study the

role of olfactory information during collective foraging in honeybees. During a Postdoc at the FCEN-UBA, and in collaborative work with Dr. Andrés González (Laboratory of Chemical Ecology, Udelar), she studied the cuticular chemistry profile of honeybees and stingless bees in the foraging context and its role in caste and nestmate recognition. Additionally, she did a postdoctoral stay (2017-2019) at Prof. Robert Raguso's lab (Cornell University), where she investigated the role of floral volatiles in hawkmoths nectar foraging and oviposition behavior.

Her current interests include plant-insect interactions in the pollination context and chemical communication in social bees.

Since 2012, Dr. Balbuena has attended several Latin American and International Chemical Ecology conferences. In addition, she has served as a councilor of the ALAEQ (Latin American Association of Chemical Ecology) for two consecutive periods (2017-2021 and 2021-2025) and was part of the organizing committee of the VI and VII ALAEQ conferences (2021 and 2023). She also organized and was part of the teaching team of a Chemical Ecology training course taught at the FCEN-UBA (2017 and 2023). In 2025, she attended the Chemical Ecology Practicum course held in South Africa, co-organized by the African Centre of Chemical Ecology (ACCE), ALAEQ, and Asia-Pacific Association of Chemical Ecologists (APACE), and supported by the International Society of Chemical Ecology (ISCE). Currently, she is part of the organizing committee for the ISCE/ALAEQ meeting that will be held in Argentina in 2027.



Don't forget: members may vote for four (4) councilors.

Deadline: May 1, 2026

Wei Xu

Dr. Wei Xu is an insect biologist at Murdoch University whose research bridges insect chemical ecology, molecular biology, biochemistry, biological control, and functional genomics. His work focuses on how



insects use chemical senses—such as smell and taste—to interact with their environment, informing the development of sustainable strategies for pest management and ecosystem health. Dr. Xu's research program aims to deepen our understanding of insect behaviour and insect–host interactions, with applications ranging from environmentally friendly control of agricultural pests to insights into mosquito olfaction and disease transmission.

Dr. Xu completed his PhD at the University of California, Davis, followed by postdoctoral research at the CSIRO, before joining Murdoch in 2015. He has established an active research group that integrates chemical ecology with advanced molecular and genomic tools. His contributions have enhanced fundamental and applied aspects of insect behaviour and pest management.

Dr. Xu seeks to support the Society's mission of advancing interdisciplinary cooperation among chemical ecologists worldwide and to advocate for expanded global engagement, especially in the Asia-Pacific region.



Society News:

ISCE Award winners 2026-2027

The 2027 winners are **Coby Schal** (ISCE Silver Medal) and **Matthias Erb** (Silverstein-Simeone Award). The winner of the 2026 Early Career Award is **Meret Huber**. The winner of the Applied Chemical Ecology Award will be announced in the next newsletter. The introduction of winners selected in 2026 will be published in the next issue.

Congratulations to all ISCE Award winners!

ISCE Family Fund Travel Grant

The ISCE wishes to promote the participation of young chemical ecologists in our meetings, in this case through the partial support of members who struggle between **early parenting and career development**. To do this, we created the ISCE Family Fund Travel Grant. For each annual meeting, we offer three awards of USD \$500 specifically allocated to offset childcare costs. Funds can be used to help cover additional travel expenses for an accompanying caregiver, or to cover expenses for local childcare in the vicinity of the meeting location.

For eligibility, check the ISCE website > <https://chemecol.org/awards/call-for-travel-awards/>



ISCE Student Travel Award

Travel awards are granted annually to support the attendance of students and postdoctoral researchers at the ISCE meeting. These awards provide partial support toward the travel costs, and a one-year ISCE membership. Award winners will be notified before the meeting registration deadline. These awards are sponsored in part by generous donations from Bedoukian Research, Inc., and Tofwerk AG. In recent years, the ISCE has awarded about 20 travel awards annually.

For eligibility, check the ISCE website > <https://chemecol.org/awards/call-for-travel-awards/>



Most downloaded articles from Nov. 2025 — Feb. 2026:

Dickman, C.R., Fardell, L.L. & Hills, N. **Odour-mediated Interactions Between an Apex Reptilian Predator and its Mammalian Prey.** *J Chem Ecol* **48**, 401–415 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10886-022-01350-w>

Original paper

Beran, F., Jiménez-Alemán, G.H., Lin, My. *et al.* **The Aggregation Pheromone of *Phyllotreta striolata* (Coleoptera: Chrysomelidae) Revisited.** *J Chem Ecol* **42**, 748–755 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10886-016-0743-6>

Original paper

Levi-Zada, A., Steiner, S., Fefer, D. *et al.* **Repelling Fruit Flies with Essential Oils and Their Components: the Peach Fruit Fly *Bactrocera zonata*.** *J Chem Ecol* **51**, 81 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10886-025-01628-9>

Original paper



International Society of Chemical Ecology

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