

Lyon - where today's aerobiologists met the future

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Is my research significant? Is my research team working on topics that are scientifically important with practical applications? How far has our research progressed? What are my colleagues researching today and what problems are they facing? These are just a few of the questions which the participants of the 6th European Symposium on Aerobiology came to find answers to. The 6th ESA was held in the beautiful city of Lyon, France, and was organized by RNSA and AFEDA with the support of different associations dedicated to Air quality. The symposium was attended by more than 200 participants from 35 different countries around the world, who were welcomed on the first day by Michel Thibaudon and Chantal Dechamp. The symposium was made up of a variety of multidisciplinary sessions in which the latest research was reported. The plenary and parallel sessions were: Aerobiology; Environmental studies (Pollution, Meteorology); Modelling/Forecasting; Ragweed (IRS/ COST SMARTER); Botany/Phenology/Climate Change; New Methods in Aerobiology; Allergy; Agronomy/Agriculture/ Botany/ Phenology; Fungal spores and culture heritage. A satellite symposium organised by the International Ragweed Society and European COST Action FA1203 "SMARTER" was held on the second day and all participants of the 6th ESA were invited to attend. Discussions concerned the sustainable management of *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* L. in Europe as well as changes in atmospheric ragweed pollen concentrations and the impact on human health. There was particular interest in the news about the accidental introduction of the ragweed leaf beetle *Ophraella communa* into Italy, which is a potential bio-control agent for this invasive and noxious plant. In the session concerned with new methods in aerobiology, exciting developments in the search for real-time monitoring were presented. Other noteworthy studies, which represent the current state-of-the art in aerobiology, included atmospheric monitoring using drones, sampling from automobiles and airplanes, DNA sequencing to monitor airborne pollen or fungi, the use of drug sales for monitoring symptoms due to pollen exposure, and atmospheric modelling. A workshop on flowmeter and normalisation held on the last day was especially thought provoking, and the paper by Oteros et al. (2016) is now available from *Aerobiologia*. The IAA and EAS provided grants so that 17 aerobiologists could attend the symposium. These grants covered the symposium fees and allowed the awardees to interact with experts in the field. Awards were also given for the most interesting studies, and 28 participants were honoured for oral and poster presentations. Awards were given for oral presentations in the following sessions: A. Damialis and Y.- T. Tseng (Aerobiology); N. Lang-Yona and P. Cariñanos (Allergy); E. Severova (Ragweed); S. Ghitarrini and S. Fernández-Rodríguez (Botany); P. Amato (Environment); J. Charbonnier, H. Niculita-Hirzel and S.-T. Loeffert (Fungal spores session); A. Pauling (Modelling); K. Leontidou And A. Núñez (New methods in

aerobiology). The following awards were also given for the best poster: F. Zhao, D. Ernst, M. Atalgic, M. Maya-Manzano, O. Marko, N.-M. Pinar, O. Volkova, M. Prentovic, B. Stjepanovic, S. Jochner, J. Oteros, A.I. Calvo, D. Fernández-González and L. Grewling. The friendly and collegial atmosphere during the symposium was highlighted by the outstanding social programme. The welcome ceremony was organised in Lyon City Hall, one of the city's finest historical monuments created by the architect Simon Maupin. The enjoyable stay included walking tours in the old part of the city which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Symposium Gala Dinner was held on a cruise boat and participants were offered spectacular views of Lyon from the perspective of the Saône and Rhône. During the European Aerobiology Society General Assembly it was decided that the next Basic Course will be organized by Åslög Dahl in Bohuslan in Sweden in 2017 and the 7th European Symposium on Aerobiology will be organized by Carmen Galan in Cordoba in 2020.

The 6th European Symposium on Aerobiology would not have been such a success without the team of sponsors: ALK Abello, Bertin Technologies, Microvision Instruments, RNSA Laboratoire, Sartorius Lab Instruments, Stallergenes Greer, Thermo Fisher Scientific, VWR International. A big thank you to each and every of them!

The symposium is over! We are saying a sincere THANK YOU to the organisers and we impatiently wait for our next meeting in Cordoba in 2020.

References

Oteros et al. (2016). Errors in determining the flow rate of Hirst-type pollen traps. *Aerobiologia*, doi:10.1007/s10453-016-9467-x.