



## Welcome to the first NPBDN Newsletter for 2025

There is plenty to look forward to this month. The first Virtual Annual Diagnostics Workshop (vADW) webinar for 2025 takes place on 27 February, and we are excited to introduce new resources and plenty of opportunities to connect and collaborate.



## Virtual Annual Diagnostics Workshop: plant mycology

The Virtual Annual Diagnostics Workshop (vADW) 2024–25 features a series of four interactive webinars. The event kicked off in November 2024 when experts presented fascinating perspectives on [plant virology](#), with an emphasis on tobamoviruses.

The second webinar, focusing on [plant mycology](#), will take place across two sessions on Thursday, **27 February 2025**, from **9:30–10:30 am AEDT** and **12:30–1:40 pm AEDT**. Each session offers expert insights, the latest research and discussions, designed to enhance diagnostic expertise. The webinars provide a unique opportunity to connect with peers, exchange ideas, and stay at the forefront of plant biosecurity developments.

Our expert speakers include:

- **Dr Joan Webber** (Forest Research, United Kingdom)
- **Dr Tom May** (Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria)
- **Dr Merje Toome** (Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand)
- **Dr Darryl Herron** (Scion Research, New Zealand)

#### Event details

- **Date:** Thursday, 27 February 2025
- **Format:** Microsoft Teams virtual webinar
- **Time:**
  - **Session 1:** 9:30–10:30 am AEDT
  - **Session 2:** 12:30–1:40 pm AEDT

vADW 2024-25 is exclusive to NPBDN members and registrations will close on **Monday, 24 February 2025**. Registered attendees will receive a Microsoft Teams invitation on Tuesday 25, February 2025.

[Register now](#)

### **Virtual Annual Diagnostics Workshops: call for abstracts – PhD/Postgraduate students**

Abstract submission is now open for the bacteriology and invertebrate plant pests workshops, coming up in March and April.

[Learn more](#)

### **FAO elearning Academy: National reporting obligations**

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has collaborated with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to create a one-hour, self-paced short course on national pest reporting obligations. The course introduces key concepts related to pest reporting, with a focus on national reporting systems and obligations for reporting the occurrence, outbreak, and spread of pests.

The course is designed for official IPPC contact points, IPP editors, and other staff from National Plant Protection Organisations or IPPC contracting parties responsible for

exchanging information on new pest detections or changes in pest status.



[Learn more](#)

## **European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) Reporting Service**

EPPO Reporting Service is a free monthly newsletter on events of phytosanitary concern. The newsletter is prepared by the EPPO Secretariat, which collects information from the scientific literature (horizon scanning) and receives official pest reports from the National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPO) of its member countries.

[Learn more](#)

## **Standards and guidelines: Generation and analysis of high throughput sequencing data**

Standardising the approach, application and interpretation of high throughput sequencing (HTS) is critical to ensure consistency in the expectations, implementation, analysis, transparency, communication and understanding across biosecurity jurisdictions. This document provides standards and guidelines for generating and analysing high throughput sequencing data for diagnostic applications in biosecurity laboratories.

[Learn more](#)

## Join the Australasian Forest Health Working Group

A new working group has been established of Australian and New Zealand forest health and biosecurity scientists. The goal is to promote collaboration and cooperation, share expertise and ideas, accelerate learning, and ensure a broad suite of expertise is available to address new and emerging forest health and biosecurity challenges in our region.

The working group is open to scientists and practitioners from government agencies, universities, forestry companies, and consultants, including those working directly in forest health and biosecurity. We also welcome those from other disciplines such as social science, Indigenous peoples, government administrators, and interested members of the public. We plan to hold quarterly online meetings, offer regular 5–10-minute speed talks, and create opportunities for visiting scientists and members to meet at conferences. The working group is voluntary and not funded.

If you are interested in joining, send a message to [angus.carnegie@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:angus.carnegie@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

## Content worth exploring

- [Standards of Diagnostic Validation: Recommendations for Reference Collections.](#)
- [Why a strategic shift in action is needed to recognise and empower Indigenous plant pathology knowledge and research.](#)
- Podcast: [I see dead plants](#) - Featured in the latest *NPDN Communicator* from the United States' National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN).
- [NPDN webinar archives](#) - Explore past sessions packed with insights.

## Career profile | Mark Schutze

This month we are profiling Mark Schutze, Principal Scientist (Entomology), Queensland Department of Primary Industry (QDPI). This forms part of our focus on reference collections, highlighting the work of dedicated researchers and staff.



[Learn more](#)

## Upcoming biosecurity events

- [Virtual Annual Diagnostics Workshop | 27 February 2025](#)  
– [register now](#)
- [International Advances in Plant Virology 2025](#), Murcia, Spain | **8-11 April 2025**
- [Australasian Plant Pathology Society Conference 2025](#), Sydney, NSW | **26-28 May 2025**
- [5th International Congress on Biological Invasions](#), Perth, WA | **21-24 September 2025**

## Career opportunities

Visit the [careers](#) page on the NPBDN website to keep up to date with current job and postgraduate scholarship opportunities.

[Visit careers](#)

## About the Network

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Professional Development and Protocols Projects are coordinated and delivered by Plant Health Australia (PHA) and funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). The objectives of the Projects are to enhance and strengthen Australia's diagnostic and surveillance capacity and capability to identify priority plant pests that impact on plant industries, environment and the community.

[Learn more](#)

## Not a member?

NPBDN members gain access to:

- free residential programs, training workshops, and laboratory proficiency testing
- contributions to developing National Diagnostic Protocols (NDPs)
- networking and collaboration opportunities at NPBDN events
- funding for travel to NPBDN member-exclusive workshops
- the NPBDN member portal with direct access to diagnostic resources.

Membership is open to active diagnostics professionals working in government, research, industry, institution-based laboratories, or museums.

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[We would love to hear your stories](#)

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