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16:00 ~ 16:30 A7F Conference Room

## Hitchhiking nematodes on beetles- insights into biology, ecology and distribution of *Pristionchus pacificus* and its relatives

### Summary

The nematode *Pristionchus pacificus* has been established as a satellite organism to *Caenorhabditis elegans*. Three years ago not much had been known about the lifecycle and ecology of *Pristionchus* in nature. The few species and strains cultured in the lab had been isolated from soil. There were some hints that the nematodes could be insect-associated. Field sampling could not only verify this hypothesis but led also to the isolation of hundreds of strains in more than a dozen species.

*Pristionchus* species are necromenic i.e. resting on insects in dauer stage until the insect dies and then growing adult and reproducing, feeding on bacteria, fungi and insect tissue.

However, in contrast to other *Pristionchus* species, *Pristionchus pacificus* could be found only in few cases and on various insects. The geographic origin and insect „host“ remained unknown. The closest relative of *P. pacificus* was isolated from Japanese soil so we came to Japan to perform a large scale field screen and hopefully find our favourite model organism. Please be curious about the whole *Pristionchus* story and some preliminary results of the JapanFieldScreenProject!

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