FISC
FOREST INVASION SYNTHESIS CENTRE, PRAGUE

NEWSLETTER

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Invasions cross borders, so does science

Forest Invasion Synthesis Centre, Prague (FISC)

Faculty of Forestry and Wood Sciences | Czech University of Life Sciences Prague

Welcome to our newsletter!

Get a bird's-eye view of what's been happening at FISC – from our latest research to international collaborations and scientific events.

IN THIS ISSUE

- International forest quarantine experts meet in Prague
- Working Groups in action
- Emerging threats to European forests



EVENT HIGHLIGHT

Forest Quarantine Experts Meet in Prague

28 September - 2 October 2026

FISC hosted the 23rd International Forestry Quarantine Research Group (IFQRG) meeting, bringing together experts in forest health and biosecurity.



KEY TOPICS

- Forest pest pathways through international trade
- Risks from seeds, germplasm and wood products
- Detection tools and research supporting phytosanitary standards

PHOTO GALLERY

FISC TALK

As part of the meeting, **Michael Ormsby, Meghan Noseworthy and Dmitrii Musolin** presented **"**Protecting Forests Beyond Borders,**"** exploring how research, phytosanitary measures and international cooperation help prevent the spread of forest pests through trade.

WATCH THE TALK



INSIDE FISC

Two Working Groups Met in Prague

Two FISC Working Groups, led by Martín A. Núñez and Michael Wingfield, held their in-person meetings in Prague, advancing research on tree growth and invasion risks.



GLOBAL PATTERNS OF GROWTH OF NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE TREES

- **WG Leader: Martín A. Núñez** (14 members)
- Why do some trees grow faster outside their native ranges?
- Exploring the roles of climate, soils, pests and pathogens using global tree-growth data.

MEET THE GROUP

INVASION RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE USE OF NON-NATIVE TREES IN PLANTATION FORESTRY

- **WG Leader: Michael Wingfield** (6 members)
- Investigating risks from insect pests, pathogens and the spread of planted trees.
- Bringing together global evidence to support better plantation forestry management.

MEET THE GROUP



FISC Talks

Two FISC Talks were held as part of the Working Group meetings:

- **Martín A. Núñez** – "Biological invasions: lessons from North American trees and their mutualists"
- **Ana Novoa** – "The Importance of Human Dimensions in the Study and Management of Biological Invasions"

INSIDE FISC

We Are Pleased to Announce Two New Working Groups!

LINKING PLANT INVASIVENESS AND COMMUNITY INVASIBILITY ACROSS SCALES

- **WG Leader: Petr Pyšek** (6 members)
- Why are some plants more invasive and some communities more vulnerable to invasion?
- Combining global databases and long-term vegetation data to identify key drivers of plant invasions.

MEET THE GROUP



FACTORS AFFECTING INTRA- AND INTERSPECIFIC VARIATION OF IMPACTS BY ALIEN FOREST INSECTS

- **WG Leader: Maarten de Groot** (10 members)
- Why do alien forest insects cause different levels of ecological damage?
- Using EICAT impact assessments and environmental data to improve predictions of invasion impacts.

MEET THE GROUP

EMERGING THREATS

Emerald Ash Borer: Europe on Alert

With the emerald ash borer now confirmed in the EU, FISC has turned its attention to this serious threat. Our experts share their insights on its potential impacts, early detection and possible responses.

WILL EUROPE LOSE ITS ASH TREES?

Andrew Liebhold

Drawing on North America's experience, Andrew Liebhold explains what Europe can expect and why stopping the spread of this destructive pest will be so difficult.

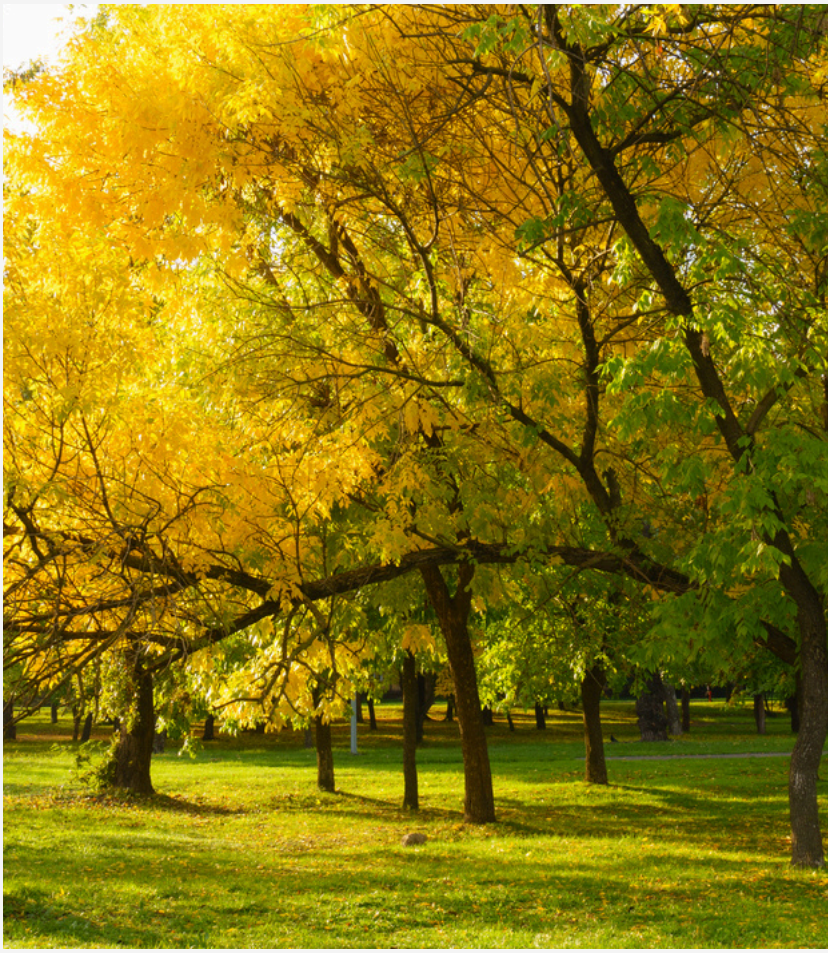
READ INTERVIEW

EARLY DETECTION: THE CHALLENGE

Roman Modlinger

A member of Maarten de Groot's FISC Working Group, Roman Modlinger visited infested ash stands in Slovakia. He discusses evidence of an invasion that went undetected for years, possible pathways of spread, and key gaps in current monitoring methods.

READ INTERVIEW



RECOGNISING THE THREAT

Kateřina Berchová, Andrew Liebhold

Emerald ash borer can kill healthy ash trees within just a few years – but detecting it early is difficult. The authors explain the telltale signs, how to distinguish EAB damage from ash dieback, and the available options for monitoring and control.

READ ARTICLE



CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHS

FISC at NeoBiota

Brussels | 7–11 September 2026

Seven FISC researchers took part in NeoBiota 2026, sharing their work and exchanging ideas with the international invasion science community.

WHAT FISC BROUGHT TO NEOBIOTA 2026: FROM RESTORATION ECOLOGY TO DARWIN'S PARADOX

- **Laura A. Meyerson** explored why managing invasive species is not simply about removing them. Her keynote highlighted the need to connect invasion science with ecological restoration to support long-term ecosystem recovery.
- **Richard Mally** revisited Darwin's naturalisation conundrum in insects: are non-native species more likely to establish where closely related native species already occur, or does competition make invasion less likely?
- **Andrew Liebhold, Edward Whitney, Shuya Fan, Arka Pal and Aditya Ganesh** presented posters, showcasing the breadth of research conducted at FISC.



MORE FROM FISC

Other activities

EUROPE'S FORESTS IN TRANSITION: NEW RISKS, NEW CHALLENGES

At an international symposium at the University of Freiburg, **Tomáš Hlásny** delivered a keynote titled "**Europe's Forest Disturbance Regimes in Transition: Biotic Agents, Recovery Pathways and Risk Policies**."

He explored how climate change, land use and native and non-native organisms are reshaping European forests, highlighting the need for more resilient forest risk management.

WATCH HERE

FISC ARTICLES – NOW YOU CAN LISTEN!

Prefer listening to reading? Many articles on the FISC website, especially longer ones, are now available in audio format!

BUILDING FOREST RESILIENCE THROUGH FUNCTIONAL COMPLEX NETWORKS

Marie-Josée Fortin, an expert in spatial ecology, disturbance ecology and conservation, visited FISC and delivered a FISC Talk introducing DIVERSE, a pan-Canadian research project.

She explored how functional diversity and landscape connectivity can help build more resilient forests under climate change.



KEYNOTE AT SOUTH AFRICA'S INVASION SYMPOSIUM

Andrew Liebhold delivered a keynote titled "**The Intertwining of Insect and Plant Invasions**" at the National Symposium on Biological Invasions in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

He explored how plant introductions facilitate insect invasions and how non-native plants initially benefit from escaping their natural enemies. Over time, however, this advantage can diminish as new insect herbivores establish.

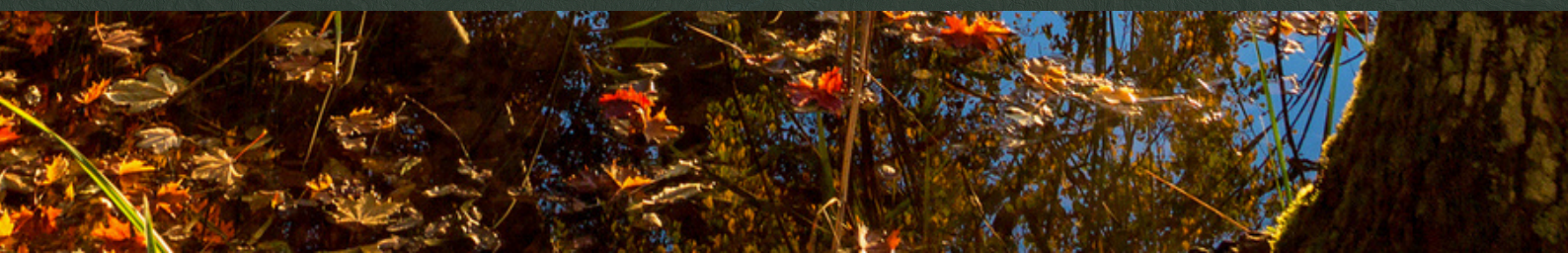
A recording of the keynote will be made available later.



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