



ASW 2024 | Surveillance in remote locations: challenges, solutions and incorporating community engagement

The hybrid Annual Surveillance Workshop 2024 (ASW 2024) took place at the Twin Towns Conference and Events Centre at Tweed Heads, NSW from 20 - 21 March 2024, addressing the theme '*Surveillance in remote locations: challenges, solutions and incorporating community engagement*'. Under this theme, ASW 2024 covered four sub-topics: *Communities* (Session 1), *Connections* (Session 2), *Risks and challenges* (Session 3), and *Opportunities* (Session 4).

Through presentation sessions, a panel discussion, and workshops, the program brought surveillance practitioners and members of the PSNAP network together to share their knowledge and learnings, and facilitate connections and collaborations. The first day of ASW 2024 overlapped with the Annual Diagnostics Workshop (ADW) 2024, allowing both PSNAP and National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network (NPBDN) members to meet and network between sessions.

Highlights of ASW 2024 included:

- 23 presentations, including three presentations delivered by invited guests Prof. Michael Douglas who spoke about the evolution of large research collaboration supporting biodiversity conservation and environmental management; Dr Heleen Kruger who shared her insights into unlocking the potential of general surveillance programs in remote regions; and Dr Desi Ramoo who spoke about the challenges posed by Brown marmorated stink bug in New Zealand and the adoption of new surveillance technologies and preparedness techniques to combat this pest
- a panel session delivered by several delegates from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste that addressed the topic of surveillance perspectives and case studies from our near neighbours
- two presentations from our successful 2023/2024 PSNAP residential awardees
- three shoulder workshops: overview and demonstration of AUSPestCheck®; introduction to National Surveillance Protocols (NSPs) and their applications; and putting NSPs into action
- 74 in-person delegates attended the event from all Australian states and territories, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, and New Zealand
- 35 delegates attended virtually
- a social networking event was held at the conclusion of Day 1.


Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) Manager of Biosecurity, Callum Fletcher, had this to say about ASW 2024.

"This year's Annual Surveillance Workshop really exemplified how important these events are to our biosecurity surveillance community. By overlapping with the diagnostician's workshop, we were able to connect with our peers from across Australia and further afield to look deeply into how to effectively manage our biosecurity system. The research presented led to conversations and potential collaborations for the future. I am currently following up with a number of scientists, connecting them with others working in their area or looking at how we can leverage their work into new and exciting research applications."

ASW 2024 was delivered by Plant Health Australia (PHA) with content and structure lead by the Plant Surveillance Network Working Group (PSNWG) and funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) as a part of the

National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics and Surveillance Professional Development and Protocols projects. PHA would like to acknowledge and thank PSNWG for their effort, support, and time contributions invested into planning and making ASW 2024 a great success. A special thank you is also extended to our invited speakers, namely Prof. Michael Douglas, Dr Heleen Kruger, and Dr Desi Ramoo, for taking the time to share their valuable insights at ASW 2024.

Plant Surveillance Network Australasia-Pacific (PSNAP) members can access the published ASW 2024 presentations via the button below (note: members must be logged into the portal to access the presentations).

ASW 2024
presentations 



If you took part in a shoulder workshop at ASW 2024, we'd love to hear your feedback. Simply click on the relevant survey link below to start (all results will be kept anonymous).

- Workshop 1: Overview and demonstration of AUSPestCheck®. Take the [survey](#).
- Workshop 2: Introduction to National Surveillance Protocols (NSPs) and their applications. Take the [survey](#).
- Workshop 3: Putting NSPs into practice. Take the [survey](#).

PSNAP-funded workshop | Diptera taxonomy and surveillance

A PSNAP-funded workshop titled *Dipteran Identification and Taxonomy in the Digital Age* took place from 12 - 16 February 2024 at the University of Western Australia. PSNAP provided

funding to each Australian jurisdiction to support the travel of staff who were nominated by their Chief Plant Health Officer.

Under the guidance of Dr Dan Bickel (Australian Museum, Sydney), Dr Keith Bayless (CSIRO, Canberra), and Prof. Raphael Didham (University of Western Australia), a total of 19 in-person participants from six jurisdictions across Australia learned about Diptera trapping techniques and considerations, identification, and taxonomy through presentations as well as hands-on activities in the laboratory and in the field.

Based on the post-workshop survey, the workshop was extremely well-received, with one participant summarising their experience:

“The presenters were fabulous and engaging and I really appreciated the opportunity to meet and build relationships with entomologists from around Australia. Most of all, I enjoyed all of the practical advice and hands-on experience I received throughout the course; from setting up traps to identifying specimens to family level.”

PSNAP would like to thank Nadine Guthrie and colleagues at the Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (WA DPIRD) for applying for PSNAP workshop funding in 2024 and for organising the workshop from start to finish.

Workshop materials presented at this workshop will be made available on the PSNAP website shortly for member-only access.



[eLearning course for the Australian Plant Pest Database \(APPD\)](#)

Plant Health Australia (PHA) is pleased to announce the launch of a new online learning course for the Australian Plant Pest Database (APPD), titled: Introduction to the Australian Plant Pest Database (APPD).

Launched in 2022, the APPD collates plant pest and pathogen specimen data from Australian herbaria and insect collections. The purpose of the APPD is to support market access and inform government policy decision-making.

The course is available on PHA's Biosecurity Online Training (BOLT) platform and explores how to use the APPD to access information on vouchered specimens of plant pests and pathogens. The course topics include: the search function, alert function, specimen information and contacting collection managers.

The course is designed for those who are new to the APPD and includes videos and clear overviews of the website's features. Access to the course is restricted to current approved users of the APPD with each new enrolment request individually assessed before being granted.

If you already have access to the APPD and would like to complete the course, please [click here](#). If you have an existing BOLT profile you can simply request enrolment however if you don't have a profile, you will need to create one. Please ensure your BOLT profile and your APPD profile have the same email address as this will be used to assess your access.

Enrol today or if you have any questions or feedback on the course, please contact the PHA Training team at training@phau.com.au or appd@phau.com.au.



TREEmendous Biosecurity Blitz 2024

An increasing number of pests and diseases are threatening Australia's trees. Whether you enjoy bushwalking, have trees in your backyard, work in forestry or horticulture, we can all play a part in protecting our trees.

The Forest Watch Australia program (coordinated by Plant Health Australia) is inviting you to participate in TREEmendous Biosecurity Blitz, from 21 March to 21 April.

By participating in the Blitz, you can help spot and report serious pests and diseases early and prevent tree deaths.

Learn
more



Upcoming Biosecurity Events

- [EVCWG Webinar/Discussion on Watermelon Chlorotic Stunt Virus, Online](#) | 10 April 2024, 5.30am – 6.30am (AEST)
- [2nd Symposium of Tephritid Workers of Asia, Australia, and Oceania \(TAAO\), Beijing, China](#) | 6 – 10 May 2024
- [Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative \(PBRI\) Plant Health student networking event](#), Cairns, QLD | 7 May 2024
- [Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative \(PBRI\) Symposium](#), Cairns, QLD | 8 – 9 May 2024
- [3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium](#), Gold Coast, QLD | 27 – 29 August 2024

- [Australasian Soilborne Diseases Symposium 2024](#), Kingscliff, NSW | 26 - 30 August 2024
- [Australasian Plant Virology Workshop 2024](#), Gold Coast, QLD | 29 – 31 October 2024

Careers in surveillance

Visit the careers page on the PSNAP website to keep up to date with current job and PhD scholarship advertisements.

The following job opportunity is currently being advertised:

- Research Officer with La Trobe University. Closes 7 April 2024.

Visit
Careers



Career spotlight

This month, the career spotlight is on Callum Fletcher, Manager - Biosecurity at the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) who has worked in entomology for 25 years.



Read more



About the Network

The Plant Surveillance Network Australasia-Pacific (PSNAP) enables members to communicate and share skills in plant pest surveillance. It acts as a coordination point for surveillance professionals and practitioners to strengthen surveillance capacity and capability across Australia, New Zealand and the nearby region.

The National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Professional Development and Protocols Projects are coordinated and delivered by Plant Health Australia and are funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

BECOME A PSNAP MEMBER

You must be an active plant surveillance professional employed in Australasia-Pacific to join.
Membership provides you with the opportunity to:

- Improve **skills**
- Facilitate **connections**
- Share **knowledge**

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