

Newsletter April 2026, Vol. 28, No. 1

World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology

WAAVP

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Message**

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**Parasitologists
around the World**

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Definition**

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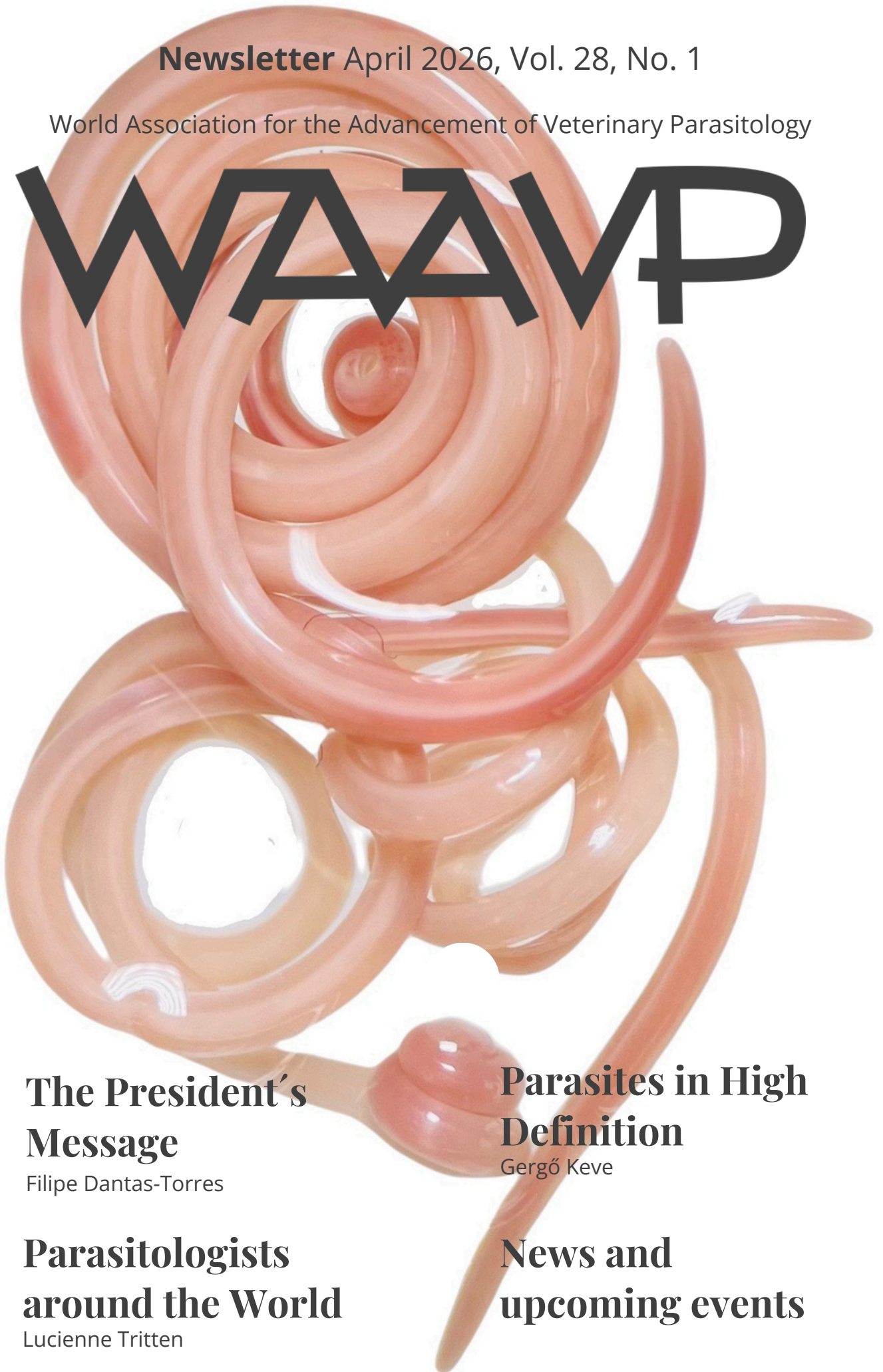


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World Association for the Advancement
WAAVP
of Veterinary Parasitology



The President's Message

“These are challenging times, but also times of great opportunity.”

Dear friends and colleagues,

Veterinary parasitology is entering a decisive decade. The pace and scale of change we are witnessing—driven by climate change, environmental disruption, and global mobility—are no longer gradual; they are accelerating, and our response must keep pace.

Vector expansion is not a future threat—it is already underway. Ticks, mosquitoes, sand flies, and other vectors are establishing themselves in new areas, often faster than our surveillance systems can detect them. As a result, pathogens follow. We must move beyond reactive approaches and invest in predictive, data-driven eco-epidemiology. If we fail to anticipate these shifts, we will continue to respond too late, with consequences for animal and public health and for economies.

At the same time, antimicrobial and antiparasitic resistance is an increasingly serious concern. Resistance is not confined to livestock systems; it is a cross-sectoral issue that demands coordinated action. We must advocate more strongly for responsible use, improved diagnostics, and sustained investment in new compounds and alternative control strategies. Complacency in this area is not an option.

Artificial intelligence is another transformative force that we must engage with both critically and proactively. AI has enormous potential, from improving diagnostics and image-based parasite identification to enhancing surveillance and predictive modelling. However, it also raises important questions about data quality, transparency, and the integrity of scientific work. As a community, we should lead in establishing standards for the responsible use of AI across research, education, and even peer review.

In this rapidly evolving landscape, the importance of a One Health perspective has never been clearer. Veterinary parasitologists work at the intersection of animal, human, and environmental health, and our expertise is central to addressing many of the challenges ahead.

“In this rapidly evolving landscape, the importance of a One Health perspective has never been clearer.”

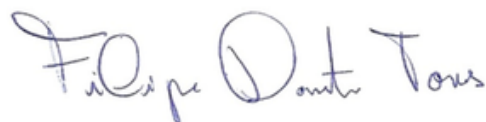
Within WAAVP, we remain fully committed to supporting our community and promoting excellence worldwide. Preparations for the WAAVP 2027 Conference in Berlin are already in full swing, and we are confident it will be an outstanding scientific and networking event. I am also very pleased to announce that the WAAVP 2029 Conference will be held in Bari, Italy—another exciting destination for our global community!

Looking ahead, we will open the call for bids for the 2031 WAAVP conference in the near future. We would particularly welcome more applications, especially from African and Southeast Asian countries, to ensure broader geographic representation and reflect the truly global nature of our discipline.

These are challenging times, but also times of great opportunity. Our field has never been more relevant. The question is not whether change is coming. It is whether we are ready to lead it.

Thank you for your continued engagement and dedication.

Best wishes,




President, World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology



Parasitologists around the World

Lucienne Tritten

Institute of Parasitology
McGill University, Canada



The Tritten Lab at McGill University's Institute of Parasitology focuses on understanding how parasites communicate with their hosts at the molecular level. Rather than viewing parasites solely as harmful invaders, the lab approaches infection as a dynamic interaction in which parasites actively modulate host biology to ensure their survival. Many parasitic helminths can persist for years within hosts by avoiding strong immune responses, instead promoting a balanced state that allows long-term coexistence.

Central to this process is the release of small regulatory molecules, particularly small RNAs, which parasites use to influence host gene expression. These molecules often resemble the host's own regulatory signals, enabling parasites to "blend in" and manipulate immune and cellular pathways. This discovery has shifted the perspective of parasitic infection toward a form of molecular dialogue that can potentially be interrupted for therapeutic purposes.

The lab now investigates extracellular vesicles (EVs), which serve as delivery systems carrying RNAs, proteins, and lipids from parasites into host cells. By studying how these vesicles are produced, transferred, and interpreted, researchers aim to better understand how chronic infections are established and maintained.

In addition to basic research, the Tritten Lab emphasizes translational applications. One key innovation is the development of "living therapeutics," in which engineered gut bacteria are designed to deliver regulatory molecules directly at infection sites. Early findings show that these bacteria can successfully colonize hosts and transfer functional cargo, offering a promising strategy for targeted interventions.

The lab also contributes to global health initiatives, such as the Guinea Worm Eradication Program, by developing sensitive RNA- and EV-based diagnostics.

By integrating fundamental research with practical applications, the lab aims to create sustainable strategies for parasite control while addressing challenges like drug resistance and emerging infections.

This work is organized around a set of complementary research directions that connect fundamental mechanisms of host-parasite communication with the development of new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. Along the way, we aim to build a lab environment where doing science remains collaborative, and where trainees have fun!

One key innovation is the development of "living therapeutics", in which engineered gut bacteria are designed to deliver regulatory molecules directly at infection sites.

Strengths: highlights and speciality of the Lab

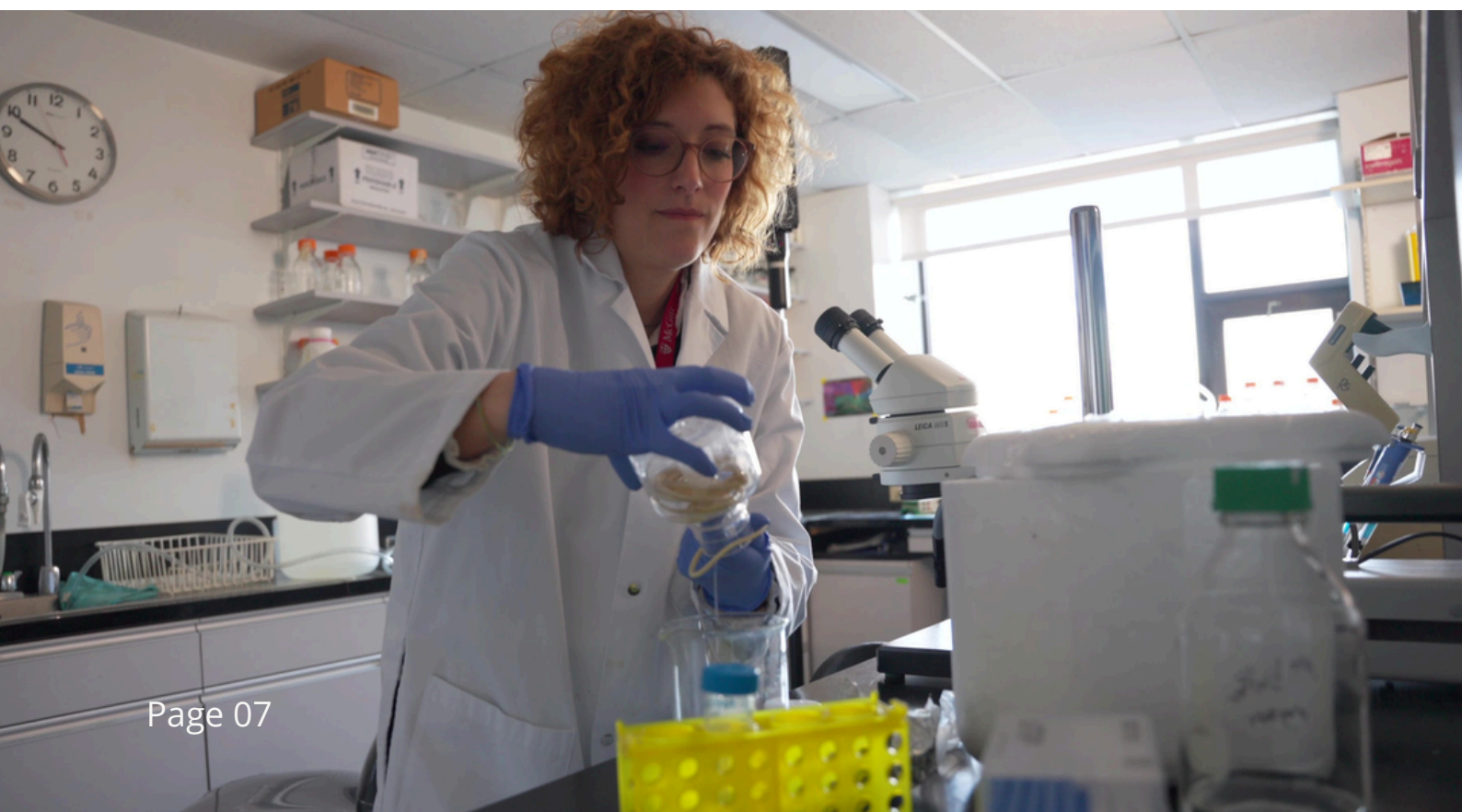
Integrative, Translational, and Forward-Looking Parasitology

Tritten's lab approaches parasitology through the lens of communication, focusing on the molecular signals exchanged among parasites, hosts, and microbiota. By treating infection as a dynamic interaction rather than a one-sided process, the lab integrates RNA science, extracellular vesicle (EV) biology, and synthetic biology to better understand and control parasitic diseases.

The first research direction investigates how parasites communicate with hosts, particularly through EVs and small regulatory RNAs. The lab examines how these molecules are packaged, delivered into host cells, and how they alter immune responses to support long-term infection. This work aims to identify points where parasite-host communication can be disrupted.

The second line of research translates these insights into RNA-based interventions. Small RNAs are explored as precise tools to target parasite biology, while engineered gut bacteria are developed as delivery systems capable of producing and releasing therapeutic molecules directly at infection sites. This strategy offers promising potential for localized, targeted treatments.

The third direction focuses on practical applications, including diagnostic tools based on parasite-derived nucleic acids and EV markers. These tools are particularly relevant for veterinary and global health, especially in low-prevalence or near-elimination contexts where sensitive detection is critical.



A key strength of the lab is its integrative approach, linking molecular mechanisms with functional validation in realistic infection models across multiple parasite species. Combined with a collaborative and curiosity-driven environment, this framework supports both scientific innovation and meaningful real-world impact.

Best three papers

1. Nematode microRNAs can Individually Regulate Interferon Regulatory Factor 4 and mTOR in Differentiating T Helper 2 Lymphocytes and Modulate Cytokine Production in Macrophages. Soichot J, Guttmann N, Rehrauer H, Joller N, Tritten L. *Front Mol Biosci.* 2022 Jun 28;9:909312. doi: 10.3389/fmolb.2022.909312.

2. Extracellular Vesicle-Contained microRNA of *C. elegans* as a Tool to Decipher the Molecular Basis of Nematode Parasitism. Duguet TB, Soichot J, Kuzyakiv R, Malmström L, Tritten L. *Front Cell Infect Microbiol.* 2020 May 25;10:217. doi: 10.3389/fcimb.2020.00217.

3. Detection of circulating parasite-derived microRNAs in filarial infections. Tritten L, Burkman E, Moorhead A, Satti M, Geary J, Mackenzie C, Geary T. *PLoS Negl Trop Dis.* 2014 Jul 17;8(7):e2971. doi: 10.1371/journal.pntd.0002971.





Introducing the team

Lucienne Tritten

Principal Investigator

She earned a PhD in Microbiology from the University of Basel in 2012. She is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Parasitology at McGill University and an Associate Member of the McGill Institute of Biochemistry. She leads research on host-parasite communication and RNA-based strategies for parasite control.

Sabina Beilstein

Postdoctoral researcher

She is an infection microbiologist specializing in neglected parasitic diseases and the exploration of alternative treatment strategies. She earned her PhD at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, where she focused on drug research and development for trypanosomatids. In the Tritten Lab, she contributes to the development of novel RNA-based therapies aimed at controlling parasitic nematode infections.

Oluwaseun Olalere

Research assistant

He is a molecular biologist who earned her MSc in Applied Biotechnology at McGill University. In the Tritten Lab, his research explores viruses as RNA delivery vectors. By engineering viral genomes, he investigates virus-mediated gene silencing and its potential for scalable functional genomics and future control of parasitic infections.

Melika Amoueian

PhD Candidate

Her research explores two interconnected aspects of helminth biology. She investigates how host lipids influence *Dirofilaria immitis* survival in culture, using lipidomics to optimize in vitro conditions. She also examines how helminth-derived extracellular vesicles and microRNAs downregulate host endosomal molecule expression, facilitating immune evasion and enhancing cargo delivery.

Ava Ghasemi Mianaei

MSc Candidate

She holds a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) and focuses on the development of innovative RNA-based therapeutics against parasitic nematodes. Her research explores the use of engineered gut bacteria to deliver small RNAs via extracellular vesicles and evaluates their effects on *Caenorhabditis elegans* development and biology.

Marc-Antoine St-Pierre

MSc Candidate

With prior experience in microbiology and immunology, he joined the Tritten Lab in 2025, contributing to multiple projects. He studies host-parasite communication in helminth infections, with a focus on characterizing the dynamics of host- and parasite-derived extracellular vesicle release and their fate across time and space.

Our journey to the world's
parasitology laboratories continues:

What about yours?



Scan the QR code and fill in the form:



Parasites in High Definition

PHD

Gergő Keve, DVM, PhD

**Department of Veterinary Sciences, FAPPZ
Czech University of Life Sciences**

Gergő Keve is a Hungarian veterinarian who began his studies in 2015 at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Szent István University, Budapest.

During his academic years, the institution became independent, and he ultimately completed his degree at the University of Veterinary Medicine, Budapest, graduating in 2021.

Throughout his studies, he developed a strong interest in parasitology, which led him to pursue a PhD after graduation. He conducted his doctoral research under the supervision of Professor Sándor Hornok at the Department of Parasitology and Zoology of his alma mater. He successfully completed his PhD in August 2025.





His main research topic during his PhD focused on the role of migratory birds in the transmission of arthropod vectors and the pathogens they carry. This work highlighted how, during spring migration, birds can transport ectoparasites across vast, sometimes transcontinental distances.

A well-known example is *Hyalomma rufipes*, though other parasites of African origin, such as the louse fly *Ornithoctona larticornis*, may also be introduced into Europe through this mechanism. This research provided valuable insights into the epidemiology of vectors and vector-borne pathogens, while his experience teaching parasitology further broadened his scientific perspective.

Birds can transport ectoparasites across vast, sometimes transcontinental distances



If you were a parasite, what would you be and why?

This is a tricky question... Endoparasites are immediately out of the pool. I'd probably go for an arthropod ectoparasite - being a tick feels a bit boring (I don't think I'd enjoy questing that much), so something with wings sounds better.

Hippobosca equina would be a safe choice, but then Tabanidae came to mind. They have quite a 'complete' life: moisture-associated larval stages in wet habitats, followed by a free-flying adult phase. Many species are relatively large and even somewhat striking in appearance—arguably less off-putting than most flies.

So yes, my answer would be *Hippobosca equina*... or a tabanid.

In Budapest, he has had the opportunity to work with well-known experts of the field, and supportive colleagues in a friendly, diverse, and encouraging environment, with nearly two-thirds of our students coming from international backgrounds.

In 2025, he participated in the ParSco Bari Summer School, where he established a collaboration with the team at the Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Bari. He looks forward to continuing this collaboration in the future.

“Ez az én Parasites in High Definition történetem nektek”

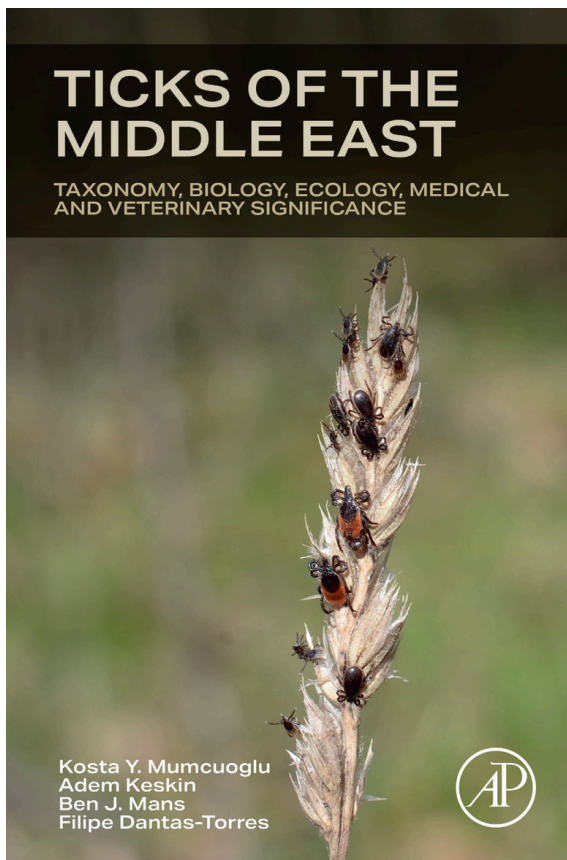
(This is my Parasite in High-Definition story for you)



Editors of PHD section:
Jairo Mendoza-Roldán and
Marcos Antonio Bezerra-Santos

News and notices

Books, Journal issues



Ticks of the Middle East

Ticks of the Middle East compiles expert knowledge on tick taxonomy, distribution, ecology, and medical/veterinary importance in the region. It includes tick research history, geoclimatic context, species maps, and country lists, offering a concise reference on Middle Eastern tick species and tick-borne diseases.

[Get your book here](#)



OPEN ACCESS Science+ Meeting

The Royal Society Publishing has recently published a fully OPEN ACCESS Science+ Meeting issue from Philosophical Transactions B: Parasite evolution and impact in action: exploring the importance and control of hybrid schistosomes in Africa and beyond compiled and edited by J Russell Stothard, Amadou Garba, Alexandra Juhasz, Lucas J Cunningham, Janelisa Musaya and David Rollinson. The articles are FREE TO ACCESS in the link below

[Get your book here](#)

Upcoming events

2nd Asia Pacific Veterinary Parasitology Congress

Building on the momentum of our inaugural congress in 2025, APAVP-Congress 2026 continues to provide a regional platform for discussion and knowledge exchange among the veterinary parasitology community across the Asia-Pacific region. The theme for this year, **“One Health in Motion: Tackling Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Parasites in a Changing Asia-Pacific”** reflects the growing recognition that parasitic diseases affect closely linked animals, humans, and ecosystems, and that effective control requires coordinated efforts across disciplines.

[Find more information on the conference's website](#)

2nd Asia Pacific Veterinary Parasitology Congress
APAVP 14-16 October 2026
BANGKOK, THAILAND

*One Health in Motion:
Tackling Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Parasites
in a Changing Asia-Pacific*

SPONSORSHIP

Organised by:
APAVP
Asia-Pacific Association of Veterinary Parasitology

Scan the QR code
for more information
www.apavp.org

Upcoming events

WAAVP conference 2027 in Berlin

In 22 – 26 August 2027, the 31st conference of the WAAVP will take place in Berlin, Germany. The motto of the conference will be “No matter when, no matter how: Veterinary Parasitology unites us all”.

Accordingly, all areas of veterinary parasitology will be represented and researchers, scientists, stakeholders, practitioners, as well as everyone interested in veterinary parasitology will be most welcome to attend.

For a first glance of the programme, venue and organization, please visit the conference website at [31st WAAVP](https://www.waavp.org/31st-waavp)

Also, feel free to sign up for our newsletter [Newsletter sign up!](#)



The poster features a dark teal background with a white diagonal line. At the top left is a circular logo with a black tick. To its right, the text 'WAAVP 2027' is displayed in white. Below this, the full name of the conference is written in white. The dates and location are also in white. A large white call to action is followed by a green button with the website URL. The bottom right corner shows a photograph of the Berlin Cathedral at night. Faint icons of a tick, a worm, and a fly are scattered in the background.

 **WAAVP
2027**

31st Conference of the World
Association for the Advancement
of Veterinary Parasitology

Berlin, Germany | 22–26 August

**Sign up for
the congress
newsletter** 

[waavp2027.com](https://www.waavp2027.com)

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Upcoming events

Conferences, courses and symposia



4th AITVM-STVM

4th Joint AITVM-STVM International Conference

23-26 June, 2026

St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

STA-FMS-SVM.Events@sta.uwi.edu



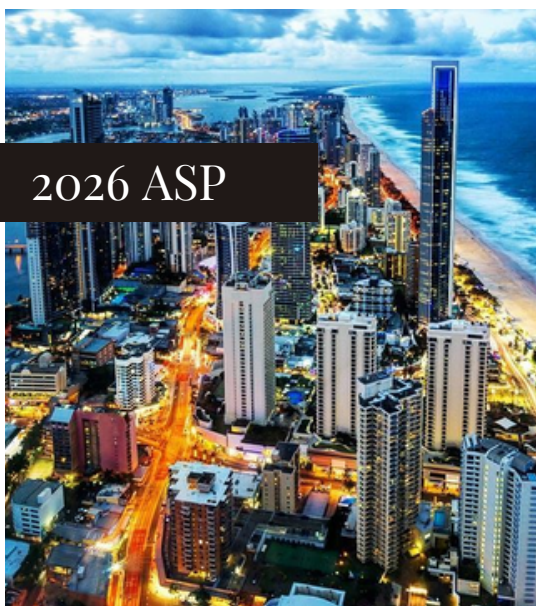
XII ParSCo

XII Parasitology Summer Course

27 June - 3 July, 2026

Basilicata, Italy

[Link for more information](#)



2026 ASP

Australian Society for Parasitology Annual Conference

29 June - 2 July, 2026

Queensland, Australia

<https://www.parasite.org.au/conferences/>



FIPARS 2026

Field Parasitology Summer School

23-31 July, 2026

Danube Delta, Romania

<https://www.parasitology.ro/fipars/>

Upcoming events

Conferences, courses and symposia



ICOPA 2026

International Congress of Parasitology

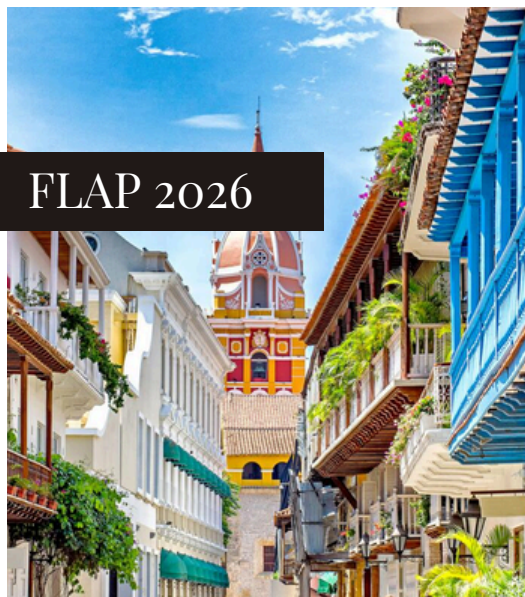
16-21 August, 2026
Montreal, Canada
www.icopa2026.org



2026 Apicowplexa

APICOWPLEXA 2026 International Congress

16-18 September, 2026
Lodi, Italy
[Link to more information](#)



FLAP 2026

28th Congress of the Federación Latinoamericana de Parasitología

27-30 October, 2026
Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
<https://www.flap2026.com/>



WAAVP Social networks

Follow our social network accounts for parasite-related content! Also, share your pictures about lab life, job opportunities, work and parasites with the hashtag

#worldparasitology

@worldparasitology



@worldparasitology



@worldparasitology



Information

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WAAVP Newsletter submission deadlines:

The WAAVP Newsletter is published twice a year with issues in April and November. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome and should be submitted by the first day of the month prior to issue, as follows:

Next newsletter release dates:

November 15th, 2026

Submission deadline:

October 1st, 2026