



INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ECOLOGY OF APHIDOPHAGA 16

It is with great pleasure that we announce the sixteenth congress of the International Symposium "Ecology of Aphidophaga", which will be held in Bologna, Italy, 8-12 September, 2025. Founded in the Czech Republic in 1965, the mission of Aphidophaga has been to connect entomologists studying the ecology of aphid-feeding arthropods, many of whom were separated by the 'Iron Curtain' that divided eastern and western Europe at the time. In 2004, Aphidophaga became an official working group of the International Organization of Biological Control (IOBC Global). We are very grateful to the Scientific Committee of Aphidophaga for selecting the University of Bologna as the host institution for this symposium.

Bologna is a historic and vibrant city in northern Italy, located between Florence and Venice. It is the capital of the Emilia-Romagna region and one of Italy's most significant urban centers. Bologna is renowned for its rich history, well-preserved medieval architecture, and its vital role in the country's economy and culture. The city is home to around 400,000 inhabitants, making it lively yet accessible. Bologna's economy is based on a blend of traditional industries like manufacturing and food production, as well as modern sectors such as technology and education. The city is also known for its excellent quality of life, its iconic porticoes, and a thriving culinary scene.

The *Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna* (Unibo) is widely recognized as the oldest university in the world, founded in 1088. It was the first institution to use the term "university" and quickly became one of the most prestigious centers of learning in Europe. Throughout the Middle Ages, it attracted scholars from across the continent, particularly for its pioneering studies in law, medicine, and the humanities. Over the centuries, Unibo has remained a central figure in the advancement of knowledge, continually adapting to a changing educational landscape. Today, the University of Bologna is a comprehensive institution offering a wide range of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs. It

maintains a strong focus on research and internationalization, with multiple campuses throughout Italy and partnerships with universities worldwide. The university is celebrated for its academic excellence and its contributions to European higher education reform.

Aphidophaga is a meeting focused on the ecology of arthropods that have evolved to exploit aphids as food, either as a primary resource, or as one component of a generalized diet. Many aphid predators and parasitoids provide ecological services as biological control agents of aphids and other pests in agricultural, forest and urban ecosystems. At the congress, senior and junior researchers from around the world, graduate students and post-docs, meet to present scientific advances and ideas in a friendly and convivial atmosphere. The symposium has no concurrent sessions; it is designed to create opportunities for intellectual exchange among participants and has stimulated many productive multinational collaborations over the years.

We hope to be able to offer travel grants to assist young scientists and students with travel costs to attend the meeting. These will be available pending approval from the International Organization of Biological Control (must be < 35 years old, IOBC membership required). These will be awarded competitively, based on the quality of submitted abstracts, and acceptance will require an oral presentation at the meeting. More information will be updated through our web page: www.aphidophaga16.it

Please share this information with any potentially interested colleagues. Updated circulars with details on registration, lodging, and abstract submission for oral presentations (15 min each) and posters will be distributed as additional information becomes available.

The Steering Committee, Ecology of Aphidophaga

J.P. Michaud (Chair and IOBC liason)
Laura Depalo and Antonio Masetti
(Hosts and Local Arrangements Chairs, Aphidophaga 16)
Kris Giles
Nickolas Kavallieratos
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Eric Lucas