

MANCHESTER
1824
The University of Manchester

British Society for Parasitology
Joint Spring Meeting
15th -17th April 2019

Joint with

The Belgian Society of Parasitology & Protistology

Netherlands Society for Parasitology

From the 15th of April until the 17th I visited Manchester for the British Society for Parasitology Joint Spring Meeting. The conference was held at the “Renold building” of the University of Manchester. I started off with an interesting workshop on science communication. Several examples of good and bad pitches of scientific research were shown and I got some valuable tips and tricks to improve a scientific pitch by being concise and targeted to the audience. Then the actual conference itself started with an inspiring talk by Patricia Wright. Trained as a primatologist, she worked extensively on the establishment of the Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar. There she also encountered the burden of parasitic diseases on the local population, which motivated her to put even more effort into the contacts with the locals. It was an impressive start of an interesting few days. From the afternoon session I remember an entertaining talk from Tomas Machacek about an outbreak of swimmer’s itch in the faculty pool. By coincidence, parasitology students were infected with *Trichobilharzia szidati*, after which the immunological response could be followed up. Later on I met up with him and we had some interesting talks about our research.

The next day I joined the sessions on ecology and ecosystems, to expand my knowledge on the effects of parasites in the broader nature. I remember a very clear and interesting talk by Adam Hayward on the survival costs of reproduction and their effects on parasitic infections in sheep. This was very different from my topic of research, but therefore very refreshing. The fact that there were so many different topics on the conference was quite enjoyable. Furthermore, switching between sessions was easy, which was very helpful.

In the afternoon I visited several posters and attended the Wright Medal Lecture, which was an impressive talk from Russel Stothard. His reflections on his work resulted in valuable insights on what it means to build a career in science and in particular in schistosomiasis research.

The evening was filled with food and dancing, with a nice dinner after which a ceilidh band played. Fortunately, the evening did not end that late, as I had to be fresh for my talk early the next morning. My presentation went well and I got some interesting questions, some researchers came to me after my presentation to ask some additional questions and comments, which were valuable.

Furthermore, I became acquainted with Tomas from the talk on the first day, which might result in a collaboration with the university in Prague, as they have a *N. fowleri* culture running.

All in all, it was an interesting conference with fruitful conversations, and I am happy to thank the NVP for providing me with a travel grant.

Maarten Sarink
Department of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases
Erasmus MC, Rotterdam