NUS National University of Singapore | Department of Biological Sciences
Faculty of Science

SEMINAR

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Hosted by Prof Prakash Kumar

Lace plant: a novel model system to study programmed cell death

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About the Speaker

Arunika Gunawardena completed her BSc with first-class honors at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka in 1993 and received the Presidential scholarship to go to the UK for post-graduate studies. She obtained her Ph.D. from the School of Biological and Molecular Sciences, Oxford Brookes University, UK, in 2000. After completing her Ph.D., she worked as a senior lecturer at the Department of Biology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, from 2000-2002. She then came to Canada and worked as a post-doctoral fellow at the Department of Botany, University of Toronto (2002-2006). After winning a prestigious NSERC (National Sciences and Engineering Research Council) University Faculty Award, she joined the Biology Department at Dalhousie University in September 2006. She has nearly 25 years of experience working in academia at four different universities in three countries and has won several awards for research, teaching, and outreach activities.

http://pcdlab.biology.dal.ca/arunika.html

Programmed cell death (PCD) is a genetically encoded, active process that results in the death of individual cells, tissues, or whole organs. PCD has been studied extensively in animal cells, where it plays a significant role during development. As in animals, PCD plays an essential role in plant development and defense and occurs throughout a plant's life cycle, from the fertilization of the ovule to the death of the whole plant. However, little is known about how the developmental cues or external signals feed into the regulatory system to execute the cell death process in plants. One of the fascinating examples of PCD in plant development is perforation formation in the lace plant (Aponogeton madagascariensis) leaves. This seminar will focus on plant PCD and introduce the lace plant's potential as a novel model to study PCD. http://pcdlab.biology.dal.ca