

CANADIAN PROFESSOR PRESENTS SPECIAL SEMINAR AT FABI

Professor Jeremy McNeil of the Department of Biology at the University of Western Ontario in Canada presented a special seminar at FABI on April 13. The title of his presentation was “The role of host plant volatiles and sex pheromones in the reproductive biology of the potato aphid, *Macrosiphum euphorbiae* and its parasitoid *Aphidius nigripes*”. Prof. McNeil’s research has primarily focused on pest species, with the intention of developing environmentally friendly approaches to pest management and control.



In his presentation, Prof. McNeil dealt with environmental factors and their influence on the sexual behaviour of *M. euphorbiae* during calling and mating. During calling, the female aphid attaches to a leaf and then secretes pheromones from specialised glands situated in its hind legs. Males respond to the pheromone secreted by the female and migrate from their plant hosts to the odour source. He compared the aphids’ behaviour in their natural environment with their behaviour in simulated but controlled conditions in a laboratory. He explained how conditions such as wind speed, temperature and atmospheric pressure favoured the aphids’ response to these different conditions.