

Bulletin

Entomological Society of Canada
Société d'entomologie du Canada

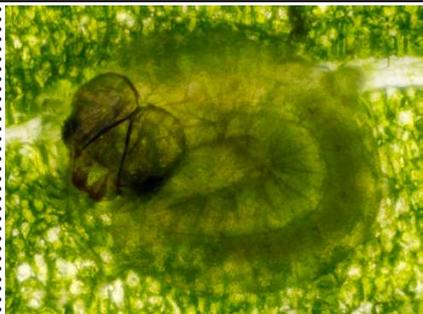
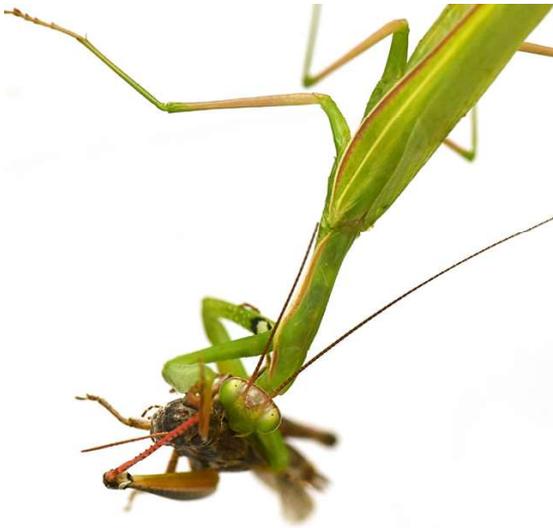
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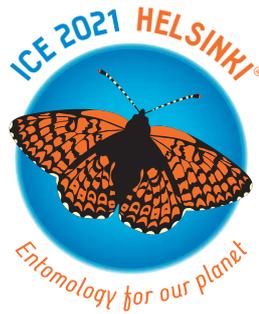
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International Congresses in the Age of Pandemics – the 26th ICE in Helsinki in 2021



XXVI International
Congress of Entomology
HELSINKI, FINLAND, JULY 18–23, 2021

International Congresses of Entomology have been organized over a period of more than 100 years. The legacy of the previous 25 ICE congresses, and their influence on the area of entomology during a century, gives an intriguing motivation to live up to great expectations and to organize the 26th ICE in Helsinki, Finland. We have been organising the 26th International Congress of Entomology in Helsinki for close to 5 years. We all know that an enormous workload is involved – mostly voluntary work by the organizing team – but it should be realized also that high expenses are associated with the organization, and inevitably there is economic insecurity associated with this endeavor.

During March 2020 we were faced with a difficult decision, with only two options concerning the organization of the 26th ICE in Helsinki:

1. Keep to our original schedule and host the Congress on 19–24 July 2020 in Helsinki, or
2. Postpone the Congress by 1 year to the only available alternative dates: 18–23 July 2021

Implications of these options include:

1. It was obvious that restrictions on travel due to the pandemic would severely limit attendance. For the most part, these restrictions were imposed in mid-March, after our deadline of 1 March to cancel registrations and to be eligible for refunds.
2. Given the impracticality of hosting a Congress without the participation of many of the world's entomologists, we decided to postpone the Congress by a year at a time when travel restrictions would ostensibly be lifted, and participants allowed to travel again. This decision was made in good faith and in order to provide the world entomological community the congress they deserve. This postponement allows you to attend the congress next year, and not to lose the registration fees as would have happened under option (1).

At the time of writing this – a week after the original congress dates – it is clear that the decision to postpone served everyone's interests. We could have followed Option 1 and have organized the ICE2020Helsinki last week in Finland as planned (practically no new COVID19 cases in Finland, limitations on gatherings lifted), but the vast majority of participants would not have been allowed to leave their home country to travel to Finland (including the USA, Canada, China, Japan, and Brazil). Now we are determined to hold a successful ICE2020Helsinki in July 2021. We believe that flexibility and resourcefulness are required given the current situation. For example, funding agencies are extending their grant expiration and reporting deadlines, because currently hardly anyone can conduct research as planned. Therefore, we would urge those who are affected by the policies of granting agencies to approach them and request flexibility in this unusual situation.

Just as we at the ICE2020Helsinki organising team have invested our time and work in the past years, we pledge you all to continue that investment in the months to come, for the benefit of the world entomological community. We have the will to host the 26th ICE congress in 2021 as announced. We hope you share our determination.

Please follow congress updates and news at our website www.ice2020helsinki.fi

Sincerely,

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