CONFÉRENCE

Dr. Aron Fazekas, Research Coordinator at The Arboretum
University of Guelph

The Elm Recovery Project at The Arboretum, University of Guelph.

JEUDI, 28 MAI 2026 à 12 h 30

Pavillon Charles-Eugène-Marchand, salle Hydro-Québec (1210)

Abstract:

The American elm (*Ulmus americana*) was once a keystone species in eastern North American forests and urban landscapes, prized for its towering form and resilience in diverse conditions. The arrival of Dutch Elm Disease (DED) in the 20th century, decimated our native elm populations, reshaping Ontario's natural ecosystems and urban environments. In the aftermath, surviving trees still dotted the landscape, but typically at a scale that would prevent effective cross-pollination. The Elm Recovery Project at The Arboretum was launched in the late 1990s with the goal of conserving and restoring this iconic species. The project began by locating and collecting cuttings from surviving mature elms across Ontario that appeared to exhibit natural tolerance to DED. These individuals were clonally propagated and evaluated in controlled field trial programs. Today, the Arboretum maintains a genetically diverse collection of disease-tolerant elms, contributing both to conservation research and to practical restoration plantings. Ongoing work includes long-term monitoring of survival, health, and reproductive success, as well as public education and outreach. Future directions include expanding genetic trials, deepening collaborations on disease resistance genomics, and supporting municipalities, landowners, and conservation agencies in reintroducing elms to the landscape. This project serves as a hopeful model for native tree recovery in the face of invasive threats and climate uncertainty.

Hôte: Pauline Hessenauer

Responsables: Juan Carlos Villarreal Aguilar et Ilga Mercedes Porth
juan-carlos.villarreal-aguilar@bio.ulaval.ca et ilga.porth@sbf.ulaval.ca