Citizen science campaign, workshop, and open lecture

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Přírodovědecká fakulta
Faculty of Science

Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích
University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice

The event was organized by
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László Nagy (HUN-REN Biological Research Centre Szeged)
and Julia Pawłowska (University of Warsaw)

19 May 2025 – Public Lecture: "Increasing Understanding of Biological Invasions Together"
An inspiring open lecture took place in České Budějovice, led by Dr. Helen E. Roy from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the University of Exeter. The event offered a unique opportunity for the public to gain insights into citizen science and biological invasions from a world-renowned expert. Around 50 attendees joined to explore how insects and their associated fungi can be studied and understood through collaborative science.

19–21 May 2025 – Citizen Science Workshop in České Budějovice
In partnership with Prof. Dr. Oldřich Nedvěd from the Department of Zoology, a hands-on citizen science activity was organized. Participants collected ladybirds in the field near the campus and examined them in the lab for insect-associated fungi using compound microscopes. Alongside this practical work, a workshop for Master's and PhD students featured lectures and roundtable discussions on organizing and leading citizen science projects.

Key figures:
16 participants from 7 countries
6 instructors from 3 countries
Activities included guided walks and lab sessions with a total of 22 participants

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Achievements **B**eyond **E**xpectations

Public Engagement	**50 people from diverse backgrounds were introduced to entomology and citizen science, sparking interest in future collaborative projects.**
International Training	**Participants gained essential skills to lead citizen science campaigns in their home countries, ensuring broader impact despite lower attendance than planned.**
Academic Collaboration	**An Erasmus+ Agreement was signed between the University of South Bohemia (Czechia) and the University of Warsaw (Poland), enabling future student and staff exchanges.**
Mobility Experience	**15 participants from Hungary, Poland, Belgium, Germany, North Macedonia, and the UK benefited from international mobility opportunities.**
Scientific Output	**A manuscript titled “Ten Simple Rules for Citizen Science in Fungal Conservation” is being prepared for submission to PLOS Computational Biology, co-authored by workshop participants and global experts.**

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The workshop strongly reflected the Visegrad spirit:

15 out of 22 participants came from Visegrad countries (Czechia: 7, Poland: 7, Hungary: 1).

Although Hungarian participation was lower than expected, this was balanced by strong engagement from Czech and Polish partners.

We are excited to announce that the next workshop will take place in Poland!

In the winter of 2025, we will gather in the beautiful city of Urwitałt for a Workshop on Fungal Genomics.

We look forward to welcoming participants to continue building our community.

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