

Aaron Onufrak

Biographical Sketch

Lecturer

University of Tennessee
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A. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2023	Ph.D.	Entomology, Plant Pathology, & Nematology	University of Tennessee
2018	M.S.	Biological Sciences	Wright State University
2016	B.S.	Biology	Slippery Rock University

B. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2025-Present	Lecturer, Entomology and Plant Pathology Department, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
2024-2025	Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Biosciences Division, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, TN
2019-2023	Laboratory Manager and Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
2016-2018	Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant, Department of Biological Sciences, Wright State University, Dayton, OH
2015-2016	Undergraduate Research Assistant, Department of Biology, Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA

C. TEACHING EXPERIENCE (2020-present)

Undergraduate Level Courses:

None

Graduate Level Courses:

2021 EPP 604: Analysis of Microbiomes

Mentoring Experiences:

2020-Present	Virtual Science Club Mentor (University of Tennessee Pre-College Middle and High School Student Mentoring Program)
2021-2024	Explore BiGG Data Mentor (US Department of Agriculture Sponsored Research and Extension Experience for Undergraduates)
2019 & 2021	Upward Bound Mentor (US Department of Education Funded High School Student Mentoring Program)

Professional Development Related to Pedagogy:

2025	Innovative Teaching & Learning Conference, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee
2025	University of Tennessee Teaching Summit, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee
2020	Best Practices in Teaching Program 7-week Professional Development Program, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee

D. GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING (2020-present)(focus on external first for space reasons)

- 2021-2023 *Characterizing the responses of Thousand Cankers Disease to drought using Omics, Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, USDA NIFA. \$120,000. Project Director*
- 2020-2021 *Cankers No More: Evaluation of chemical and biological control treatments for control of *Geosmithia morbida*, the causal agent of Thousand Cankers Disease, SFRA \$4,460. Student Principal Investigator*

E. PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2024-Present Ecological Society of America
- 2020-Present The American Phytopathological Society
- 2019-2020 Secretary and Treasurer, Entomology and Plant Pathology Graduate Student Association, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

F. HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2023 Belle Baruch Poster Award, 2023 Southern Forest Tree Improvement Committee Conference, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
- 2022 Forest Pathology Student Travel Award, The American Phytopathological Society
- 2022 Arthur Kelman Student Travel Award, The American Phytopathological Society
- 2022 PRC Travel Fellowship Award, Plant Research Center, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
- 2021 WFGA Critchfield Award Runner-Up Student Poster, 2021 Forest Genetics Symposium
- 2021 Honorable Mention, Best Student Paper Competition, Phytobiomes Journal

G. PUBLICATIONS (selected, Asterisks (*) indicate co-first authorship, Underlined names denote high school, undergraduate, or graduate student mentees)

1. Onufrak A.J., Gazis R., Gwinn K., Klingeman W., Khodaei S., Perez Oñate L.I., Finnell A., Givens S., Chen C., Holdridge D.R., Hadziabdic D. (2024) Potential biological control agents of *Geosmithia morbida* restrict fungal pathogen growth via mycoparasitism and antibiosis, *BioControl*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10526-024-10277-y>
2. Reyes A., Smith Z., **Onufrak A.J.**, Pietsch G., Ony M., Odoi M., Khodaei S., Small C., Ginzel M., Klingeman W., Hadziabdic D. (2023) First report of Bot Canker (*Diplodia corticola*) in Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*) in Tennessee, *Plant Disease*, <https://doi.org/10.1094/PDIS-02-23-0308-PDN>.
3. Kapoor B., **Onufrak A.J.***, Klingeman W., DeBruyn, J., Cregger M., Willcox E., Trigiano R., Hadziabdic D. (2023) Signatures of prescribed fire in the microbial communities of *Cornus florida* are largely undetectable six months post-fire, *PeerJ*, <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.15822>.
4. Odoi M.E., **Onufrak A.J.**, Kosiewska J.R., Arnwine A., Holbert R., Boggess S.L., Hadziabdic D., Bernard E.C., Trigiano R.N. (2022) First report of leaf anthracnose on the whorled sunflower, *Helianthus verticillatus*, caused by *Colletotrichum fioriniae* in the United States. *Plant Disease*, <https://doi.org/10.1094/PDIS-06-22-1286-PDN>.
5. **Onufrak A.J.**, Ony M.A., Odoi M.E., Dugger C.J., Pietsch G.M., Phillips E.F., Grant J.F., Klingeman W., Hadziabdic D. (2022) First report of *Diplodia corticola* causing dieback of

white oak (*Quercus alba*) in Tennessee. *Plant Disease*, <https://doi.org/10.1094/PDIS-02-22-0447-PDN>

6. **Onufrak A.J.**, Williams G. *, Klingeman W., Cregger M., Klingeman M., Debruyn J., Ginzel, M., Hadziabdic D. (2020) Regional differences in the structure of *Juglans nigra* phytobiome reflect geographical differences in Thousand Cankers Disease severity. *Phytobiomes Journal*, 4(4). <https://doi.org/10.1094/PBIOMES-05-20-0044-R>
7. **Onufrak A.J.**, Rúa M.A., Hossler K. (2019) The missing metric: An evaluation of fungal importance in wetland assessments. *Wetlands*, 40., <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13157-019-01228-w>
8. DeNicola D.M., Stapleton M.G., **Onufrak A.J.** (2018) Examination of effects of acid and metals on benthic algae in streams using chemical diffusing substrates. *Ecological Indicators*, 88 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2017.12.071>