

Conferencia de apertura / Opening lecture

"Evolution and development of petal surfaces that attract pollinators"

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Abstract

Flowers and the animals that pollinate them interact at a single key point - the petal surface. It is this single layer of tissue that provides the visual surface that advertises nectar rewards. It is on this layer of tissue that pollinators land. And it is often from this layer of tissue that the scents that attract pollinators over longer ranges are released. Our recent research has focused on the optical effects of the petal surface. The majority of petal morphologies will act to support certain plant/pollinator interactions but not others, leading to greater reproductive isolation and speciation within the flowering plants. I will present recent work on the nanoscale properties of the petal surface, taking molecular developmental, evolutionary and pollinator behavioural perspectives.