

Austel N.^{1*}, Böttcher C.², Meiners T.²

Non-targeted metabolome profiling of green flower buds in oilseed rape: screening for resistance against the pollen beetle

¹Freie Universität Berlin, Department of Biology, Applied Zoology / Animal Ecology, Haderslebener Str. 9, 12163 Berlin, Germany, austel@zedat.fu-berlin.de

²Julius-Kühn Institut, Institute for Ecological Chemistry, Plant Analysis and Stored Product Protection, Königin-Luise-Straße 19, 14195 Berlin, Germany

Corresponding author's e-mail address: austel@zedat.fu-berlin.de

The pollen beetle (*Meligethes aeneus* F.; Coleoptera: Nitidulidae) is one of the major insect pests of oilseed rape (*Brassica napus* L.; Brassicaceae), with the potential of causing significant reductions in seed yield. Since pollen beetles become increasingly resistant to pyrethroids, alternative control strategies within the framework of integrated pest management are needed to reduce the use of insecticides and the undesirable selection of beetles for insecticide resistance. One strategy is to use the natural variation in brassicaceous plants species to identify potential chemical resistance parameters that enable plant breeders to enhance the resistance of oilseed rape against adult pollen beetles.

In this project we have i) screened *B. napus* cultivars and related brassicaceous plant species for their effect on the feeding behaviour of adult *M. aeneus* and ii) analysed the metabolome profiles of green flower buds by liquid chromatography electrospray ionisation time-of-flight mass spectrometry.

The feeding response of the pollen beetle was dependent on sex and plant species. Males discriminated stronger between plant cultivars and species than females. The beetles preferred plants closely related to *B. napus* over distantly related ones like *Sinapis alba*, *Eruca sativa* or *Barabarea vulgaris*. To identify candidate compounds as potential chemical resistance parameters, we correlated metabolome profiles and beetle feeding behaviour. Positive and negative correlations of plant compounds with the beetles feeding behaviour have been detected. The metabolome profiles were plant species and variety-specific. Oilseed rape varieties could also be clearly separated statistically. Statistical models resulted in a candidate list for metabolite identification. Non-targeted metabolome profiling can be a first step to unravel plant resistance traits via a chemical ecology approach.

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ABSTRACT BOOK

Cover photo: The insect on the ISCE logo is a moth, a young female *Erannis bajaria* (Geometridae), in calling posture, emitting her pheromone [(3Z,6Z,9Z)-3,6,9-octadecatriene and (3Z,6Z,9Z)-3,6,9-nonadecatriene, G. Szócs, W. Francke et al., unpublished] (photo L.Z. Nagy)

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