Part 1: Conservation and sustainability

14.05 – 14.15: Dr Al Reeve (The River Dee - http://www.riverdee.org.uk)

Al Reeve is a behavioural aquatic biologist, graduating from St Andrews in 2014 with a PhD in the behavioural ecology of Trinidadian guppies, with Dr Alfredo Ojangurren. Al Reeve has worked in environmental and conservation fields both in academia and the third sector for over 15 years and joins the River Dee Trust from the Deveron, Bogie & Isla Trust. He has a particular interest in fish and aquatic environments and is excited to contribute to the conservation and restoration of fish and the wider environment along the Dee.

About The River Dee Trust
The River Dee Trust is a community-based charitable company, registered in Scotland, No. SC028497. It was set up in 1998 and is tasked with improving our knowledge of the ecology and associated fish stocks of the River Dee so that practical improvements and restoration of the River and the wildlife it supports can be achieved. We work in co-operation with those that have the improvement of the River at heart. To deliver educational information to schools, organisations and individuals living in the North East of Scotland. Our work is guided by the principle of how we can better understand and improve the River so that we may look after it for this and future generations. To achieve these aims the River Dee Trust must raise sufficient funds so that these works can be achieved to the highest standard. With your support we will be able to meet our aims and continue looking after the Dee and the surrounding area, for many years to come.

14.15 – 14.25: Dr. Tom Ashton (Xelect - https://xelect-genetics.com/)

Tom Ashton has a background in marine biology, aquaculture and genetics. Tom graduated from St Andrews in 2011 with a PhD in the genetics of farmed salmon, with Prof. Ian Johnston. During his PhD, Tom identified some commercially valuable intellectual property and decided to launch a spin-out company to exploit it. The launch of an entrepreneurial venture had always been a dream of Tom, and the timing seemed like the perfect opportunity. Over the following 9 years together with my colleagues at Xelect we have developed the business into a well-known and respected brand in aquaculture genetics, and we now serve many of the biggest names in our industry. We have a team of world class scientific staff and are growing steadily each year.

About Xelect
Xelect is a provider of specialist genetics and breeding management services to the aquaculture industry. The company has modern laboratories and offices in St Andrews, Scotland and a sales and development representative based in Puerto Montt, Chile. We manage and support breeding programmes on behalf of leading producers of farmed finfish and prawns worldwide.


Neil qualified as a commercial lawyer in Scotland before working on European law and environmental policy within various EU institutions. He then co-founded the multi-award-winning nature and adventure travel company Wilderness Scotland and has served as a non-executive Director of several conservation organisations in Europe and Africa. In addition to his role as CEO his primary focuses within Conservation Capital’s technical advisory services division include commercial and legal structuring for protected areas, and all aspects of conservation tourism planning and development.

About Conservation Capital
Conservation Capital develops financial and business driven solutions to support the world’s most important conservation areas. Conservation Capital’s team combines decades of experience in finance, commerce, law and management with a passion for the natural world to bring the rigour of corporate finance and business development to high priority conservation initiatives.

14.35 – 14.45: Q&A

Break
Part 2: Careers advice for life sciences graduates

14.50 - 15.15: Round table discussion

Sarah Willich (Career representative – students)

Sarah Willich is the fourth-year Biology class representative and careers representative at the university. She has been class representative for the past three years and also joined the BioSoc committee two years ago. Sarah has completed research internships every summer, most of them at the university, and worked as a research assistant last year as part of the Undergraduate Research Assistant Programme. Sarah was selected to be an Amgen Scholar at the University of Cambridge last year and is now looking forward to joining them this summer. Currently, Sarah is in the interview phase of applying for PhD position in the field of eukaryotic DNA replication and the cell cycle in the autumn of this year.

Julie McLellan (University of St Andrews Careers Adviser - https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers/)

Julie McLellan graduated from the University of Glasgow in 2010 with a BSc (Hons) in Psychology. Following that she has completed an MSc in Health Psychology at the University of St Andrews in 2011 and an MSc in Psychological Therapy in Primary care at the Universities of Dundee and Stirling in 2014. In 2017 Julie McLellan qualified as a Health Psychologist and was awarded a PhD entitled “The development of an intervention to support midwives in addressing multiple health behaviours with pregnant women” from the University of Stirling in 2020. Julie McLellan has worked as a Careers Adviser at the University of St Andrews since July 2020.

About the Career centre

The Careers Centre offers services to all full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students; graduates within three years of graduation and graduate-level staff members of the university. The Careers Centre’s mission is to help students understand themselves and find their place in the world. We do that by educating, inspiring and empowering our students so they can design meaningful and satisfying careers that meet their own unique ambitions. We offer experiences, connections, guidance, and information to allow our students to: explore who they are and what makes them curious, as well as to help students focus their plans and ambitions.

Alison Dun (SULSA - https://www.sulsa.ac.uk)

Alison Dun is the Executive Director for the Scottish Universities Life Science Alliance (SULSA), which drives strategic collaboration across Universities, disciplines and sectors. Within this role Alison drives SULSA’s skills agenda, working in partnership with national agencies and organisations to support the life science skills pipeline. After obtaining her degree in Molecular Medicine at the University of Sussex, Alison undertook her PhD at the University of Edinburgh, using advanced microscopy to investigate molecular mechanisms at the cellular membrane. After completing her PhD in 2013 Alison became the facility manager for the Edinburgh Super-Resolution Imaging Consortium (ESRIC) at Heriot-Watt University. Alison established ESRIC as a globally recognised centre of excellence for advanced microscopy, providing access to state-of-the-art microscopy equipment and the expertise to support high impact research. Under Alison’s leadership ESRIC won a TIMES Higher Education Award, hosted the Nobel Prize Winner for Physics and Chemistry 2014 and secured funding for the only microscope of its kind in Scotland (£1.2 million). With a passion for driving collaboration and an interest in policy, Alison joined SULSA as Executive Director in March 2020. Since joining Alison has worked across the 10 Research Pools in Scotland to create Research Innovation Scotland and continues to build SULSA’s activity in skills development and the improvement of research culture.

About SULSA

The Scottish Universities Life Science Alliance (SULSA) is the Life Sciences Research Pool in Scotland. A strategic partnership across 11 Universities, which aims to drive collaboration across Universities as well as the industry sector, the Health Service and across disciplines. SULSA strives to enhance Scotland’s vibrant life sciences research community by improving opportunities for cross-cutting collaboration, inward investment, skills development and translational research. SULSA supports and enhances research and innovation excellence in Scotland’s life science sector, ensuring Scotland is recognised globally as a destination for leading life sciences research and development.

15.10 – 15.15: Q&A

Break
Part 3: Entrepreneurialism and careers in industry

15.20 – 15.30: Naveed Hedayat (Biogen - https://www.biogen.com)

Naveed graduated from St Andrews in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Statistics. He currently works in the Strategic Analytics group within Product & Technology Development at Biogen, a biotechnology company that develops and delivers therapies for neurological and neurodegenerative diseases. Before starting at Biogen, he interned at two other biotechnology companies: Merck KGaA and Amgen.

About Biogen
Biogen are pioneers in neuroscience and one of the world’s first global biotechnology companies. Biogen has led innovative scientific research with the goal over the last decade to defeat devastating neurological diseases.


Dr Lissa Herron first obtained a BS in biochemistry at Miami University, Ohio, USA before moving to Scotland in 2003 to pursue a PhD in neurobiology with Prof Frank Gunn-Moore. Despite difficult personal circumstances and the difficulties of trying to characterise a novel protein that kept killing off cells (and subsequently finding that it’s a tumour suppressor), Lissa completed her PhD in 2008. After a post-doc with Prof Gareth Miles studying synaptic changes in spinal cords of a mouse model of motor neuron disease, Lissa finally left St Andrews in 2012 and returned to her biochemistry roots for a post-doc in chicken biotechnology at The Roslin Institute with Prof Helen Sang. After nearly a decade of post-doctoral research, she made the commercialisation leap through a Royal Society of Edinburgh Enterprise Fellowship and Converge in 2017. A year after taking the ‘Eggcellent Proteins’ project from the university into the company Roslin Technologies, Lissa joined the Converge team as Enterprise Manager.

About Converge
Converge is Scotland’s leading company creation programme for staff, students and recent graduates of all Scottish Universities and Research Institutes. Converge is the only programme of its kind that brings together academic entrepreneurs from every university in Scotland. Our mission is to empower people to take their future into their own hands. We do this by providing intensive business training – tailored to academic entrepreneurs – a dynamic and supportive network and one to one guidance for staff, students and graduates.

15.40 – 15.50: Alice King (AMICULUM - https://www.amiculum.biz/)

Alice King graduated from the University of Nottingham in 2014 with an MSci in Medicinal and Biological Chemistry, which included an assessed year in industry undertaken at Novartis in Horsham. Following that, Alice studied at the Institute of Cancer Research in London until 2018, when she was awarded a PhD for her work on the development of injectable radiotracers for PET imaging of haematological and pancreatic cancers. Alice has worked as a Medical Writer at Seques (an AMICULUM agency), based in the Dundee office, since October 2018.

About AMICULUM
AMICULUM is an independent family of 9 branded agencies that delivers communications and consultancy services to pharmaceutical, biotechnology and health technology companies across the world. What makes us different is our agile and highly collaborative approach, which allows us to put together the right expertise from across our business to deliver high-quality, technically accurate and compelling content for different audiences, through selective use of key communication channels. Created in 2001, AMICULUM has grown steadily for the past 19 years with significant repeat business from our clients and recommendations from the leading experts we have worked with. We now have a team of over 250 healthcare communications professionals and operate in some of the most complex and challenging areas of medicine.

15.50 – 16.00: Q&A

Part 4: Networking

16.00 – 16.50: Networking
17:00: Close