

MONDAY

COLLOQUIUM

Working the night shift: Rhythms and visual senses of nocturnal pollinators

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23 Feb 2026 (Monday) | 16:00 Hrs (Tea / Coffee 15:45 Hrs) | Venue: TIFRH Auditorium

Pollination is a crucial ecosystem service built on mutualistic interactions between plants and their animal pollinators, shaped over evolutionary time. Pollination of nocturnally flowering plants is common in the tropics but remains understudied unsurprisingly, as it occurs after dark. Even less is known about how the night-time environment shapes the foraging ecology and sensory worlds of pollinators themselves.

In this talk, I will explore how ambient light influences flower visitation by visually guided nocturnal pollinators, including bats, moths, and the more evolutionarily recent nocturnal bees. I will then focus on nocturnal bees in particular, discussing the visual adaptations that enable them to forage under low-light conditions, and how ecological factors such as predation risk and resource availability have shaped the evolution of nocturnality in bees. Finally, I will examine how these pollination services are being disrupted, with particular emphasis on the striking lack of information from tropical regions, where nocturnal pollination and pollinators are most prevalent.