

FROM THE EDITOR

In this June 2019 issue of *Science Diliman*, we feature four research articles and one short communication. One article is on the use of benthic macroinvertebrate assemblages to assess stream condition in an urban landscape. Two articles have relevance to DNA forensics. Another article discusses the isolation of fungal endophytes from leaves of medicinal plants. The short communication is on phytoplankton grown from ballast waters.

Magbanua et al. assessed the overall condition of the waterways in the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman campus based on benthic macroinvertebrate assemblages. They sampled 19 stream reaches across three different land use categories. Their results revealed poor to severe stream conditions in all sampling sites. Thus, they suggest restoration efforts in streams and waterways, as well as improvement of the wastewater treatment facility in the campus.

Sales et al. compared the utility of an organic procedure and a silica-based method for extracting DNA from cigarette butt samples. They also tested the effect of storage time and conditions, and cigarette type on DNA yield and allele recovery. They recommend the use of organic procedure for samples collected outdoors and stored for a long period of time, while the silica-based method is recommended for samples collected indoors and stored for a short period of time.

Guerrero et al. compared the occurrence, frequency, and isolation rates of fungal endophytes from the leaves of the 10 most frequently used medicinal plants in Albay across three different locations. They obtained 120 fungal isolates belonging to 17 species. They found no significant difference in terms of the number of isolates and unique species across the sampling sites. They recommend further sampling and testing of the biological properties of these fungal endophytes.

Soliven et al. compared DNA yield and quality from urine samples stored at room temperature, 4°C, and -20°C for 2 months and 9 months. They found that DNA extracted from urine samples stored at cooler temperatures were amplified better, especially at 2 months of storage. Their study is important as DNA testing of urine samples can be used to resolve allegation of sample switching and laboratory misconduct.

Austero et al. identified bloom-forming and potentially harmful diatom and dinoflagellate species in ballast waters from international vessels berthing at two ports in the country. Their results showed that these harmful phytoplankton can be transported via shipping, which may lead to bioinvasion in the local aquatic environment.

Lastly, on behalf of the Editorial Board of *Science Diliman*, I would like to thank Dr. Irene M. Villaseñor for her three years of service as Editor-in-Chief. Under her able leadership, *Science Diliman* was included in the ASEAN Citation Index and Emerging Sources Citation Index, and was a recipient of the Journal Incentive Program awarded by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED).

Science Diliman also deeply mourns the passing on March 2, 2019 of the UP Diliman College of Science Dean, Dr. Perry S. Ong. He was a UP Scientist and a former Director of the Institute of Biology. He was at the forefront of biodiversity research and conservation in the Philippines.


Jonas P. Quilang, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief