

Zoë Migicovsky, PhD (she/her)



Bio:

Dr. Zoë Migicovsky is a Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in Agri-Food and Sustainable Agriculture and an Assistant Professor in the Biology Department at Acadia University. She works at the intersection of plant agriculture and data analytics, integrating plant biology with computational tools to investigate biological variation in crop species. The Migicovsky Lab focuses on perennial crops and their wild relatives, including apples, grapes, and strawberries. Their research leverages crop diversity, including genomic and trait data, to improve our understanding of plant biology and make data-driven decisions for plant breeding, management, and conservation strategies. To learn more, visit <http://migicovskylab.ca/>

Title:

Perennial fruit crops as a case study for crop wild relative conservation, use, and public engagement

Abstract:

We rely on diversity in both cultivated plants and their wild relatives as the foundation of crop improvement. Many perennial fruit crops have wild relatives in Canada which need to be conserved in their natural habitat. In addition, conservation can occur outside of these habitats through use of seedbanks. However, many perennial fruit crops are not suited to seedbanks and require unique strategies based primarily on living collections. These collections serve as valuable resources for exploring plant variation and provide material for breeding efforts. Perennial fruit crops can also serve as useful examples for helping the public understand the value of crop wild relatives. Ultimately, a future with a secure and sustainable food supply demands that we conserve and harness the immense amount of variation available across perennial fruit crops and their relatives.