



Robert POULIN

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Originally from Canada, Robert obtained a PhD from Laval University before joining the University of Otago in 1992. He has since established a research programme in parasite ecology and evolution that focuses on broad questions. His research group has four main research directions. First, his lab investigates the forces shaping the evolution of parasites, in particular the evolution of life history traits such as host specificity, the ability to manipulate host behaviour, and the complexity of transmission pathways. Second, they are studying the role of parasites in aquatic ecosystems, i.e. how they affect community diversity and food web stability, and how parasitism may interact with climate change to influence ecosystems. Third, Robert has long been exploring large-scale patterns of parasite biodiversity and biogeography, searching for the processes behind the diversification and distribution of parasites and diseases. Finally, Robert and his team are now turning toward the role of parasite microbiomes in shaping the host-parasite interaction. Robert was awarded Otago University's Distinguished Research Medal in 2013, the Hutton Medal from the Royal Society of New Zealand in 2011 for contributions to animal sciences, the Wardle Medal from the Canadian Society of Zoologists in 2007 for contributions to parasitology, and was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand in 2001.