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2024 SEA Symposium Abstract

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Decontamination of Microbacterium Cluster EE Phage in the Laboratory Setting

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In the Fall ‘23 semester, students in the Bio 143L isolated Microbacterium foliorum phages. However, once these phages were sequenced it was revealed that three of the phages were identical to a phage found the previous year. To investigate this issue, we swabbed several commonly used areas in the lab with sterile swabs and PYCa broth to search for contamination. After incubating and plating our swabs, we found that several areas of the lab had been contaminated by phage; such as the tables, vortex machine, and tube containers. Several items in the lab being contaminated is a serious issue for future classes planning to discover new phages. To combat this issue, we will be using UV disinfectant and 10% bleach. At the time this was written, results for the UV and bleach disinfecting are unavailable, but will be for the final poster.