

Topical Collection

Unconventional Viruses

Message from the Collection Editor

Since its very beginning, with the serendipitous discovery of the tobacco mosaic virus by Dmitri Ivanovsky in 1892, virology has mostly focused on those viruses responsible for (often dreadful) diseases of human, animals, or plants. One noticeable exception was the study of bacteriophages that led to the basic concepts of modern cellular biology and to many of today's molecular biology tools. Through isolations or large-scale environmental metagenomic studies, a flurry of new viruses has since been uncovered that are considered unconventional due to their virion size and morphology, unusual gene contents, or exotic modes of replication. Beyond their unanticipated diversity, these “unconventional viruses” are challenging the established borders between the viral and cellular worlds as well as traditional views on the origin of life. This Special Issue will gladly welcome articles pertaining to any of these unconventional viruses, from virophages to multipartite RNA and DNA viruses, huge phages, archaeal viruses, giant DNA viruses, as well as to the emerging concept of virus-encoded metabolism.

Collection Editor

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