

Previously unknown world of life found on common apple blossom

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Credit: Ashley Shade, courtesy of Yale University

A succession of distinct but surprising microbial communities populate apple blossoms during the flowers' life cycle, suggesting that the bacteria have a carefully regulated relationship with the common fruit tree, say Yale scientists.

University researchers have pinpointed for the first time the identity of some of these microbes, including a form of bacteria previously known to exist in the human mouth and ocean.

"The dogma had been that the bacterial populations on these plants were the product of random environmental events, but when we took a closer we found that just isn't true; we see an orderly transition of specific groups of microorganisms, " said Jo Handelsman, professor of molecular, cellular and [developmental biology](#) and senior author of the study.

The next step is to explore whether these populations interact with the [flowering plants](#) to drive their development. "The microbiome in humans drives our health more than we ever anticipated," she said.

More information: mbio.asm.org/content/4/2/e00602-12

Provided by Yale University

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