

Geoffrey David McLeod, Superintendent Urban Forestry and Pest Management, Saskatoon, passed away surrounded by family and friends on 4 March 2015. He defied his initial prognosis of “2 weeks to live” to go on to fight a nearly 2-year battle against brain cancer.

Geoff was born to Gary and Fran McLeod in 1971 and spent much of his early life in Regina, where he completed high school at Martin Collegiate in 1989. He then went on to graduate from the University of Regina with a bachelor’s degree in biology in 1997. He completed a second bachelor’s degree from the University of British Columbia in Forest Management (2001) and a master’s degree in insect chemical ecology from Simon Fraser University (2005). Under the supervision of Dr Gerhard Gries, Geoff worked on semiochemical mediated attraction of bark beetles to Dutch elm disease infected trees. Geoff discovered that the fungus which causes Dutch elm disease, *Ophiostoma novo-ulmi*, manipulates the semiochemical profile of host elm trees to make diseased trees more attractive to the fungal vector, the native elm bark beetle, *Hylurgopinus rufipes*. Working with the different blends of antennal-active compounds, Geoff made a breakthrough with his re-evaluation of the initial data when he discovered that one compound was partially obscured by another on the gas chromatogram.

After completing his master’s degree, Geoff returned to the City of Regina to apply his new knowledge to Dutch elm disease prevention. In 2006, the position of Pest Management Supervisor with the City of Saskatoon brought Geoff north. Geoff advanced quickly within the organization to become the Superintendent of Pest Management and Urban Forestry in 2008. During his time with the City of Saskatoon, Geoff created 20 new jobs including a full-time Entomologist position. When provincial funding for West Nile suppression ended, Geoff secured significant municipal funding to keep the mosquito control program functioning at the same capacity and still continued to fund Dutch elm disease prevention. He supported entomological initiatives including supplementing the monitoring programs of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to improve the chances of early detection of important forest insect pests (e.g., gypsy moth and emerald ash borer). Geoff valued collaboration among municipalities, as evidenced by an organization that he started with several interprovincial colleagues called the Prairie Urban Forest Alliance, a group devoted to improving communication between urban forestry and pest management programs across the Prairie Provinces.

Geoff was active in a number of organizations including the International Society of Arboriculture, Save Our Saskatoon Elms, Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association, Wildlife Rehabilitation Society of Saskatchewan, and the Entomological Society of Canada (2006-2012). Geoff often served in leadership roles within each of these organizations. As Provincial Director for Saskatchewan of the Prairie Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, Geoff was the first to bring the Annual General Meeting to Saskatoon in 2010 and also laid the foundation for the meeting in Saskatoon in 2014.

Geoff’s move to Saskatoon not only resulted in his career with Urban Forestry and affiliation with many societies, it also introduced him to the love of his life, Jamille Heer. They married,



**Geoffrey D. McLeod
(1971-2015)**

started their family in Saskatoon and began raising two daughters, Grace Margaret (5) and Bethany Frances (3). As an avid rugby player Geoff played for the Condors, Meraloma's, Saskatchewan Prairie Fire and the Saskatoon Gophers Rugby Club. At the end of Geoff's rugby-playing years he served as President of the North Saskatchewan Rugby Union. At his memorial service, his "rugby brothers" united in a scrum, sang "Danny boy" in tribute to their fallen brother. After rugby, Cross Fit became his new athletic passion and he quickly went from training to competing and helping judge in competitions. Geoff has not only left his indelible mark on the people and communities around him but also on entomology in Saskatchewan.

Jeff Boone and Tyler Wist
Saskatoon



Jeff Boone

Hylurgopinus rufipes