Insights into the Role of Fungi in Pine Wilt Disease

Cláudia S. L. Vicente 1,2,*, Miguel Soares 3, Jorge M. S. Faria 1,2, Ana P. Ramos 3,4, and Maria L. Inácio 2,5,*

1 Mediterranean Institute for Agriculture, Environment and Development (MED), Institute for Advanced Studies and Research, Universidade de Évora, 7006-554 Évora, Portugal; jorge.faria@iniav.pt
2 Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária (INIAV, I.P.), 2780-159 Oeiras, Portugal
3 Laboratório de Patologia Vegetal “Veríssimo de Almeida” (LPVVA), Instituto Superior de Agronomia (ISA), University of Lisbon, 1349-017 Lisboa, Portugal; soares8118@gmail.com (M.S.); pramos@isa.ulisboa.pt (A.P.R.)
4 Linking Environment Agriculture and Food (LEAF), Instituto Superior de Agronomia (ISA), University of Lisbon, 1349-017 Lisboa, Portugal
5 GREEN-IT Bioresources for Sustainability, Instituto de Tecnologia Química e Biológica, Universidade Nova de Lisboa (ITQB NOVA), Av. da República, 2780-157 Oeiras, Portugal
* Correspondence: cvicente@uevora.pt (C.S.L.V.); lurdes.inacio@iniav.pt (M.L.I.)

Abstract: Pine wilt disease (PWD) is a complex disease that severely affects the biodiversity and economy of Eurasian coniferous forests. Three factors are described as the main elements of the disease: the pinewood nematode (PWN) Bursaphelenchus xylophilus, the insect-vector Monochamus spp., and the host tree, mainly Pinus spp. Nonetheless, other microbial interactors have also been considered. The study of mycoflora in PWD dates back the late seventies. Culturologic studies have revealed diverse fungal communities associated with all PWD key players, composed frequently of saprophytic fungi (i.e., Aspergillus, Fusarium, Trichoderma) but also of necrotrophic pathogens associated with bark beetles, such as ophiostomatoid or blue-stain fungi. In particular, the ophiostomatoid fungi often recovered from wilted pine trees or insect pupal chambers/tunnels, are considered crucial for nematode multiplication and distribution in the host tree. Naturally occurring mycoflora, reported as possible biocontrol agents of the nematode, are also discussed in this review. This review discloses the contrasting effects of fungal communities in PWD and highlights promising fungal species as sources of PWD biocontrol in the framework of sustainable pest management actions.

Keywords: biocontrol; blue-stain fungi; interactions; mycobiome; pine wood nematode

1. Introduction

Pine wilt disease (PWD) has become one of the most damaging diseases to conifers worldwide and is a risk nowadays for the sustainability and profitability of forest ecosystems. PWD was detected in Japan in 1905, later spreading to other Asian countries; namely China, Korea, and Taiwan in the 1980s [1], and to Europe (Portugal and Spain in 1999 and 2010, respectively) [2–4]. To date, no recorded outbreaks have been identified in other European countries, despite several scientific studies alert for a high vulnerability of northern European pine forests due to the oncoming effects of climate change and the reported susceptibility of the dominating pine species to PWD [5,6]. The PWD has gradually and consistently spread between continents as a result of an increase in the global trade of wood and derivative materials. Significant economic and ecological impacts were reported in the affected countries, including a reduction in productivity and an increase in the costs of management procedures for disease control, as well as a decrease in forest biodiversity [7,8].

Effective PWD management strategies have been difficult to achieve given the complex disease infection cycle, where several organisms contribute to the infection’s overall development and severity, namely its causal agent, the pinewood nematode (PWN) Bursaphelenchus xylophilus (Steiner & Bührer) Nickle; the PWN’s insect-vector Monochamus spp.; and a susceptible host tree, commonly trees from the genus Pinus [1]. Recent studies have additionally identified a strong influence of the PWN-associated bacteria, and the
microbiome associated with the susceptible pine, on PWD development [9–11]. While the description of microbial diversity has been established for the PWN, the insect-vector, and susceptible pine hosts—leading to the preliminary proposal of their functional roles in the PWD—information on the mycological diversity associated with these organisms is scarcer. In the present review, an up-to-date compilation of the published works reporting on naturally occurring fungi associated with the PWN, the host tree, and its insect-vector, is presented. A critical analysis of the summarized information further allows us to envision the functional role of associated fungi on PWD development and guide future research in this area.

2. The Complexity of PWD

The PWN is a small plant-parasitic nematode of about 500–1000 µm in length and 22 µm in width, capable of feeding on plant (phytophagous) and fungal tissues (mycophagous). Its life cycle is comprised of four juvenile stages (J1 to J4) and both adult males and females (Figure 1a). In natural conditions, the PWN can quickly complete its life cycle, usually 4 days in summer conditions while, under in vitro conditions in laboratory cultured *Botrytis cinerea* Pers. mats, it can take between 4 to 6 days [1,12] (or slightly longer on aseptic co-cultures of in vitro pine with the PWN) [13]. Adverse environmental conditions and/or undernutrition induce morphological and physiological changes in the J3 stage, leading to the occurrence of the PWN dispersal stages, the third and fourth dispersal juvenile stages (JIII and JIV). The JIV, known as the dauer juvenile stage, is characterized by an interruption of the feeding process, the establishment of large lipidic reserves, and the production of a thick protective layer around the PWN’s body [1,14]. At this stage, the PWN is attracted to the juvenile longhorn beetles emerging from dead, or decaying, wood in forest ecosystems, invading beetles trachea. The PWN establishes these commensalism associations with members of the genus *Monochamus* (Coleoptera; Cerambycidae), considered the main PWN vector, with seven confirmed species vectoring the nematode in field and laboratory conditions [15–17], the most common being *M. alternatus* in East Asian forestlands [1], and *M. galloprovincialis* in Europe [18,19]. Colonized beetles can transmit the PWN by transporting them to (1) new beetle feeding sites during the beetle maturation stage, commonly in young branches of susceptible pine species (primary transmission), or (2) weakened or dead trees in the forest, where the matured female beetles oviposit (secondary transmission). The beetles benefit from an increase in reproduction sites at weakened or dead trees, where oviposition occurs, while the PWN takes advantage of the increase in beetle population, leading to higher rates of transmission (Figure 1b) [20]. Once infection occurs in a susceptible tree, the PWN quickly multiplies and begins feeding on the epithelial parenchyma cells lining the pine resin ducts, inducing extensive damage that leads to a reduction in resin production and the release of volatile terpenoids. As the infection progresses, the PWNs damage the tree’s vascular system and an embolism phenomenon begins to interrupt water transport, partly due to the build-up of volatile terpenoids [20,21]. The typical symptoms of PWD (Figure 2) are visible at this stage, namely pine shoot wilting due to desiccation, chlorosis, and drooping. When external symptoms of the PWD are noticeable, the affected tree cannot recover and eventually dies. However, the symptoms caused by the PWN, including abrupt reduction in the production of resin and pine needle wilting, can be mistakenly attributed to other biotic or abiotic stress factors such as water stress [22]. In North America, endemic pines are mostly tolerant, with only exotic species expressing the strongest symptoms. In China, Japan, Korea, and Portugal, many pine species were found to be very susceptible, e.g., *Pinus densiflora* Siebold & Zucc., *Pinus nigra* J.F. Arnold, *Pinus pinaster* Aiton, *Pinus radiata* D. Don, *Pinus sylvestris* L. or *Pinus thunbergii* Parl., which caused extensive economic and cultural repercussions [15,23].
Figure 1. Pine Wilt Disease pathosystem. (a) Life cycle of the pinewood nematode *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (grey arrows indicate propagative stage; black arrows indicate dispersal stage); (b) Primary and secondary transmission of *B. xylophilus* by the sawyer beetle *Monochamus* sp. (grey arrow indicates interconnection between transmission modes). Image of a healthy and wilted tree, retrieved from Biorender®.

Figure 2. Symptoms of Pine Wilt Disease—wilted *Pinus pinaster* trees (pine trees with brown canopy) surrounded by asymptomatic *P. pinaster* (greenish canopy without PWD manifestation). Location: Companhia das Lezírias (Portugal; 38°49'17.6" N 8°52'20.5" W), in January 2020.

Despite not being able to induce PWD, the microbiome (bacteria and fungi) associated with the PWD, and its elements is considered a major biotic factor influencing the disease’s severity (further detailed in [9–11]). The isolation of fungi and bacteria dates back the
70s, when Tokushige and Kiyohara isolated microbial samples from dead pine trees and tested their pathogenicity in healthy pines [20]. Since then, several researchers attempted to correlate the pathogenicity of some bacterial species, like *Pseudomonas* spp. or *Bacillus* spp., with the disease [24–26]. Still, the latest studies point to a less active role of the bacterial communities associated with PWD. These communities behave as opportunistic/saprophytes and/or endophytes expressing phenotypic plasticity in the PWN-wilted pine host [11,27–31]. The impact of fungal communities in the complexity of PWD and their elements is presented in detail in the next section.

3. Mycobiome Associated with PWD Complex

Forest trees harbour extremely complex fungal communities that play important roles on ecosystem multifunctionality and equilibrium [32]. Most of these communities are shaped by intrinsic factors of the host, like host genotype, condition, and/or development, and by external factors such as geographical location, seasonality, or even surrounding vegetation [33]. Under the presence of non-native pathogens, these ecosystems suffer disequilibrium situations that can eventually lead to considerable spatial and temporal community variation [34].

3.1. Diversity and Composition of Fungal Communities

Fungal communities associated with PWD have been described since the early 80s. These culture-dependent studies worked with different culture conditions, such as different growth media (e.g., potato dextrose agar or malt extract agar) or supplementation of antibiotics (Table 1). The most recent reports in fungal communities associated with the disease combine morphology with molecular identification based on fungal DNA barcode markers (i.e., primary marker ITS, internal transcribed spacer; and secondary marker TEF1-α, translational elongation factor 1 alpha) [35,36] and other protein-coding genes (i.e., beta-tubulin BT or calmodulin CAL) [37]. These conventional culturing methods are biased towards fast-growing species rather than the more specialized fungi [38], suggesting that only a limited fraction of the fungal community’s diversity has been uncovered in this complex disease. Three main phyla were identified within the Fungi kingdom, namely Ascomycota, Basidiomycota, and Mucoromycota. The most predominant phylum, Ascomycota, was represented by 6 classes (Blastomycetes, Dothideomycetes, Eurotiomycetes, Leotiomycetes, Orbiliomycetes, and Sordariomycetes) and nearly 30 families (Table 1). Most of the described taxa are common saprophytes and probably not specific to the disease or associated with the PWN. This may be the case of *Penicillium* (Ascomycota, Eurotiomycetes, Trichocomaceae), *Trichoderma* (Ascomycota, Sordariomycetes, Hypocreaceae) and *Aspergillus* (Ascomycota, Eurotiomycetes, Aspergillaceae) among others, which are ubiquitous to all existing environments and detected in all PWD elements (Table 1). The description of fungal communities has also been made in different pine species and insect-vectors from different geographical locations (e.g., China, Japan, Korea, Portugal, and the USA). The first isolations of mycoflora were conducted on symptomatic *P. thunbergii* (shoots, twigs, and woodchips), on the surface tissues of tunnels and pupal chambers bored by *Monochamus* larvae, and from the adult body of *M. alternatus* after its emergence [39,40]. These works reported that the genera *Ceratocystis* and *Verticicladiella* (synonym of *Leptographium* [41]), from Ceratocystidaceae and Ophiostomataceae families, respectively, were the only flora common to the three sampled locations apart from the saprophytic fungi *Trichoderma* and *Penicillium*. Later, Wingfield [42] isolated fungi from the cerambycid beetles *M. scutellatus* and *M. carolinensis*, also identifying *Ceratocystis* and *Ceratocystiopsis* as common genera associated with adult beetles and pupal chambers from *P. banksiana* and *P. resinosa*. Curiously, Wingfield [42] could also isolate the nematode-trapping fungi *Arthrobotrys cladodes* var. *cladodes* and *A. superba* in the PWN. Kuroda and Iko [43] isolated fungi from healthy and wilted *P. thunbergii* and reported that the same species were recovered from both pine trees (i.e., *Pestalotiopsis* spp., *Nigrospora* spp., *Cladosporium* spp., and *Phomopsis* spp.) and that *Ceratocystis* sp., was only detected after PWN inoculation. This study has also
shown that the composition of fungal species varied slightly among seasons [43]. In 2007, Hyun et al. [44] characterized the fungal communities associated with the PWN; the insect-vector *M. alternatus* and *P. thunbergii* in Korea. Among the 15 genera identified, *Penicillium* and *Ophiostoma* were the most frequent genera in all elements, with PWNs and insect larvae showing a smaller number of associated fungi than insect adults or infected wood. In 2015, Inácio et al. [45] described fungal communities associated with *M. galloprovincialis*, native to Portugal. From a total of 100 insects, species of 18 genera of filamentous fungi were reported: *Acremonium, Alternaria, Arthrinium, Aspergillus, Beauveria, Botryosphaeria, Botrytis, Cladosporium, Clonostachys, Eppicocum, Fusarium, Ophiostoma s. l., Paecilomyces s. l., Penicillium, Stemphylium, Trichoderma*, and *Trichotheceum* (Table 1) [45]. A more detailed characterization of endophytic fungi associated with *P. pinaster* with, and without, PWN infection in Portugal was presented by Trindade [46]. Novel fungal species are also continuously described. Wang et al. [47] identified new species of Ophiostomatales associated with PWD in the pupal chambers of *M. alternatus* from infected *Pinus massoniana* Siebold & Zucc. and *P. thunbergii* in China. In this study, over 90% of all isolates were identified as *Ophiostoma ips*, with three novel species—*Ophiostoma album* sp. nov., *Ophiostoma massoniana* sp. nov. and *Sporothrix zhejiangensis* sp. nov.—and two species whose identities remained unclear; *Ophiostoma cf. deltoideosporum* and *Graphilbum cf. rectangulosporium* [47].

The availability of high-throughput sequencing (HTS) technologies, such as amplicon metagenomics, has revolutionized ecological studies of fungal communities [37] allowing broader insight into the complexity of host-fungal interactions. The primary fungal DNA barcode ITS is commonly used on HTS-based metabarcoding. Still, caution should be taken when interpreting HTS results since, for several groups of important plant pathogens and endophytes, ITS provides insufficient resolution for species-level assignment [37]. It is recommended that researchers use the ITS2 subregion, less taxonomically biased, with lower length variation and more universal primer sites, or the full ITS region with greater taxonomic resolution and reduced amplification of dead organisms [37]. In the context of PWD, amplicon technologies were firstly applied to characterize bacterial communities (e.g., using the hypervariable regions of 16S rRNA molecule), revealing the presence of PWNs and PWD progression [48–50]. Chu et al. [51] described the impact of the disease on root-associated fungi (e.g., ectomycorrhizal fungi, ECMF; dark septate endophytic fungi, DSE; arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi, AMF) in different stands of *Pinus tabulaeformis* Carrière forest (undisturbed, moderate, and highly disturbed pine stands). The authors showed that fungal community richness and diversity, as well as soil hyphal density, decreased with the increase of disease disturbance. Basidiomycota and Ascomycota were the dominant root-associated fungi, with specific genera present in the different disturbed stands [51].
Table 1. Culture-dependent mycoflora isolated from the PWN, insect-vectors, and host pines. PWN, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*; Ma, *Monochamus alternatus*; Ms, *M. scutellatus*; Mg, *M. galloprovincialis* (A—Adult, L—Larvae); Pd, *Pinus densiflora*; Pm, *P. massoniana*; Pt, *P. thunbergii*; Pb, *P. banksiana*; Pr, *P. resinosa*; Pp, *P. pinaster* (W—wood, Pc, pupal chamber); JP, Japan; PT, Portugal; KR, Korea; CH, China; USA, United States of America.

| Phylum          | Class               | Family            | Genus     | Insect-Vector | Host Pine | Country | References |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------|------------|
| **Phylum**      | **Class**           | **Family**        | **Genus** | **Ma** | **Ms** | **Mc** | **Mg** | **Pd** | **Pm** | **Pt** | **Pb** | **Pr** | **Pp** | **Country** | **References** |
| **Blastomycetes** | **Crytococcaceae** | Candida           |           | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | JP         | [52]          |
| **Botryosphaeriaceae** | Botryosphaeria        | Macrophoma        |           |        | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        | JP         | [39,52]      |
|                 |                     | Sphaeropsis       |           |        |        | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        | JP         | [53]          |
| **Dothideomycetes** | **Cladosporiaceae** | Cladosporium      |           |        | ●      |          | ●      |        |        |        |        |        |        | JP, PT     | [39,43,45,46,52] |
| **Didymellaceae** | **Epicoccum**        |                   |           |        |        | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        | PT         | [45,46]      |
| **Leptosphaeriaceae** | Leptosphaeria     |                   |           |        |        | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        | KR         | [44]          |
| **Massarinaceae** | **Alternaria**       |                   |           |        | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, PT     | [39,45,46,52] |
| **Pleosporaceae** | **Bipolaris**        |                   |           |        | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | PT         | [45]          |
| **Saccocarpoaceae** | **Stemphylium**     |                   |           |        |        | ●      |          |        |        |        |        |        |        | PT         | [45]          |
| **Saccocarpoaceae** | **Alternaria**       |                   |           |        | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, PT     | [45,46,54]   |
| **Ascomycota**   | **Eurotiomycetes**  | **Aspergillus**    |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, CH, PT | [42,44–46,52,54] |
| **Trichomycetes** | **Penicilium**      |                   |           |        | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, CH, PT | [39,44–46,52–54] |
| **Herpotrichiellaceae** | **Phialophora**   |                   |           |        | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP         | [42,52]      |
| **Sordariomycetes** | **Sclerotinaceae**  | **Botrytis**      |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | CH, PT     | [44–46]      |
| **Orbiomycetes** | **Orbiillaceae**    | **Arthrotrypis**  |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, CH, USA| [42,52,53]   |
| **Ascomycota**   | **Eurotiomycetes**  | **Arthrobotrys**  |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP         | [52]          |
| **Orbiomycetes** | **Orbiillaceae**    | **Dactylaria**    |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP         | [39]          |
| **Ascomycota**   | **Eurotiomycetes**  | **Aspisporaceae** | **Arthrobotrys** | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, CH, USA| [42,44,53,55] |
| **Sorediomyces** | **Ceratocystidaceae** | **Ceratocystis** |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | JP, CH, USA| [42,44,53,55] |
| **Orbiomycetes** | **Orbiillaceae**    | **Chaetomium**    |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | CH         | [55]          |
| **Sorediomyces** | **Cordycipitaceae** | **Beauveria**     |           | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | ●      | USA, PT    | [42,45,46]   |
| Fungal Taxonomy | Insect-Vector | Host Pine | Country | References |
|----------------|-------------|----------|---------|------------|
| **Phylum** | **Class** | **Family** | **Genus** | **Ma** | **Ms** | **Mc** | **Mg** | **Pd** | **Pm** | **Pt** | **Pb** | **Pr** | **Pp** |
| **Glomerellaceae** | Colletotrichum | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Hypocreopsis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Cephalosporium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Gloeocladium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Trichoderma | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Microascaeae** | Graphium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Giberella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Fusarium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mariannaeae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Nectria | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Ophiostomatiaeae** | Ceratocystis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Graphilbum | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Leptographium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Ophiostoma | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Sperothrix | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Plectosphaerella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Verticillium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Sordariaeae** | Sordaria | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Sporocadaceae** | Monochaeta | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Pestalotiopsis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Trichosphaeriaeae** | Nigrospora | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Spadixidia | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Valasciaeae** | Phomopsis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Incertae sedis** | Trichothecium | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Basidiomycota** | Agariomycetes | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Irpiceae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Ceratobasidiaceae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Rhizoctonia | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Mucoromycteae** | Mortierellaeceae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mortierella | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mucoraceae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mucor | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Rhizopodaceae | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Rhizopus | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Later, the same authors assessed the effects of the PWN on the colonization rates, and community structure/diversity of root-associated mycoflora (EMCF, DSE, and AMF) in PWN-infected and non-infected *P. tabuliformis* [57]. Once more, infection with the PWN reduced the biomass, abundance, and colonization of root-associated fungi, as well as species richness and diversity. Zhang et al. [50] analyzed the endophytic (stem and branches) and rhizosphere fungal communities in healthy (without PWNs) and PWN-infected *P. massoniana* using ITS1 (ITS1f-ITS2R) metagenomics. The study revealed that healthy pines (stem and branches) have a higher endophytic fungi species richness and diversity than wilted pines (stem/branches) and rhizospheres (from healthy and wilted pines) suggesting that PWN infections likely affect endophytic fungi communities. No significant differences were found between the fungal communities of wilted pines and those of rhizosphere fungi in healthy and wilted pines. Phylum Ascomycota had higher abundance (ca. 75%), especially on samples from wilted pines. The shared fungal communities between healthy and wilted *P. massoniana* were species of *Cyberlindnera*, *Kirschsteiniothelia*, *Penicillifer*, *Penicillium*, *Pestalotiopsis*, *Saitozyma*, *Sporothrix*, *Trichoderma*, *Venturia*, and *Zygoascus*. The abundances of *Penicillifer*, *Zygoascus*, *Kirschsteiniothelia*, and *Sporothrix* were higher in wilted, than in healthy, pines [50]. More recently, Liu and colleagues [58] analyzed the fungal community and functional structure in needles, roots, and surrounding soil of *P. thunbergii* naturally infected by PWNs, targeting full ITS (ITS1f-ITS2R). No significant changes on fungal diversity were found between the soil or roots of healthy and diseased trees, contradicting the previous studies [51,57]. Fungal species richness/diversity/evenness and community structure in the needles of diseased trees were significantly lower than those in healthy trees [58]. The most predominant phyla were Ascomycota (54.6% of the operational taxonomy units, OTUs), followed by Basidiomycota (13.8% OTUs) and Mortierellomycota (1.8% OTUs) and, at genus level, *Mortierella* (Mortierellomycota), *Delicatula* (Basidiomycota), and *Trichoderma* (Ascomycota) were the most abundant. In terms of functional prediction, saprotrophs were identified in higher abundance in needles of PWN-infected pine, while symbiotrophs were more abundant in healthy trees [58]. All these HTS studies have already shed insight on fungal communities’ structure caused by PWN infection. Surprisingly, there are few references to the diversity and abundance of ophiostomatoid fungal communities frequently isolated from PWN-infected trees (see next section).

3.2. Close Relationships between Blue-Stain Fungi and the PWN

Pine trees infected with PWNs are often infested with bark beetles (Curculionidae) carrying a wide range of ophiostomatoid fungi, also commonly called blue-stain fungi, either in specialized structures (e.g., mycangia) or on the exoskeleton [59,60]. These bark beetles are limited to colonizing weak, or recently killed, trees, yet there are species capable of developing in living trees and even killing healthy trees [60]. The beetle-associated fungi belong to the unrelated orders Ophiostomatales (*Ophiostoma* s. l., *Grosmannia*, and *Ceratozystis*) and Microscales (*Ceratocystis*) and Microscales (*Ceratocystis*), and they are mostly necrotrophic pathogens of varying virulence that are able to colonize the phloem and xylem of pine species [62]. The reproduction structures of some of these blue-stain fungi were detected in the tunnels of *Monochamus* spp. as well as in the pine trees or nematode, thus suggesting an association with the disease [42,47,63] (Table 2). In the later stages of PWD, the PWN is able to switch from its plant-parasitic mode to a fungal-feeder depending on the available pine tree fungi for its nutrition [20]. Kobayahi et al. [40] showed that *Ceratozystis*, *Fusarium*, *Macrophoma*, and *Pestalotia* seemed to be a favourable food for the PWN. Fukushige [53] also reported that only *Ceratozystis* sp. was the most suitable fungi, among others, for PWN, leading to a quick increase in the population four weeks after inoculation in pine segments. To understand the factors influencing the number of PWNs carried by the insect-vector *M. alternatus*, Maehara and Futai [64,65] inoculated wood blocks containing the beetle (prior its emergence) with different species of fungi isolated from infected *P. thunbergii* and *P. densiflora*. The authors confirmed that the PWN was only able to grow densely and account for a higher number of nematodes transferred to the beetle, when in the presence of *O.*
minus. Thus, they concluded that only the most prevalent species of fungi in the killed pine trees could help determine the number of PWNs carried by the beetles emerging from the wood. Later, the same authors analyzed the temporal changes in the PWN population and the percentage of dispersal juveniles (JIII) of PWNs on *P. densiflora* branches segments [66], reporting that only *O. minus*, *Macrophoma* sp., and *Trichoderma* sp. 1 could heavily increase the PWN population and the number of JIII over 12 weeks after inoculation. In field surveys in Kyoto and Ibaraki Prefecture (Japan), Maehara et al. [52] examined the effect of blue-stain fungi on the number of PWNs carried by *M. alternatus* emerging from logs of pine wilt-killed of *P. densiflora*. The authors confirmed that blue-stain fungi could be isolated from 90% of wilted pine, and that the number of JIV nematodes carried by the beetle was significantly affected by the species of blue-stain fungi (Table 2), individual pine trees, and wood water content [52]. Using sterilized branches of *P. thunbergii*, Wang et al. [67] co-inoculated axenic PWNs with different species of fungi isolated from healthy and wilted *P. densiflora* in order to study the relationship between the existence and distribution of fungi and the multiplication and distribution of PWNs. The multiplication of the nematode was only successful in sterilized branches inoculated with *Cryptosporiopsis* sp. and *Leptographium* sp. [67]. Niu et al. [68] compared the propagation rate of PWNs treated with a monoterpene ratio representative of blue-stain infected pines (*Sporothrix* sp.) (137.8 mg/mL of α-pinene/β-pinene in a ratio of 1:0.8) and monoterpene ratio of healthy pines, or pines damaged by *M. alternatus* feeding (137.6 mg/mL of α-pinene:β-pinene in a ratio of 1:0.1). From this, Niu et al. found that PWN growth was significantly higher in the blue-stain infected pine monoterpene ratio [68]. The authors suggested that the PWN uses high monoterpene concentrations and native blue-stain fungi to improve its propagation and overcome host resistance. Zhao et al. [69] demonstrated that *Sporothrix* sp. had a strong positive effect on the population and prevalence of the invasive PWN-native beetle symbiosis in the xylem of trees. The fragrant diacetone alcohol released from the wood infected by *Sporothrix* sp. promoted fecundity of the nematode and the growth and survival of the beetle [69]. Togashi et al. [70] also showed an increase in the PWN population resulting from the presence of *O. minus*, although the effect on *M. alternatus* larvae or the rate of development to adulthood was not observed due to experimental differences reported in other studies [71] (i.e., pine bolts, instead of an artificial diet, were provided to *M. alternatus*).

| Fungi in Interaction with PWNs | Mode of Action | References |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| **Growth promoters**          |               |            |
| *Botrytis cinerea*            | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi | [53] |
| *Ceratocystis* sp.            | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi and in pine segments of *Pinus densiflora* | [39,40,53] |
| *Diplodia* sp.                | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi | [53] |
| *Pestalotia* sp.              | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi and in pine segments of *Pinus thunbergii* | [39,40] |
| *Macrophoma* sp.              | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi and in pine segments of *Pinus thunbergii* | [39,40,66] |
| *Fusarium* sp.                | Increase of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi | [39,40] |
Table 2. Cont.

| Fungi in Interaction with PWNs | Mode of Action | References |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| *Ophiostoma minus* | Increase of PWN population growth in wood blocks of *Pinus thunbergii*; Increase of PWN population growth in *Pinus densiflora* bolts; Increased no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [64–67,70,71] |
| *Leptographium* | Increase of PWN population growth in logs of *Pinus densiflora*; Increase of axenic PWN population on autoclaved cuttings of *Pinus thunbergii* | [52,53,67] |
| *Crytosporiopsis* | Increase of PWN population growth in wood blocks of *Pinus densiflora* | [52] |
| *Sporothrix* | Increase of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [68,71] |
| *Ophiostoma ips* | Increase of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* and in segments of *Pinus thunbergii* | [68–70] |
| *Leptographium pine-densiflorae* | Increase of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [71] |
| *Trichoderma* sp. 1 | Increase of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [52] |
| *Trichaptum abietinum* *Arthrobotrys* sp. *Gloeophyllum striatum* *Cryptoporus volvatus* | Increase of PWN population growth in *Pinus densiflora*; Increased no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [66] |
| *Alternaria* sp. *Epicoccum* sp. *Aureobasidium* sp. *Aspergillus* sp. *Gliocladium* sp. *Mucor* sp. *Mortierella* sp. *Penicillium* sp. *Rhizoctonia* sp. | Decrease of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [53] |
| *Cystidiophorus castaneus* | Decrease of PWN population growth in *Pinus densiflora*; Decrease the no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [66] |
| *Cephalosporium* | Decrease of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [53,54] |
| *Fusarium* sp. | Decrease of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* | [53,54] |
| *Pycnoporus coccineus* | Decrease of PWN population growth in *Pinus densiflora*; Decrease in the no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [66] |
| *Trichoderma* sp. | Decrease of PWN population growth in *in vitro mycelial fungi* and in wood blocks of *Pinus densiflora* and *P. thunbergii*; Decrease in the no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [53,64–66,72] |
Table 2. Cont.

| Fungi in Interaction with PWNs | Mode of Action | References |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| *Verticillium* sp. | Endoparasitic fungi; Decrease of PWN population growth in in vitro mycelial fungi and in wood blocks of *Pinus densiflora* and *P. thunbergii*; Decrease in the no. of PWNs carried by emerging *Monochamus alternatus* | [65,66] |
| *Arthrobotrys conoides* | Nematode-trapping fungi; Extracellular enzyme Ac1 with nematostatic effect on PWN | [73] |
| *Drechsleria dactyloides* | Nematode-trapping fungi | [74] |
| *Esteya vermicola* | Endoparasitic fungi; Decrease of PWN population growth in in vitro feeding trials; Volatile compounds attractive to PWN | [74–78] |
| *Esteya floridanum* | Endoparasitic fungi; Decrease of PWN population growth in in vitro feeding trials | [79] |
| *Caryospora callicarpa* | Nematicidal activity of caryospomycins A to C metabolites exhibit moderate killing of PWN | [80] |
| *Geotrichum* sp. AL4 | Nematicidal activity against PWN | [81] |
| *Acremonium* sp. BH0531 | Nematicidal activity against PWN | [82] |

3.3. Naturally Occurring Fungal Communities for the Control of PWN

While exploring PWN growth and development by the fungi of non-infected and infected pine trees, several fungi species showed promising results in the control of nematode populations (Table 2). Naturally occurring Ascomycota fungi from the genera *Ascoscyphus*, *Aspergillus*, *Cephalosporium*, *Fusarium*, *Gliocladium*, *Mucor*, *Mortierella*, *Penicillium*, *Rhizoctonia*, and some species of *Trichoderma* and *Verticillium*, affected PWN survivability in in vitro or in vivo bioassays [40,52–54,64,65]. To further study the effect of *Trichoderma* sp. on PWN suppression and transmission by *M. alternatus*, Maehara et al. [72] inoculated several isolates of *Trichoderma* spp. into wilt-killed *P. densiflora* logs. Beetles from logs treated with *Trichoderma* sp. 3 carried less than 1000 nematodes. The authors suggested that combining the use of this fungus for PWN control with the entomopathogenic fungus *Beauveria bassiana* for *M. alternatus* control could represent a potential biocontrol application in PWD [72]. The entomopathogenic fungus *B. pseudobassiana*, isolated from naturally infected *M. galloprovincialis* in Spain, has also showed potential as a natural insect population regulator [83], and it may also be feasible in combination with other PWN control agents.

Nematophagous fungi have evolved different strategies to attack nematodes (free-living or plant parasitic), among which the most interesting for biological control applications are the nematode-trapping fungi and the endoparasitic fungi [84]. The nematode-trapping fungi can produce specialized adhesive hyphal networks, knobs, constricting rings, and hydrolytic enzymes to trap and penetrate nematodes [85]. An extracellular serine protease (Ac1) of the nematode-trapping fungi *Arthrobotrys conoides* has been successfully tested on PWNs [73]. Ac1 was found to be effective at immobilizing the free-living *Panagrellus redivivus* and PWNs [85]. An extracellular serine protease (Ac1) of the nematode-trapping fungi *Arthrobotrys conoides* has been successfully tested on PWNs [73]. Ac1 was found to be effective at immobilizing the free-living *Panagrellus redivivus* and PWNs [85]. Previously used for the control of other plant-parasitic nematodes [86–88], the nematode-trapping fungi *Drechslerella dactyloides* (isolates CNU09125 and CNU091026) showed high efficiency, trap-forming, and capture ability against PWNs, trapping 100% of juveniles within 24 h after inoculation [74]. The nematophagous fungi *Verticillium* sp. Was the first recorded endoparasite isolated from the PWN [53]. Later, Liou et al. [75] isolated and characterized *Esteya vermicola* as a potential biocontrol agent of PWNs. In in vitro assays, PWN populations could be completely killed by *E. vermicola* in 8 to 10 days [75]. In 2001, *E. vermicola* was patented in the USA for PWN control [89]. New strains of *E. vermicola* CNU120806 were isolated in Korea [76] and tested together with the
nematode-trapping fungus *A. brochopaga*, and the nematode-feeding fungus *B. cinerea* for nematode attraction to living mycelia and exudative substances [77]. The PWNs showed the strongest attraction to *E. vermicola* CNU120806 avolatile exudative and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) [77]. Lin et al. [78] demonstrated that VOCs from *E. vermicola* living mycelia could mimic volatiles from the host pine tree by producing monoterpenes α- and β-pinene, and the terpenoid camphor, thus explaining PWN’s attraction to *E. vermicola*. More detailed discussion on the advances of *E. vermicola* as a biocontrol agent of PWD can be found in Chu et al. [90] and Yin et al. [91]. More recently, a novel species of *Esteya* was described, *E. floridanum* sp. nov. [79]. This species was recovered from the head of the ambrosia beetle *Myoplatypus flavicornis* (Curculionidae: Platypodinae) in *P. taeda* and showed a similar infection process as *E. vermicola* with a high infectivity rate towards PWNs [79].

The use of bioactive metabolites with nematicidal activities, extracted from naturally occurring fungi from different environments, is an unexplored approach to PWN control. Metabolites of the fresh-water fungus *Caryospora callicarpa* YMF1.01026 (namely tetrade-lactone metabolites caryospomycins A to C) exhibited moderate killing activity against PWNs [80]. Three compounds isolated from the endophytic fungi *Geotrichum* sp. AL4, found on leaves of *Azadirachta indica*, showed noticeable activities against the nematode [81]. Culture filtrates of *Acremonium* sp. BH0531, obtained from seawater, exhibited the highest PWN mortality rate of (ca. 93% mortality rate) in in vitro trials [82].

4. Conclusions

Plant microbiome is considered a very propitious strategy for fostering plant protection against abiotic and biotic stressors [92]. Research on PWD-associated mycoflora has been slowly progressing since the first studies in the mid-seventies. HTS technologies have enriched the narrow vision of culturomic studies, and we now know that the presence of PWNs can affect the fungal diversity of the infected trees. Ophiostomatoid, or blue-stain fungi, often recovered from wilted pine trees, are considered the most determinative biotic factors for multiplication and distribution of PWNs inside the tree and in the insect-vector. Naturally occurring fungi, endophytic or nematophagous (e.g., nematode-trapping fungi *D. dactyloides* or the endoparasitic fungi *E. vermicola*), should be further explored as new tools for PWD management.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, C.S.L.V.; writing—original draft preparation, C.S.L.V., M.S. and J.M.S.F.; writing—review and editing, C.S.L.V., M.S., J.M.S.F., A.P.R. and M.L.I.; funding acquisition, A.P.R. and M.L.I. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research was funded by the Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT) through the national project LISBOA-01-0145-FEDER-028724 PineENEMY—Exploring the NEmatode-MYcobiota interactions in Pine Wilt Disease; the CEECIND/00040/2018 (to CSLV); projects FCT/UIDB/04129/2020 and FCT/UIDP/04129/2020 (LEAF), and by Laboratório de Patologia Vegetal “Veríssimo de Almeida”, Instituto Superior de Agronomia.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: The authors would like to thank the team of the PineENEMY project (laboratory of Nematology, Mycology and Entomology of INIAV).

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.
References
1. Mamiya, Y. Pathology of the pine wilt disease caused by Bursaphelenchus xylophilus. *Annu. Rev. Phytopathol.* 1983, 21, 201–220. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
2. Mota, M.M.; Braasch, H.; Bravo, M.A.; Penas, A.C.; Burgermeister, W.; Metge, K.; Sousa, E. First report of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* in Portugal and in Europe. *Nematology* 1999, 1, 727–734. [CrossRef]
3. Fonseca, L.; Cardoso, J.M.S.; Lopes, A.; Pestana, M.; Abreu, F.; Nunes, N.; Mota, M.; Abrantes, I. The pinewood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, in Madeira Island. *Helminthologia* 2012, 49, 96–103. [CrossRef]
4. Abelleira, A.; Picoaga, A.; Mansilla, J.P.; Aguin, O. Detection of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, causal agente of pine wilt disease on *Pinus pinaster* in northwestern Spanish. *Plant Dis.* 2011, 95, 776. [CrossRef]
5. Robinet, C.; Van Opstal, N.; Baker, R.; Roques, A. Applying a spread model to identify the entry points from which the pine wood nematode, the vector of pine wilt disease, would spread most rapidly across Europe. *Biol. Control* 2011, 13, 2981–2995. [CrossRef]
6. Hirata, A.; Nakamura, K.; Nakao, K.; Kominami, Y.; Tanaka, N.; Ohashi, H.; Takano, K.T.; Takeuchi, W.; Matsui, T. Potential distribution of pine wilt disease under future climate change scenarios. *PLoS ONE* 2017, 12, e0182837. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
7. Webster, J.; Mota, M. Pine wilt disease: Global issues, trade and economic impact. In *Pine Wilt Disease: A Worldwide Threat to Forest Ecosystems*; Mota, M., Vieira, P., Eds.; Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2008; pp. 1–3.
8. Vicente, C.; Espada, M.; Vieira, P.; Mota, M. Pine Wilt Disease: A threat to European forestry. *Eur. J. Plant Pathol.* 2012, 133, 89–99. [CrossRef]
9. Zhao, L.; Mota, M.; Vieira, P.; Butcher, R.A.; Sun, J. Interspecific communication between pinewood nematode, its insect vector, and associated microbes. *Trends Parasitol.* 2014, 30, 299–308. [CrossRef]
10. Nascimento, F.X.; Hasegawa, K.; Mota, M.; Vicente, C.S.L. Bacterial role in pine wilt disease development—Review and future perspectives. *Environ. Microbiol. Rep.* 2015, 7, 51–63. [CrossRef]
11. Proença, D.N.; Grass, G.; Morais, P.V. Understanding pine wilt disease: Roles of the pine endophytic bacteria and of the bacteria carried by the disease-causing pinewood nematode. *Microbiologica* 2017, 6, 1–20. [CrossRef]
12. Hasegawa, K.; Miwa, J. Embryology and cytology of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*. In *Pine Wilt Disease, 1st ed.*; Zhao, B.G., Futai, K., Sutherland, J.R., Takeuchi, Y., Eds.; Springer: Tokyo, Japan, 2008; pp. 81–104.
13. Faria, J.; Sena, I.; Vieira da Silva, I.; Ribeiro, B.; Barbosa, P.; Ascensão, L.; Bennett, R.N.; Mota, M.; Figueiredo, A.C. In vitro co-cultures of *Pinus pinaster* with *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*: A biotechnological approach to study pine wilt disease. *Planta* 2015, 241, 1325–1336. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
14. Fonseca, L.; Cardoso, J.; Abrantes, I. Nematode-plant. In *Pine Wilt Disease in Europe—Biological Interactions and Integrated Management*, 1st ed.; Sousa, E., Vale, F., Abrantes, I., Eds.; Federação Nacional das Associações de Proprietários Florestais: Coimbra, Portugal, 2015; pp. 35–78.
15. Evans, H.F.; McNamara, D.G.; Braasch, H.; Chadoueuf, J.; Magnusson, C. Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) for the territories of the European Union (as PRA area) on *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* in China. *EPPO Bull.* 2012, 42, 399–502. [CrossRef]
16. Sousa, E.; Naves, P.; Bonifácio, L.; Bravo, M.A.; Penas, A.C.; Pires, J.; Serrão, M. Preliminary survey for insects associated with *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* in Portugal. *EPPO Bull.* 2012, 32, 499–502. [CrossRef]
17. Akbulut, S.; Stamps, W.T. Insect vectors of the pinewood nematode: A review of the biology and ecology of *Monochamus* species. *For. Pathol.* 2011, 42, 89–99. [CrossRef]
18. Sousa, E.; Bravo, M.A.; Pires, J.; Naves, P.; Penas, A.C.; Bonifácio, L.; Mota, M.M. *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Aphelenchoidea*) associated with *Monochamus galloprovincialis* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) in Portugal. *Nematology* 2001, 3, 89–91.
19. Naves, P.M.; Camacho, S.; De Sousa, E.M.; Quartau, J.A. Transmission of the pinewood nematode *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* through feeding activity of *Monochamus galloprovincialis* (Col., Cerambycidae). *J. Appl. Entomol.* 2007, 131, 21–25. [CrossRef]
20. Futai, K. Pine wood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*. *Annu. Rev. Phytopathol.* 2013, 51, 61–83. [CrossRef]
21. Yazaki, K.; Takanashi, T.; Kanzaki, N.; Komatsu, M.; Leiva, D.F.; Kabeya, D.; Tobita, H.; Kitao, M.; Ishida, A. Pine wilt disease causes cavitation around the resin canals and irrecoverable xylem conduit dysfunction. *J. Exp. Bot.* 2018, 69, 589–602. [CrossRef]
22. Mota, M.M.; Vieira, P. Pine wilt disease in Portugal. In *Pine Wilt Disease, 1st ed.*; Zhao, B.G., Futai, K., Sutherland, J.R., Takeuchi, Y., Eds.; Springer: Tokyo, Japan, 2008; pp. 33–38.
23. Inácio, M.L.; Nóbrega, F.; Vieira, P.; Bonifácio, L.; Naves, P.; Sousa, E.; Mota, M. First detection of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* associated with *Pinus nigra* in Portugal, and in Europe. *For. Pathol.* 2015, 45, 235–238. [CrossRef]
24. Oku, H.; Shiraiishi, T.; Kurozumi, S. Participation of toxin in wilting of Japanese pines caused by a nematode. *Naturwissenschaften* 1979, 66, 210. [CrossRef]
25. Han, Z.M.; Hong, Y.D.; Zhao, B.G. A study on pathogenicity of bacteria carried by pine wood nematodes. *J. Phytopathol.* 2003, 151, 683–689. [CrossRef]
26. Zhao, B.G.; Wang, H.L.; Han, S.F.; Han, Z.M. Distribution and pathogenicity of bacteria species carried by *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* in China. *Nematology* 2003, 5, 899–906. [CrossRef]
27. Vicente, C.S.L.; Nascimento, F.X.; Espada, M.; Barbosa, P.; Hasegawa, K.; Mota, M.; Oliveira, S. Characterization of bacterial communities associated with the pine sawyer beetle *Monochamus galloprovincialis*, the insect vector of the pinewood nematode *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*. *FEMS Microbiol. Lett.* 2013, 347, 130–139. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
28. Vicente, C.S.L.; Nascimento, F.X.; Barbosa, P.; Ke, H.M.; Tsai, I.J.; Cock, P.J.A.; Kikuchi, T.; Hasegawa, K.; Mota, M. Evidence for an Opportunistic and Endophytic Lifestyle of the Bursaphelenchus xylophilus—Associated Bacteria Serratia marcescens PWNI146 Isolated from Wilting pinus pinaster. Microb. Ecol. 2016, 72, 669–681. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
29. Vicente, C.S.L.; Nascimento, F.X.; Ikuyo, Y.; Cock, P.J.A.; Mota, M.; Hasegawa, K. The genome and genetics of a high oxidative stress tolerant Serratia sp. LCNI16 isolated from the plant parasitic nematode Bursaphelenchus xylophilus. BMC Genom. 2016, 17, 1–15. [CrossRef]
30. Nascimento, F.; Vicente, C.; Cock, P.; Tavares, M.; Rossi, M.; Hasegawa, K.; Mota, M. From plants to nematodes: Serratia grimesii BXFI genome reveals an adaptation to the modulation of multi-species interactions. Microb. Genom. 2018, 4, 1–13. [CrossRef]
31. Morais, P.V.; Proença, D.N.; Francisco, R.; Paiva, G. Bacteria-nematode-plant. In Pine Wilt Disease in Europe—Biological Interactions and Integrated Management; 1st ed.; Sousa, E., Vale, F., Abrantes, I., Eds.; Federação Nacional das Associações de Proprietários Florestais: Coimbra, Portugal, 2015; pp. 161–192.
32. Tomao, A.; Antonio Bonet, J.; Castaño, C.; de-Miguel, S. How does forest management affect fungal diversity and community composition? Current knowledge and future perspectives for the conservation of forest fungi. For. Ecol. Manag. 2020, 457, 117678. [CrossRef]
33. Siddique, A.B.; Unterseher, M. A cost-effective and efficient strategy for Illumina sequencing of fungal communities: A case study of beet endophytes identified elevation as main explanatory factor for diversity and community composition. Fungal Ecol. 2016, 20, 175–185. [CrossRef]
34. Crous, C.J.; Burgess, T.I.; Le Roux, J.J.; Richardson, D.M.; Slippers, B.; Wingfield, M.J. Ecological disequilibrium drives insect pest and pathogen accumulation in non-native trees. AoB Plants 2017, 9, 1–16. [CrossRef]
35. Xu, J. Fungal DNA barcoding. Genome 2016, 59, 913–932. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
36. Meyer, W.; Irinyi, L.; Hoang, M.T.V.; Robert, V.; Garcia-Hermoso, D.; Desnos-Ollivier, M.; Yurayart, C.; Tsang, C.; Lee, C.; Woo, P.C.Y.; et al. Database establishment for the secondary fungal DNA barcode translational elongation factor 1α (TEF1α). Genome 2019, 62, 160–169. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
37. Nilsson, R.H.; Anslan, S.; Bahram, M.; Wurzbacher, C.; Baldrian, P.; Tedersoo, L. Mycobiome diversity: High-throughput sequencing and identification of fungi. Nat. Rev. Microbiol. 2019, 17, 95–109. [CrossRef]
38. Roberts, P.J. Protocols for an all taxa biodiversity inventory in a costa Rican conservation area. Mycologist 1998, 13, 45. [CrossRef]
39. Kobayashi, T.; Sasaki, K.; Mamiya, Y. Fungi associated with Bursaphelenchus lignoncolus, the pine wood nematode. J. Jpn. For. Soc. 1974, 56, 136–145.
40. Kobayashi, T.; Sasaki, T.; Mamiya, Y. Fungi associated with Bursaphelenchus lignoncolus, the pine wood nematode (II). J. Jpn. For. Soc. 1975, 57, 184–193.
41. Wingfield, M.J. Reclassification of Verticicladiella based on conidial development. Trans. Br. Mycol. Soc. 1985, 85, 81–93. [CrossRef]
42. Wingfield, M.J. Fungi associated with the pine wood nematode, Bursaphelenchus xylophilus, and cerambycid beetles in Wisconsin. Mycologia 1987, 79, 325–328. [CrossRef]
43. Kuroda, K.; Ito, S. Migration speed of pine wood nematodes and activities of other microbes during the development of pine wilt disease in Pinus thunbergii. Kansai Res. Cent. For. For. Prod. Res. Inst. 1992, 74, 383–389.
44. Hyun, M.W.; Kim, J.H.; Suh, D.Y.; Lee, S.K.; Kim, S.H. Fungi isolated from pinewood nematode, its vector Japanese pine sawyer, and the nematode-infected Japanese pine wood in Korea. Mycologia 2007, 35, 159–161.
45. Inacio, M.L.; Nóbrega, F.; Trindade, J.; Bonifácio, L.; Naves, P.; Sousa, E.; Mota, M.; Lima, A. Fungi associated with the vector of the pinewood nematode and their influence on Pine wilt disease. In Proceedings of the XVII Congress of European Mycologists, Madeira, Portugal, 21–25 September 2015.
46. Trindade, M.J.F. Estudo da População de Fungos em Pinus pinaster em Portugal. Master’s Thesis, Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Lisbon, Portugal, December 2019.
47. Wang, H.M.; Lun, Y.Y.; Lu, Q.; Liu, H.X.; Decock, C.; Zhang, X.Y. Ophiostomatoid fungi associated with pines infected by Bursaphelenchus xylophilus and Monochamus alternatus in China, including three new species. MycoKeys 2018, 39, 1–27. [CrossRef]
48. Alves, M.; Pereira, A.; Matos, P.; Henrique, J.; Vicente, C.; Aikawa, T.; Hasegawa, K.; Nascimento, F.; Mota, M.; Correia, A.; et al. Bacterial community associated to the pine wilt disease insect vectors Monochamus galloprovincialis and Monochamus alternatus. Sci. Rep. 2016, 6, 23908. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
49. Proença, D.N.; Francisco, R.; Santos, C.V.; Lopes, A.; Fonseca, L.; Abrantes, I.M.O.; Morais, P.V. Diversity of bacteria associated with Bursaphelenchus xylophilus and other nematodes isolated from Pinus pinaster trees with pine wilt disease. PLoS ONE 2010, 5, e15191. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
50. Zhang, W.; Wang, C.; Li, Y.; Liu, Z.; Li, D.; Wen, X.; Feng, Y.; Zhang, X. Pinewood Nematode Alters the Endophytic and Rhizospheric Microbial Communities of Pinus massoniana. Microb. Ecol. 2021, 81, 807–817. [CrossRef]
51. Chu, H.; Wang, C.; Wang, H.; Chen, H.; Tang, M. Pine wilt disease alters soil properties and root-associated fungal communities in Pinus tabulaeformis forest. Plant Soil 2016, 404, 237–249. [CrossRef]
52. Maehara, N.; Tsuda, K.; Yamasaki, M.; Shirakikawa, S.; Futai, K. Effect of fungus inoculation on the number of Bursaphelenchus xylophilus (Nematode: Aphielenchoididae) carried by Monochamus alternatus (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae). Nematology 2006, 8, 59–67. [CrossRef]
53. Fukushima, H. Propagation of Bursaphelenchus xylophilus (Nematode: Aphielenchoididae) on fungi growing in pine-shoot segments. Appl. Entomol. Zool. 1991, 26, 371–376. [CrossRef]
54. Srawati, R.; Takemoto, S.; Futai, K. Cohabitation of the pine wood nematode *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, and fungal species in pine trees inoculated with *B. xylophilus*. *Nematology* 2007, 9, 77–86.
55. Ye, W.; Zhang, Q.; Hong, S.; Zhu, D. Studies on fungi associated with *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* on *Pinus massoniana* in Shenzhen, China. In Proceedings of the International Symposium on Pine Wilt Disease Caused by the Pine Wood Nematode, Beijing, China, 31 October–5 November 1995.
56. Suh, D.Y.; Hyun, M.W.; Kim, J.J.; Son, S.Y.; Kim, S.H. *Ophiostoma ips* from pinewood nematode vector, Japanese pine sawyer beetle (*Monochamus alternatus*). In Korea. *Mycobiology* 2013, 41, 59–62. [CrossRef]
57. Chu, H.; Tang, M.; Wang, H.; Wang, C. Pinewood nematode infection alters root mycoflora of *Pinus tabuliformis* Carr. *J. Appl. Microbiol.* 2018, 125, 554–563. [CrossRef]
58. Liu, Y.; Qu, Z.L.; Liu, B.; Ma, Y.; Xu, J.; Shen, W.X.; Sun, H. The impact of pine wood nematode infection on the host fungal community. *Microorganisms* 2021, 9, 896. [CrossRef]
59. Paine, T.D.; Raffa, K.F.; Harrington, T.C. Interactions among scolytid bark beetles, their associated fungi, and live host conifers. *Annu. Rev. Entomol.* 1997, 42, 179–206. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
60. Six, D.L.; Wingfield, M.J. The role of phytopathogenicity in bark beetle-fungus symbioses. *Annu. Rev. Entomol.* 2011, 56, 255–272. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
61. De Beer, Z.W.; Wingfield, M.J. Emerging lineages in the Ophiostomatales. In *Emerging lineages in the Ophiostomatales*. [CrossRef]
62. Six, D.L. Ecological and evolutionary determinants of bark beetle-fungus symbioses. *Emerging lineages in the Ophiostomatales*. [CrossRef]
63. Whitney, H.S. Relationships between bark beetles and symbiotic organisms. In *Bark Beetles in North American Conifers: A System*.
64. Maehara, N.; Futai, K. Factors affecting both the numbers of the pinewood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Aphelenchoideidae*), carried by the Japanese pine sawyer, *Monochamus alternatus* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae), and the nematode’s life history. *Appl. Entomol. Zool.* 1996, 31, 443–452. [CrossRef]
65. Maehara, N.; Futai, K. Effect of fungal interactions on the numbers of the pinewood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Aphelenchoideidae*), carried by the Japanese pine sawyer, *Monochamus alternatus* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae). *Fundam. Appl. Nematol.* 1997, 20, 611–617. [CrossRef]
66. Maehara, N.; Futai, K. Population changes of the pinewood nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Aphelenchoideidae*), on fungi growing in pine-branch segments. *Appl. Entomol. Zool.* 2000, 35, 413–417. [CrossRef]
67. Wang, Y.; Yamada, T.; Sakaue, D.; Suzuki, K. Influence of fungi on multiplication and distribution of the pinewood nematode. In *Pine Wilt Disease: A Worldwide Threat to Forest Ecosystems*; Springer: Dordrecht, The Netherlands, 2005; Volume 7, pp. 115–127. [CrossRef]
68. Niu, H.; Zhao, L.; Lu, M.; Zhang, S.; Sun, J. The ratio and concentration of two monoterpeneols mediate fecundity of the pinewood nematode and growth of its associated fungi. *PLoS ONE* 2012, 7, e31716. [CrossRef]
69. Zhao, L.; Lu, M.; Niu, H.; Fang, G.; Zhang, S.; Sun, J. A native fungal symbiont facilitates the prevalence and development of an invasive pathogen-native vector symbiosis. *Ecology* 2013, 94, 2817–2826. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
70. Togashi, K.; Miyauchi, O.; Kusumoto, D.; Matsushita, N. Commensal relation between *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Aphelenchoideidae*) and *Monochamus alternatus* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) within pine trees. *Appl. Entomol. Zool.* 2016, 51, 53–62. [CrossRef]
71. Zhao, L.; Ahmad, F.; Lu, M.; Zhang, W.; Wickham, J.D.; Sun, J. Ascarosides Promote the Prevalence of Ophiostomatid Fungi and an Invasive Pathogenic Nematode, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*. *J. Chem. Ecol.* 2018, 44, 701–710. [CrossRef]
72. Maehara, N. Reduction of *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (Nematoda: *Parasitaphelenchidae*) population by inoculating *Trichoderma* spp. into pine wilt-killed trees. *Biol. Control* 2008, 44, 61–66. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
73. Yang, J.; Li, J.; Liang, L.; Tian, B.; Zhang, Y.; Cheng, C.; Zhang, K.Q. Cloning and characterization of an extracellular serine protease from the nematode-trapping fungus *Arthrobotrys conoides*. *Arch. Microbiol.* 2007, 188, 167–174. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
74. Wang, Z.; Wang, C.Y.; Gu, L.J.; Sun, B.S.; Zhang, D.L.; Liu, L.; Lee, M.-R.; Li, Z.; Mo, E.-K.; Sung, C.-K.; et al. Variabilities of two *Drechslerella dactylloides* isolates in Korea and high predacity against *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*. *Curr. Microbiol.* 2011, 62, 472–478. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
75. Lin, F.; Ye, J.; Wang, H.; Zhang, A.; Zhao, B. Host deception: Predaceous fungus, *Esteya vermicola*, entices pine wood nematode by mimicking the scent of pine tree for nutrient. *PLoS ONE* 2013, 8, e71676. [CrossRef]
76. Li, Y.; Hu, H.; Araujo, J.P.M.; Zhang, X.; Ji, Y.; Hulcr, J. *Esteya floridanum* sp. nov.: An Ophiostomatalean Nematophagous Fungus and Its Potential to Control the Pine Wood Nematode. *Phytopathology* 2021, 111, 304–311. [CrossRef] [PubMed]
77. Dong, J.; Zhu, Y.; Song, H.; Li, R.; He, H.; Liu, H.; Huang, R.; Zhou, Y.; Wang, L.; Cao, Y.; et al. Nematicidal resorcylics from the aquatic fungus *Caryospora calicarpa* YMF1.01026. *J. Chem. Ecol.* 2007, 33, 1115–1126. [CrossRef]
81. Li, G.H.; Yu, Z.F.; Li, X.; Wang, X.B.; Zheng, L.J.; Zhang, K.Q. Nematicidal metabolites produced by the endophytic fungus Geotrichum sp. AL4. *Chem. Biodivers.* 2007, 4, 1520–1524. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

82. Meng, Q.H.; Shi, X.X.; Meng, F.H.; Feng, X.; Sun, J.H. Isolation of an *Acremonium* sp. from a screening of 52 seawater fungal isolates and preliminary characterization of its growth conditions and nematicidal activity. *Biotechnol. Lett.* 2012, 34, 1847–1850. [CrossRef]

83. Álvarez-Baz, G.; Fernández-Bravo, M.; Pajares, J.; Quesada-Moraga, E. Potential of native *Beauveria pseudobassiana* strain for biological control of Pine Wood Nematode vector *Monochamus galloprovincialis*. *J. Invertebr. Pathol.* 2015, 132, 48–56. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

84. Zhang, Y.; Li, S.; Li, H.; Wang, R.; Zhang, K.Q.; Xu, J. Fungi-nematode interactions: Diversity, ecology, and biocontrol prospects in agriculture. *J. Fungi* 2020, 6, 206. [CrossRef]

85. Li, J.; Zou, C.; Xu, J.; Ji, X.; Niu, X.; Yang, J.; Huang, X.; Zhang, K.Q. Molecular mechanisms of nematode-nematophagous microbe interactions: Basis for biological control of plant-parasitic nematodes. *Annu. Rev. Phytopathol.* 2015, 53, 67–95. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

86. Singh, K.P.; Jaiswal, R.K.; Kumar, N.; Kumar, D. Nematophagous fungi associated with root galls of rice caused by *Meloidogyne graminicola* and its control by *Arthrobotrys dactyloides* and *Dactylaria brochopaga*. *J. Phytopathol.* 2007, 155, 193–197. [CrossRef]

87. Stirling, G.R.; Smith, L.J. Field test of formulated products containing either *Verticillium chlamydosporium* or *Arthrobotrys dactyloides* for biological control of root knot nematodes. *Biol. Control* 1998, 11, 231–239. [CrossRef]

88. Stirling, G.R.; Smith, L.J.; Licastro, K.A.; Eden, L.M. Control of root knot nematode with formulation of nematode trapping fungus *Arthrobotrys dactyloides*. *Biol. Control* 1998, 11, 224–230. [CrossRef]

89. Tzean, S.S.; Liou, J.Y.; Shih, J.Y. Nematophagous fungus Esteya vermicola. U.S. Patent 006168947BI, 16 January 2020.

90. Chu, W.H.; Dou, Q.; Chu, H.L.; Wang, H.H.; Sung, C.K.; Wang, C.Y. Research advance on *Esteya vermicola*, a high potential biocontrol agent of pine wilt disease. *Mycol. Prog.* 2015, 14, 115. [CrossRef]

91. Yin, C.; Wang, Y.; Zhang, Y.; Wang, H.; Tao, R.; Li, Y.; Sung, C.K. A pine wood sample preparation method for high target and quality DNA extraction for detection of *Esteya vermicola* by PCR from living pine. *J. Basic Microbiol.* 2019, 59, 437–441. [CrossRef]

92. Corinne, V.; Bastien, C.; Emmanuelle, J.; Heidy, S. Trees and Insects Have Microbiomes: Consequences for Forest Health and Management. *Curr. For. Rep.* 2021, 7, 81–96. [CrossRef]