

Thompson Rivers University
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES SEMINAR SERIES
Fall 2025

Guest speaker information

Name of guest speaker:	Ghassen Chaieb
Current affiliation:	Postdoctoral researcher
Seminar date:	November 13 th 2025
Title of seminar:	Shifts in Plant–Plant Interactions and Their Role in Maintaining Diversity Under Stress

Abstract: 5-8 lines in length, non-technical, written to be accessible and "catchy" to a general audience

Over the past 30 years, scientists have explored how plants interact with each other to survive in stressful environments. These interactions can be competitive, when plants compete for limited resources, or facilitative, when one plant improves the conditions for another. Research shows that facilitation often dominates under moderate stress but declines when conditions become too harsh. Such shifts between competition and facilitation strongly influence which species can coexist and therefore shape community diversity. In dry and saline ecosystems of North Africa, understanding these changing relationships helps explain how vegetation structure and biodiversity persist under increasing environmental stress and climate change.