

Turner Spratling, Ph.D.
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Education

The University of Georgia (UGA) Griffin, GA
Ph.D. in Plant Pathology December 2024
GPA: 3.93/4.00

The University of Georgia Athens, GA
Master of Plant Protection and Pest Management (M.P.P.P.M.) December 2018
GPA: 4.0/4.0

The University of Georgia Athens, GA
Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (B.S.A.) May 2017
Major: Agriscience and Environmental Systems
GPA: 3.69/4.00 *Cum Laude*

Work and Research Experience

Champions Retreat Golf Club Augusta, GA
Spray Technician February 2025-Present

- Contribute to the daily maintenance and presentation of a 27-hole championship-caliber facility, performing a wide array of agronomic and cultural practices, including mowing, rolling, course setup, watering, aerification, topdressing, planting, bunker maintenance, and more
- Perform pesticide and fertilizer applications as the primary spray technician, applying with precision and intent to promote turf vigor, suppress disease and pests, and support consistent playing conditions and overall plant health
- Support tournament preparation for the annual Augusta National Women's Amateur Championship, helping deliver elite playing conditions through collaboration, meticulous attention to detail, and a commitment to the highest standards of excellence

UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Plant Pathology Department Griffin, GA
Graduate Research Assistant (Ph.D.) August 2020-December 2024

- Partnered with professors, colleagues, and private enterprises to explore sustainable management strategies for dollar spot disease by studying pathogen population genetics and behavior
- Led experiments in field, laboratory, and greenhouse settings to meet research objectives
- Conducted in-depth data analysis to derive actionable insights for optimizing disease control strategies
- Delivered tailored presentations to growers and industry professionals on crop production and effective disease control, while also presenting research at academic conferences to share insights and collaborate with the scientific community
- Authored and co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles related to phytopathology, specifically pathogen genetics and alternative disease management strategies for dollar spot

United States Golf Association Green Section Southeastern, U.S.
Intern August 2022

- One of six students in the country selected to serve as an intern with the USGA Green Section in 2022
- Accompanied a USGA Green Section agronomist on consulting visits to various golf courses throughout the Southeast, gaining hands-on experience in providing agronomic recommendations and solutions to improve golf course conditions
- Gained valuable experience and insight into aspects of golf course operations including turfgrass maintenance, budget oversight, labor management, and more

UGA Cooperative Extension Brunswick, GA
Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent - Glynn County, GA January 2019-July 2020

- Developed and delivered educational programs to the people of Glynn County on topics regarding crop production, pest management, natural resource conservation, and more

- Served as an expert consultant to county officials, producers, and residents in making decisions related to agriculture
- Collaborated with university specialists to conduct statewide research projects related to various aspects of plant cultivation and pest control
- Demonstrated strong communication skills and adaptability in day-to-day responsibilities, as requests from clientele occurred frequently and varied extensively

UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Entomology Department

Athens, GA

Graduate Assistant (M.P.P.P.M)

August 2017-December 2018

- Developed and executed initiatives focused on enhancing educational outreach for Georgia's Pesticide Safety Education Program, while also conducting research trials
- Authored two category manuals for Georgia's Pesticide Safety Education Program that serve as authoritative references for commercial pesticide applicators in specific fields
- Partnered with university professors to revitalize educational content related to pesticide application, safety protocols, and ethical responsibilities

University of Georgia Athletic Association

Athens, GA

Grounds Crew

August 2014-August 2017

- Helped maintain over 10 athletic fields for University of Georgia athletic events, making sure they were safe and playable for competitors
- Operated a wide range of equipment required to keep athletic fields in exceptional condition, including mowers, tractors, sprayers, and more
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively and efficiently under pressure, ensuring athletic fields met the highest visual standards while meeting the demands of tight team schedules

Georgia Seed Development Commission and Georgia Crop Improvement Association

Athens, GA

Intern

May 2016-August 2016

- Helped propagate and market higher-yielding, disease-resistant seed and plant materials for agricultural and horticultural markets
- Collaborated with university plant breeders and industry partners to ensure genetic purity and commercial success of new cultivars
- Gained experience working with a wide variety of crops including turfgrass, wheat, soybean, peanuts, and forages

Skills

- **Technical skills:** Turfgrass maintenance equipment operation; microscopy; plant disease diagnosis; pathogen isolation and culturing; DNA isolation, PCR amplification; gel electrophoresis; field and greenhouse research; experimental design; data collection
- **Communication and Leadership:** Public speaking; written communication; interpersonal skills; collaboration; organization; project management; mentoring and training; teaching and outreach
- **Technology:** Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint; extensive experience with statistical analysis and data visualization in R; working knowledge of bioinformatic and sequencing analyses using R, STRUCTURE, BLAST, DARwin, Geneious, GenAlEx, and MEGA

Grants and Scholarships Received (during Ph.D.)

1. Georgia Seed Association Scholarship (2023; Awarded by: The Georgia Seed Association)
 - Awarded to graduate students who intend on pursuing a career in the seed industry or related field and display exceptional academic ability and impactful community involvement
2. Fonseca Scholarship (2022; Awarded by: University of Georgia Griffin Campus)
 - Awarded to students who distinguish themselves through outstanding academic achievement and personal excellence in the field of Horticulture or closely related field

3. Plant Center Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (2022; Awarded by: University of Georgia Plant Center)
 - Project Title: Development of Species-Specific Primers for Clarireedia Pathogens, Etiological Agents of Dollar Spot in Turfgrass
4. University of Georgia Graduate School Summer Research Grant (2021; Awarded by: University of Georgia Graduate School)
 - Project Title: Effectiveness of Ozone Nanobubbles in Controlling Dollar Spot

Scholarly Publications

1. Peer-Reviewed Scientific Publications:
 - a. **Spratling W. T.**, Raymer P.L., Fan Q., Rowe P.S., Jespersen D., Waltz F.C., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B.A. Assessing UV-C radiation treatments for dollar spot suppression in seashore paspalum. *Plant Disease* (2025).
 - b. **Spratling W. T.**, Jespersen D., Waltz C., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B.A. Evaluation of oxygenated and ozonated nanobubble water treatments for dollar spot suppression in seashore paspalum. *Agronomy* (2025).
 - c. **Spratling W. T.**, Sapkota S., Vermeer B. C., Mallard J., Ali E., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B.A. First Report of Gray Leaf Spot Caused by *Pyricularia oryzae* (synonym: *Magnaporthe oryzae*) in Oat (*Avena sativa*) in Georgia, USA. *Plant Disease* (2021).
 - d. Ghimire B., Aktaruzzaman M., Chowdhury S.R., **Spratling W.T.**, Vermeer C.B., Buck J.W., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B. A. Sensitivity of *Clarireedia* spp. to Benzimidazoles and Dimethyl Inhibitors Fungicides and Efficacy of Biofungicides on Dollar Spot of Warm Season Turfgrass. *Frontiers in Plant Science* (2023).
 - e. Bahri B.A., Parvathaneni R.K., **Spratling W.T.**, Sapkota S., Raymer P.L., and Martinez-Espinoza A.D. Whole Genome Sequencing of *Clarireedia aff. paspali* Reveals Potential Pathogenesis Factors in *Clarireedia* Species, Causal Agents of Dollar Spot in Turfgrass. *Frontiers in Genetics* (2022).
2. Abstracts:
 - a. **Spratling W. T.**, Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B. A (2022). Effectiveness of Gaseous Nanobubble Water in Controlling Dollar Spot in Seashore Paspalum. *APS Plant Health Annual Meeting*, August 6, 2022, Pittsburgh, PA.
 - b. Bahri B.A., **Spratling W. T.**, Jones C.M., Sigdel S., Raymer P.L., Fan Q., Jespersen D., Waltz F.C., and Martinez-Espinoza A.D (2026). Light-Based Disease Management in Turfgrass: Evaluating UV-C and Blue Light for Control of Dollar Spot, Rhizoctonia Large Patch, and Gray Leaf Spot. *APS Plant Health Annual Meeting*, August 2, 2026, Providence, RI.
 - c. Bahri B.A., **Spratling W. T.**, Raymer P.L., Fan Q., Rowe P.S., Jespersen D., Waltz F.C., and Martinez-Espinoza A.D (2026). Ultraviolet-C radiation mediating dollar spot suppression in seashore paspalum. *APS Southern Division Meeting*, March 9-10, 2026, Athens, GA.
 - d. Ghimire B., **Spratling W. T.**, Saxena H., Parvathaneni R.K., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., Buck J.W., and Bahri B.A (2024). Comparative genomic analyses of *Clarireedia monteithiana* causing dollar spot in warm-season turfgrass. *APS Plant Health Annual Meeting*, July 27, 2024, Memphis, TN.
 - e. Bahri B.A., Parvathaneni R.K., **Spratling W. T.**, Saxena H., Sapkota S., Raymer P.L., and Martinez-Espinoza A.D (2023). Variability in Potential Pathogenesis Factors within *Clarireedia* Species, Causal Agents of Dollar Spot in Turfgrass. *APS Plant Health Annual Meeting*, August 12, 2023, Denver, CO.
 - f. Willis M.J., **Spratling W. T.**, Momin A., Thompson B., Vermeer B. C., Martinez-Espinoza A.D., and Bahri B.A (2022). Temperature and Host Preference of *Clarireedia* Species, Causal Agent of Dollar Spot on Turfgrass. *APS Plant Health Annual Meeting*, August 6, 2022, Pittsburgh, PA.
3. Published Extension Bulletins:
 - a. *Aquatic Pest Management Category Manual* (with Milton Taylor). Commercial Pesticide Applicator's Safety Guide developed in cooperation with UGA Cooperative Extension and the Georgia Department of Agriculture. 2017.

- b. *Agricultural Plant Pest Control Category Manual* (with Milton Taylor and Jacob Wolf). Commercial Pesticide Applicator's Safety Guide developed in cooperation with UGA Cooperative Extension and the Georgia Department of Agriculture. 2017.