

Searching for signatures of life from before it happened to the present

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This talk will present an overview of the work my research group is doing applying the principles of organic geochemistry to find signatures of life. The primary focus of this work is investigating signatures of microbial life, but it also includes anthropogenic effects and geoarcheology. The overarching goal of the work is to be able to better understand the evidence for the processes that have gone on throughout geologic history all the way to the processes that are affecting our environment today, and the way we can use current microbial processes to remediate our negative impacts on the environment. I will include discussion of: our work on the Tagish Lake meteorite and the signatures associated with hydrothermal processing prior to life; our work at Pavilion Lake BC and the search for signatures indicating microbial construction of geologic features; and our work applying similar approaches to understand where pollutants in the environment are coming from and how microbes are helping protect us from them.



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