

Vale Warwick Hillier



**Associate Professor Warwick Hillier:
18 October 1967 – 10 January 2014**

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the premature death of our highly valued and talented research colleague and friend, Warwick Hillier. Warwick succumbed to a year-long fight with cancer and has left behind a young and loving family including his wife Sari and children Henry and Stella. His colleagues at the Research School of Biology are deeply saddened by his death.

Warwick was an ANU graduate (BSc Hons 1991, MSc. 1994; PhD 1999) who was awarded the Australian Young Biophysicist award in 1998. He quickly built an international reputation in the late Jerry Babcock's Laboratory (1999-2003) as an NIH postdoctoral fellow on metallo proteins and radical mechanisms, and in the Photobioenergetics group RSBS as a postdoc with Tom Wydrzynski, funded from the Human Frontier Science Program. Warwick obtained a permanent position in RSBS in May 2007 and later that year he shared the Robin Hill Award at the 14th International Photosynthesis Congress, Glasgow, for his work on the mechanism of water oxidation. In 2009 he won an Australian Future Fellowship for research in this area and at the time of his death was a Laboratory Leader in the Division of Plant Science in RSB.

Warwick's scientific passion was to understand the mechanism of the light-driven water oxidation complex of photosystem II in photosynthesis that produced Earth's oxygen-rich atmosphere and now sustains all oxygen requiring life on Earth. It was the source of energy accumulated in fossil fuels in the distant past and continues to drive all food production today. A more fundamentally important scientific endeavour cannot be imagined. He communicated his passion for this subject in various publically available web-based contributions such as http://biology.anu.edu.au/warwick_hillier/.

Warwick was an excellent amateur astronomer and photographer. He had many requests for use of his stunning photo of the stromatolites from Shark Bay, Western Australia for textbooks and class room use (<http://www.photosynthesisresearch.org/resources/Theme/images/Warwick%20st4250L.jpg>)

We know that his many colleagues and friends in Australia and around the world will join us in acknowledging Warwick as a talented high achiever in science, a good friend, a loving husband and a caring father. The School has lost one of its best and he will long be remembered by all those who knew him.