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Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

## EEB Monthly: April 2023

EEB Monthly is a department newsletter to be distributed at the end of each month. It will be used to share departmental information, remind team members of upcoming events, acknowledge various accomplishments, and keep us all connected between our different goals and responsibilities.

This newsletter is for your enjoyment, and to provide it, we rely heavily on submissions from our community for its content! If you have anything you'd like to share in upcoming editions, we encourage you to send any submissions to Pam Diggle, Harrison Goodale, and/or the assistant email ([eeb.assistant@uconn.edu](mailto:eeb.assistant@uconn.edu)).



## Upcoming Celebrations: May 2023

This coming month sees two monthly celebrations that may interest the folks in EEB: **Garden for Wildlife Month** and **American Wetlands Month**!

[Garden for Wildlife Month](#) encourages homeowners to make their land a welcoming, natural habitat for the wildlife that doesn't like manicured, green grass lawns. It supports birds, bugs, small mammals and more!

[American Wetlands Month](#), established by the US Environmental Protection Agency, "is a time... [to] celebrate the vital importance of wetlands to our Nation's ecological, economic, and social health. Wetlands help improve water quality and supply, reduce flooding and provide critical habitat for plants, fish and wildlife."

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## In the News

**Robin Chazdon** recently had the opportunity to be a guest on The Earthshot Podcast with hosts Armando Davila, Patrick Leung, & Pedro Ribeiro Piffer. They had a fascinating conversation about assisted natural regeneration, the



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in and around ecosystem regeneration. You are invited to [listen to this episode \(alternate episode link\)](#) and learn more about Robin's journey as an ecologist, researcher, academic and practitioner of ecosystem restoration including current projects with the World Resources Institute, University of the Sunshine Coast, the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and Flagship Restoration Case Studies.

**Greg Anderson** was quoted in a UConn Today article: [Class Tree Project Expanding as UConn Again Earns 'Tree Campus USA' Honor](#)

**Dr. Susan Preston-Berlin** received a shoutout in a UConn Today student bio: [Meet the Class of 2023: Celina Marie Lopes Caetano, UConn School of Medicine Commencement Student Speaker](#)

A paper by [Sarah Brisson et al](#), current EEB TA and student of **Andrew Bush**, received a write-up in UConn Today: [Learning About What Happens to Ecology, Evolution, and Biodiversity in Times of Mass Extinction](#)

**Mark Urban** was quoted in a *Reasons to be Cheerful* magazine article: [The Flashlight-Wielding, Frog-Taxiing Guardians of Spring's 'Big Night'](#)

**Dave Wagner** was quoted in a *New York Times* article: [Nurturing Nature in Your Yard](#)

**Cindi Jones** was quoted in a UConn Today article: [The Story of the Tree Has Artistic and Scientific Branches](#)

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**Nick Boston**, EEB educational program administrator, and **Andrea Li**, former EEB student worker, were featured on *CLAS Connections*, a minicast featuring special connections within CLAS: [Class Connections: Nick Boston and Andrea Li '22 \(BUS\)](#).

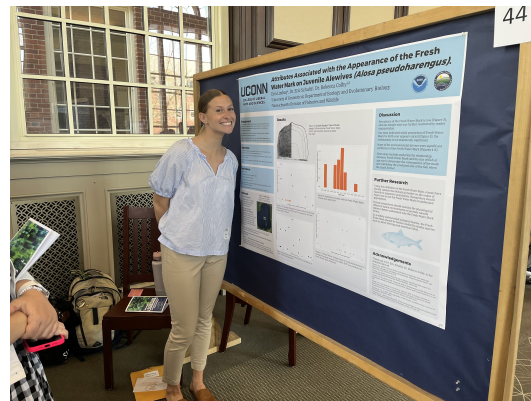
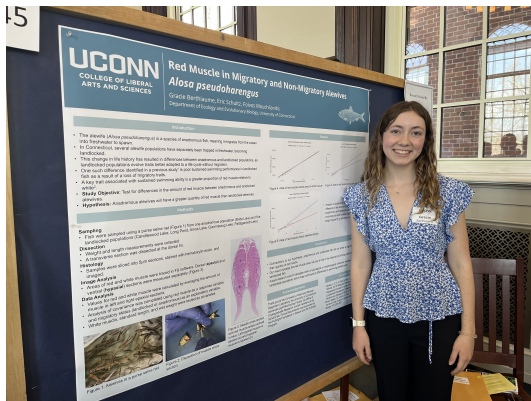
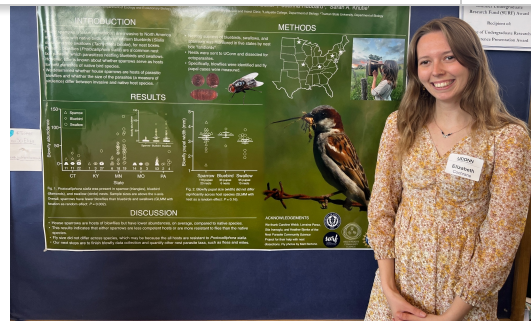
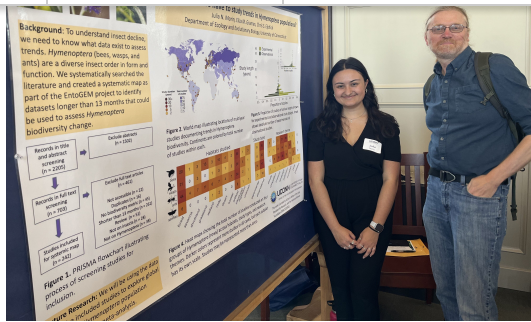


In celebration of Earth Day, **Harrison Goodale's** non-profit Sustain Music & Nature has released its eighth Songscape music video, entitled "[Century Trail](#)," featuring Grammy Nominated artist KT Tunstall in [Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge](#).

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A round of applause for EEB and Natural Resources' talented undergraduates, **Julia Morin** (top left), **Elizabeth Cochrane** (top right), **Gracie Berthiaume** (bottom left), and **Erin Lindsay** (bottom right), who presented at Frontiers 2023.

## Awards

**Zach Muscavitch** won the 2023 Graduate Student Dissertation Award of \$10,000 in Phylogenetic Comparative Plant Biology from the Botanical Society of America. The committee was very impressed with his proposal "The Evolutionary Dynamics of Fog Lichen Symbionts: Going Global."

**We'd like to celebrate a few Office of Undergraduate Research awardees:**

- **Sila Inanoglu** received a Summer Undergraduate Research Fund (SURF) award for "Effect of  $\alpha$ -pinene on ectoparasite resistance in tree swallows."
- **Anita Amity** received a SURF award for "Does lipid consumption and a gut microbiota disruption affect immune gene expression?" co-advised

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nestlings influence parasite abundance across two bird species?"

**Karl Fetter** was recently awarded a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Postdoctoral Fellowship to study conservation genetics in eastern hemlock. Congratulations!

**Zach Muscavitch** received the Trainor Award at the North East Algal Society annual conference for best graduate student poster: "The Next Era of Lichen Photobiont Systematics: Validating Trebouxia Target Capture Baits."

EEB undergrad **Reilly Stiefel** won a Hoham Research Award from the North East Algal Society for "Uncovering algal diversity and geographic distribution through lichen of fog deserts."

**Isabelle Hudson**, an EEB undergrad involved in the herbarium and elsewhere, recently won the [Office of Sustainability's Environmental Leadership Award](#), undergraduate student section.

The following from **Sarah Knutie's** lab received American Ornithological Society grants:

- **Sydney Horan**, PhD student: "*Effects of early-life nest ectoparasitism on host immune development*"
- **Alex Soldo**, Master's Student: "*Effect of invasive, co-infecting avian vampire flies and pox virus on Darwin's Finches*"
- **Sila Inanoglu**, Undergraduate Student: "*Effect of alpha-pinene on ectoparasite resistance in tree swallows*"
- **Ashley Love**, NSF Post-doctoral Fellow: "*Investigating early-life diet quality and the mycobiome as drivers of immunity to nest parasites in Tree Swallows (Tachycineta bicolor)*"

## Publications

**Albert, L.**, Rumschlag, S., Parker, A., **Vaziri, G.**, & **Knutie, S. A.** (2023). Elevated nest temperature has opposing effects on host species infested with parasitic nest flies. *Oecologia*. DOI: 10.1007/s00442-023-05343-8

**Alejandro Rico-Guevara**, **Kristiina J. Hurme**, **Margaret A. Rubega**, David



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April 2023; 226 (Suppl\_1): jeb245074. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1242/jeb.245074>

Lauren Fuess and **Daniel Bolnick**, 2023, Single-cell RNA sequencing reveals micro-evolution of the stickleback immune system. Genome Biology and Evolution evad053, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gbe/evad053>

**Brisson, S. K.**, J. Q. Pier, J. A. Beard, A. M. Fernandes, and A. M. Bush. 2023. Niche conservatism and ecological change during the Late Devonian mass extinction. Proceedings of the Royal Society B 290:20222524.

Beever, E.A., Wilkening, J.L, **Billman, P.D.** et al. (+47 authors). 2023. Geographic and taxonomic variation in adaptive capacity among montane mammals: implications for conservation status and actions. Biological Conservation. 282: 109942. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2023.109942>

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**Tanner Matson** (PhD '23), **Becca Colby** (PhD '22), **Andrew Stillman** (PhD '21), and **Val Milici** (PhD '22) reunited at a friend's wedding on April 1st. The EEB spirit was still strong despite living across four states!

## Accomplishments

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Binghamton University. Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Hunter Weitowitz** for passing his BS/MS oral exam "very convincingly!"

**Valerie Mingrone** has passed her BS/MS oral exam and now only has to make it through the home stretch of classes. Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Brendan Enochs** on a "fine defense of his MS thesis!"

**Dan Bolnick** has been elected to be the next President of The American Society of Naturalists. Dan will be president-elect in 2024 and President in 2025.

**Kris Anderson** has passed their defense of their MS project. Congratulations!

**Vikas Sarathy** passed his MS exit exam. Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Frank Muzio**, who passed his prospectus defense "with flying colors."

**Katja Kwaku** passed her general exam this month. Congratulations!

**Eric Schultz** was elected as an honorary member of Phi Beta Kappa.

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## Opportunities

### UConn@COP – Applications Due May 7

Be part of global climate action at the United Nations' climate negotiations in Dubai this November! The Conference of the Parties (COP) is an annual international gathering of delegates working to cooperatively make progress on climate solutions. UConn@COP is a flagship program that sends undergrad and grad students to experience COP. Thanks to donors, all but \$250 of the trip cost is covered. That fee can also be waived in case of hardship. UConn@COP is a lifechanging program - if you're a student interested in climate, APPLY! All



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Application and program information available [here](#). Applications are due by May 7.



**Kris Anderson** and **Bernard Goffinet** celebrate Kris' successful defense!

## Events



[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)**All Biology Undergraduate Commencement Reception**

Sunday, May 7th

BPB Lobby

3:30 - 5:00 PM

Award ceremony celebrating the achievements of seniors  
in the biological sciences.

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