
University of Connecticut
Departments of Cell and Molecular Biology &
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
www.heatherskeen.com

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2025-2027 **Postdoctoral Research Fellow**, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Princeton University (starting January 2025)
- 2022-pres. **Research Associate**, Integrative Research Center, Field Museum of Natural History
- 2022-2024 **Research and Teaching Scholar**, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Connecticut
- 2022-2024 **Assistant Research Professor**, Molecular and Cell Biology & Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Departments, University of Connecticut
- 2020-2021 **Chicago Center for Teaching Fellow**, University of Chicago
- 2018-2019 **Women in Science Graduate Fellow**, Field Museum of Natural History
- 2015-2022 **Scientific Affiliate**, Integrative Research Center, Field Museum of Natural History
- 2011-2015 **Staff Scientist**, Emerging Pathogen Project, Field Museum of Natural History
- 2009-2011 **Program Facilitator**, Education Department, Field Museum of Natural History

EDUCATION

- 2022 **Ph.D.** University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Committee on Evolutionary Biology
Advisor: Dr. John Novembre
Thesis: *Geographic variation and temporal dynamics of migratory bird microbial communities*
- 2016 **M.S.** Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL
Biology
Advisor: Dr. Sushma Reddy
Thesis: *Prevalence and diversity of the haemosporidian blood parasite Leucocytozoon in sub-Saharan African birds*
- 2008 **B.S.** Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
Zoology, Biological Sciences

PUBLICATIONS

Published

- (13) Gil, J.C., **H.R. Skeen**, C. Cuellar, and S.M. Hird. 2024. *Canada goose fecal microbiota correlate with geography more than host-associate co-factors.* **Journal of Avian Biology.**

- (12) Wells, K., J.A. Bell, A. Fecchio, S. Bensch, S. Drovetski, V. Ellis, S. Galen, H.L. Lutz, **H.R. Skeen**, G. Voelker, W. Wamiti, J. Weckstein, and N.J. Clark. 2024. [Parasite abundance-occupancy relationships across biogeographic regions: joint effects of niche breadth, host availability and climate.](#) *Journal of Biogeography*
- (11) **Skeen, H.R.**, D.E. Willard, A.W. Jones, B.M. Winger, E.F. Gyllenhaal, B.R. Tsuru, S.J. Hackett, and J. Novembre. 2023. [Intestinal microbiota of Nearctic Neotropical migratory birds vary more over seasons and years than between host species.](#) *Molecular Ecology*.
- (10) Herder, E.A., **H.R. Skeen**, H.L. Lutz and S.M. Hird. 2023. [Body size poorly predicts host associated microbial diversity in wild birds.](#) *Microbiology Spectrum*.
- (9) **Skeen, H.R.**, N.W. Cooper, S.J. Hackett, J.M. Bates, and P.P. Marra. 2021. [Repeated sampling of individuals reveals impact of tropical and temperate habitats on microbiota of a migratory bird.](#) *Molecular Ecology*.
- (8) A. Fecchio, N.J. Clark, J.A. Bell, **H.R. Skeen**, H.L. Lutz, J.A. Vaughan, V.V. Tkach, F. Schunck, F. C. Ferreira, É. M. Braga, C. Lugarini, W. Wamiti, J. H. Dispoto, S. C. Galen, K. Kirchgatter, G. M. De La Torre, M. C. Sagario, V. R. Cueto, D. González-Acuña, G. Voelker, M. D. Collins, O. Hellgren, V. A. Ellis, S. Bensch, R. E. Ricklefs, J. D. Weckstein, K. Wells. 2021. [Global drivers of avian haemosporidian infections vary across zoogeographical regions.](#) *Global Ecology and Biogeography*.
- (7) McNew, S.M., L.N. Barrow, J.L. Williamson, S.C. Galen, **H.R. Skeen**, S.G. DuBay, A. M. Gaffney, A.B. Johnson, E. Bautista, P. Ordoñez, C. J. Schmitt, A. Smiley, T. Valqui, J.M. Bates, S.J. Hackett, and C.C. Witt. 2021. [Contrasting drivers of diversity in hosts and parasites across the tropical Andes.](#) *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
- (6) Song, S.J, J. Sanders, F. Delsuc, J. Metcalf, K. Amato, M. Taylor, F. Mazel, H.L. Lutz, K. Winker, G. Graves, G. Humphrey, J. Gilbert, S.J. Hackett, K.P. White, **H.R. Skeen**, S.M. Kurtis, J. Withrow, T. Braile, M. Miller, K. McCracken, J. Maley, V. Ezenwa, A. Williams, J. Blanton, V. 2020. McKenzie, and R. Knight. [Comparative analyses of vertebrate gut microbiomes reveal convergence between birds and bats.](#) *mBio*.
- (5) Barrow, L.N., S. McNew, N. Mitchell, S.C. Galen, H.L. Lutz, **H.R. Skeen**, T. Valqui, J.D. Weckstein, and C.C. Witt. 2019. [Deeply conserved susceptibility in a multi-host, multi parasite system.](#) *Ecology Letters*.
- (4) Pulgarin, P.C., C. Gomez, N.J. Bayly, S. Bensch, A. FitzGerald, N. Starkloff, J. Kirchman, A.M. Gonzalez, K.Hobson, J. Ungvari-Martin, **H.R. Skeen**, M.I. Castano, and C.D. Cadena. 2018. [Migratory birds as vehicles for long distance parasite dispersal? Infection by avian haemosporidians over the year and throughout the range of a long-distance migrant.](#) *Journal of Biogeography*.
- (3) Sweet, A.D., S.E. Bush, D.R. Gustafsson, J.M. Allen, E. DiBlasi, **H.R. Skeen**, J.D. Weckstein, and K.P. Johnson. 2018. [Host and parasite morphology influence congruence between host and parasite phylogenies.](#) *International Journal for Parasitology*.
- (2) Bush, S.E., J.D. Weckstein, D.R. Gustafsson, J.M. Allen, E. DiBlasi, S.M. Shreve, R. Boldt, **H.R. Skeen**, and K.P. Johnson. 2016. [Unlocking the black box of feather louse diversity: A molecular phylogeny of the hyper diverse genus *Brueelia*.](#) *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution*.

- (1) Bush, S.E., J.D. Weckstein, D.R. Gustafsson, J.M. Allen, E. DiBlasi, S.M. Shreve, R. Boldt, **H.R. Skeen**, and K.P. Johnson. 2015. [Data supporting a molecular phylogeny of the hyper-diverse genus *Brueelia*](#). *Data in Brief*.

Forthcoming

- (5) **Skeen, H.R.**, G. Dwyer, D.E. Willard, E.F. Gyllenhaal, S.J. Hackett, and J. Novembre. [Periodicity of blood-borne pathogen prevalence in migratory birds provides evidence of cyclic population dynamics](#). (under review, *PNAS*)
- (4) Adams, N., T. Dias, **H.R. Skeen**, T. Pegan, B. Winger, K. Ruegg, B. Weeks, and R. Bay. [Genetic and morphological shifts associated with climate change in a migratory bird](#). (under review, *BMC Biology*)
- (3) Weeks, B.C., Z. Zhou, C. Probst, J. Berv, B. O'Brien, B. Benz, **H.R. Skeen**, M. Ziebell, L. Bodt, and D. F. Fouhey. [Skeletal trait measurements for thousands of bird species](#). (submitted, *Scientific Data*)
- (2) Morrison, E.S., Pandolfi, G.P., Aguillon, S.M., Ali, J.R., Archard, O., Baldassarre, D.T., Baquero, I., Bennett, K.F.P., Bonney, K.M., Bryant, R., Catanach, R.M., Catanach, T.A., Chavoshan, I., Davis, S.N., Goodman, B.D., Gulson-Castillo, E.R., Hack, M., He, Y., Hudon, J., Leighton, G.M., Long, K.M., Ma, Z., McCoy, D.E., McLaughlin, J.F., Moreno, G.R., Mota, T.M., Noguchi, L., Nwigwe, U., Pegan, T., Provost, K., Rasband, S.A., Salter, J.F., Silvernail, L.C., Simard, J.A., **Skeen, H.R.**, Soto-Patiño, J., Suh, Y.H., Wang, Q., Warshauer, M.E., Yan, S., Zalinski, B., Zhao, Z., & Shultz, A.J. [Bird Name-a-thon: Categorizing English bird names using crowdsourcing](#). (submitted, *Ibis*)
- (1) Kohl, K.D., R. Anderson, C. Andreadis, M.D. Baiz, K.H. Bodawatta, F. Campos-Cerda, J.A. Chaves, A.B. Clark, M.S. Costantini, G.L. Davidson, C.S. Davies, M.W. Dietz, M. Florkowski, S.M. Hird, J.J. Houtz, W.H. Karasov, K.C. Klasing, S.A. Knutie, H.C. Lim, N.A. Mason, M. Rowe, E.N. Rudzki, P.A. San Juan, **H.R. Skeen**, M.C. Slevin, S. Somers, A.G. West, S. Worsley, E. Videvall, B.K. Trevelline. [Methodological challenges faced by the avian microbiome field](#). (in prep for *Animal Microbiome*)

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2024	\$440	Travel Award , American Ornithological Society
2023	\$31,170	CLAS Summer 2023 Funding Initiative , University of Connecticut
2022	\$700	Travel Award , American Society of Parasitology
	\$900	Travel Award , International Conference on Wildlife Haemosporidians
2020	\$6,000	Microbiome Center Pilot Grant , Argonne National Laboratory
2019	\$7,000	Grainger Bioinformatics Grant , Field Museum of Natural History
	\$6,250	Women's Board Field Dreams Award , Field Museum of Natural History
	\$1,500	Brien O'Brien and Mary Hasten Scholarship , University of Chicago
	\$400	Travel Award , American Ornithological Society
	\$2,500	Museum Collections Spending Fund , Field Museum of Natural History
	\$1,600	Henry Hinds Fund for Graduate Student Research , University of Chicago
2018	\$250	Chicago Chapter Travel Award , Graduate Women in Science
	\$2,055	Carnes Award , American Ornithological Society

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	\$5,000	Women in Science Graduate Research Funding , Field Museum of Natural History
2017	\$22,500 \$1,300 \$2,500 \$1,000	Alan Schriesheim ARCS Foundation Scholar , ARCS Foundation of Illinois Graduate Student Research Award , Society for Systematic Biologists Henry Hinds Fund for Graduate Student Research , University of Chicago Research Grant , Illinois Ornithological Society
2016	\$10,575	Pritzker Laboratory Summer Research Grant , University of Chicago (x4)
2014	\$500 \$600 \$330	Poster Presentation Award , International Congress on Phthiraptera Travel Award , International Congress on Phthiraptera Travel Award , American Ornithologists' Union
2013	\$1,480	Council on Africa Research Grant , Field Museum of Natural History

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Selected Conference Presentations

- 2024 American Ornithological Society
- 2023 Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Disease
- 2022 5th International Conference on Wildlife Haemosporidians
American Society of Parasitologists
Midwestern Conference of Parasitologists
- 2019 American Ornithological Society
- 2018 International Ornithological Conference
American Ornithological Society
- 2015 Loyola University Chicago Weekend of Excellence
Midwestern Ecology and Evolution Conference
- 2014 American Ornithological Society
International Congress on *Phthiraptera*

Invited Research Seminars

- 2024 Stony Brook University, Stony Brook, New York (scheduled for November 2024)
- 2023 Field Museum Women's Board, Chicago, Illinois
Museums and Emerging Pathogens in the Americas (virtual)
- 2022 Universidad de los Andes, Bogota, Colombia
Museums and Emerging Pathogens in the Americas (virtual)
- 2021 North Shore Bird Club, Evanston, Illinois (virtual)
- 2019 Cornell University, Ithaca, New York
Chicago Audubon Society, Chicago, Illinois
Field Museum Women's Board, Chicago, Illinois
- 2018 Women in Science, Chicago Chapter, Chicago, Illinois

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor of Record

- 2024 **Writing in Evolutionary Biology – Biogeography emphasis**, Undergraduate course, University of Connecticut
2022 **Evolutionary Biology**, Undergraduate course, University of Connecticut

Guest Lecturer

- 2023 **The Extended Specimen**, Undergraduate seminar, University of Connecticut
2022 **Scales, feathers, bones, and leaves: the world of natural history collections**, Undergraduate seminar, University of Connecticut
2020 **Ecology in the Anthropocene**, Undergraduate course, University of Chicago
2015 **Bioinformatics**, Undergraduate course, Loyola University Chicago
2014 **Evolution**, Undergraduate course, Loyola University Chicago

Teaching Assistant

- 2021 **Fundamentals of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**, Undergraduate non-major course, University of Chicago
2020 **Ecology in the Anthropocene**, Undergraduate course, University of Chicago
2020 **Course Design and College Teaching**, Graduate course, Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago
2017 **Ecology in the Anthropocene**, Undergraduate course, University of Chicago
2015 **Bioinformatics**, Undergraduate course, Loyola University Chicago
2014 **Evolution**, Undergraduate course, Loyola University Chicago

Workshop Lead

- 2024 **Introduction to NMDC: use of workflows in microbiota analyses**, with the National Microbiome Data Collaborative at University of Connecticut
2024 **NMDC Hands-On Workshop: NMDC EDGE tutorial and scavenger hunt**, with the National Microbiome Data Collaborative and Penn State University One Health Microbiome Center
2021 **Digitized museum resources in the classroom**, Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago
2021 **Fundamentals of Teaching in STEM**, Chicago Center for Teaching, University of Chicago

MENTORSHIP

High School Students

- 2011-2019 F. Collins, Northside College Prep
M. Flaherty, Lane Tech High School
S. Furlow, Latin School of Chicago
T. Lopez, Lake View High School
M. Wenny, Illinois Math and Science Academy

Undergraduate Students

- 2011-2023 A. Cataldi, University of Connecticut
A. Chung, University of Illinois
F. Flores Nina, Universidad Científica del Peru
E. Gyllenhaal, University of Rochester
R. Jackson, University of Connecticut
S. Kurtis, University of Chicago

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J. Mavillapalli, University of Connecticut
K. McDonnell, Tufts University
D. Montgomery, University of Indiana
S. Shampiana Mora, Universidad Científica del Peru
L. Snyderman, Middlebury College
D. Tolmach, University of Connecticut
M. Ziang, University of Illinois

Post-baccalaureate

2015-2020 K. Kueffner, Art Institute of Chicago
K. Taylor, University of Chicago
B. Tsusu, University of Chicago
K. Wacker, University of Chicago
J. Weiss, University of Michigan

Graduate Students

2011-2022 S. Finn, Loyola University Chicago
C. Ivanovitch, University of Chicago
E. Lupancu, Loyola University Chicago
W. Wamiti, Kenyatta University, Kenya

OUTREACH AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2024-pres. **Ambassador**, National Microbiome Data Collaborative
2023 **Women in Science Saturday**, Connecticut Science Center
2022-2023 **EEB Mentor Match**, mentor to one undergraduate student (virtual)
2022 **Population Genetics Faculty Search Committee**, University of Connecticut
2021-pres. **Museums and Emerging Pathogens in the Americas**, Core Team Member
2020 **Graduate Student Admission Committee**, Student representative, Committee on Evolutionary Biology, University of Chicago
2018 **Earth Day Festival Presentation**, Cat Island, The Bahamas
2017 **Expand your Horizons Workshop Leader**, *Pathogen Prevalence Detection*, Chicago, Illinois
2016 **Upward Bound Workshop Leader**, *Pathogens and Museum Research*, Chicago, Illinois
2016 **Expand your Horizons Workshop Leader**, *Introduction to Field Work*, Chicago, Illinois
2015-2022 **Meet a Scientist**, Science Hub, Field Museum of Natural History
2014 **Sisters for Science**, Reavis Elementary Math and Science School, Chicago, Illinois
2014 **Science Day presenter**, Raymond Ellis Elementary School, Round Lake Beach, Illinois
2013 **AVID Program speaker**, Mundelein High School, Mundelein, Illinois
2011-2022 **Talk to a Scientist**, Pritzker Lab, Field Museum of Natural History
2011-2022 **Women in Science**, Field Museum of Natural History
2010-2020 **Youth Program Educator**, Dozin' with the Dinos, Field Museum of Natural History
2009-2019 **Member's Night Open House**, Presenter, Field Museum of Natural History
2009-2019 **DNA Research Summer Residency**, Advisor, Field Museum of Natural History
2009-2011 **Educator Open House**, Organizer, Field Museum of Natural History
2008-2009 **AmeriCorps VISTA**, The Volunteer Center of Northwest Suburban Chicago

FIELD WORK

- 2023 **Bermuda**, European goldfinch territories
Connecticut, Tolland County
- 2022 **Colombia**, Vichada, Tomogrande
- 2019 **Peru**, lowland Amazonia, with Universidad Científica del Peru
- 2018 **Michigan**, Upper Peninsula, Hiawatha National Forest
Michigan, Lower Peninsula, Kirtland's Warbler Breeding Territories
The Bahamas, Cat Island
- 2017 **Minnesota**, Superior National Forest
The Bahamas, Cat Island
- 2013 **Peru**, Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul
Brazil, Gurupi, Pará

REFERENCES

Dr. John Novembre

PhD Advisor

Professor

Dept. of Human Genetics

Dept. of Ecology and Evolution

University of Chicago

jnovembre@uchicago.edu

Dr. John Bates

Mentor

Curator of Birds

Integrative Research Center

Field Museum of Natural Hist.

jbates@fieldmuseum.org

Dr. Sarah Hird

Mentor

Associate Professor

Dept. of Molecular and Cell Bio.

University of Connecticut

sarah.hird@uconn.edu

Dr. Trevor Price

Mentor

Professor

Dept. of Ecology and Evolution

University of Chicago

pricet@uchicago.edu

Dr. Shannon Hackett

Mentor

Curator of Birds

Integrative Research Center

Field Museum of Natural Hist.

shackett@fieldmuseum.org

Dr. Greg Dwyer

Mentor

Professor

Dept. of Ecology and Evolution

University of Chicago

gdwyer@uchicago.edu