

# University of California Riverside Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology



Welcome 2021!

After a year filled with lots of uncertainties, change, and turmoil, this new year was anticipated more than most. As we kick off the new year, we can look back at some of the good points of the academic year and look forward to better things to come.

In this newsletter, you'll find department announcements, interviews with EEOB alumni, DEI and online teaching resources, and upcoming events. Thank you for taking the time to read UCR EEOB's winter newsletter!

## Announcements

- New publication from EEOB:
  - **Catherine Nguyen, Meng Zhao, Wendy Saltzman** - *Effects of sex and age on parental motivation in adult virgin California mice* ([Link](#))
- Grants awarded to EEOB:
  - **Samantha Levell** received the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Grant to fund her live bearing fish research in Panama!
  - **Andrea Keeler** received the EDGE Institute Graduate Student Research Award this Fall, which she'll use to fund her research on legume mutualisms in a changing climate!

## Upcoming Events

- EEOB's weekly **seminar series** (BIOL 252) is now online via Zoom. If you're interested in viewing a seminar, visit [EEOB Seminars](#).
- EEOB GSA is hosting its first **Mileage Fundraiser & Raffle** throughout the month of February. Proceeds will go towards the annual EEOB Graduate Student Research Grants. See [flyer](#) for more information.
- EEOB Graduate Students are holding **Social Hours** on Friday evenings during the winter quarter. Students should check their email every week for information and Zoom link.

## Resources

[diversity.ucr.edu](https://diversity.ucr.edu)

[keeplearning.ucr.edu](https://keeplearning.ucr.edu)

[keepeteaching.ucr.edu](https://keepeteaching.ucr.edu)

75% of UCR's courses are expected to be using Canvas by Fall 2021. Visit [keepeteaching.ucr.edu/canvas](https://keepeteaching.ucr.edu/canvas) for more information regarding this switch.

# EEOB Alumni: Where are they now?

## Erika Bucior, M.S.

- Graduated in 2020 from the Santiago lab
- Currently a *Research Leader* at the *USDA's National Peanut Research Laboratory* in Georgia
- How did her time at UCR & EEOB prepare Erika? *"It provided me with the opportunity to gain the leadership skills necessary for not only doing high quality research, but also running a logistically efficient and cooperative laboratory environment."*
- Advice for current EEOB graduate students: *Appreciate the UCR botanical gardens and the food in the Riverside/LA area while you're here – "you'll definitely miss it!"*
- *"If you are interested in becoming a researcher for any of the bureaus in the federal government, please reach out to me! I'm more than happy to help you get your foot in the door and begin the transition from academia into federal service."*
- Contact: erika.bucior@usda.gov



*"Right after graduating I became an ecologist for the Bureau of Land Management. I would drive ATV's and UTV's into the most pristine and untouched areas of public land every day, and would regularly see wild bison, bald eagles, and tons of other cool wildlife!"*

## Meng (Gemma) Zhao, Ph.D.

- Graduated in 2018 from the Saltzman lab
- Currently a *Postdoctoral Researcher* in the *Svensson Lab* at *Stanford University* studying *endocrinology in mammalian energy metabolism*
- Latest publication: *Isolation, culture, and functional analysis of hepatocytes from mice with fatty liver disease* ([STAR Protocols link](#))



*"For my previous postdoc position, my peers and I went on a one-month-long trip to Costa Rica, where we visited (and sampled) Costus species in five incredible sites. We were hunting for Costus sometimes in areas that were a little tricky, so it involved a lot of mud and swampy boots."*



## Eleinis Avila-Lovera, Ph.D.

- Graduated in 2018 from the Santiago lab
- Currently a *Tupper Postdoctoral Fellow* at the *Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute* in Panama
- How did her time at UCR & EEOB prepare Eleinis? *"I learned how to do research that advances knowledge in the field of plant physiological ecology, and specifically in the topic I am mostly interested (stem photosynthesis), and how to network and create long-lasting connections."*
- Advice for current EEOB graduate students: *"Do the research that you enjoy and be persistent despite setbacks – it will be worth it!"*
- What does Eleinis miss most? *GradFest, Thanksgiving potluck, the oranges, avocados, and asparagus available in the mailroom of Batchelor Hall, and the Avocado Taste Panel – "sweet memories!"*
- Contact: eleinis.avila@gmail.com

## EEOB Alumni: Where are they now? (cont.)

### Emily Naylor, Ph.D.

- Graduated in 2020 from the Higham lab
- Currently a *Postdoctoral Scientist* at the *George Washington University* in the *Fins & Limbs Lab* of *Sandy Kawano*
- *"I am very nostalgic about the Spieth courtyard. In addition to the big departmental events, it really was a sacred little outdoor refuge. It's crazy to think about how often I used that space to think, to read, to have very serious and very not serious conversations, and to just take a breath during my PhD."*
- Advice for current EEOB graduate students: *"Ask for help when you need it - with your research, teaching, interpersonal relationships, mental health, etc. I think that encountering obstacles during grad school is so important for professional and personal growth, but there are some things that you shouldn't have to deal with at all, deal with for an excessive amount of time, or deal with alone. I wish that I had been less hesitant as a grad student about reaching out to people for guidance and support."*



*"I \*finally\* visited the Grand Canyon during my cross-country road trip for my post-doc, and it is absolutely as spectacular as humans have been saying for thousands of years. It's only a seven hour drive from Riverside; everyone should experience it!"*

Website: [ernaylor.weebly.com](http://ernaylor.weebly.com)

## A look back at 2020...

- UCR classes were quickly pivoted to an online format in March, and countless professors, staff, TAs, and students stepped up and worked tirelessly to make this change possible and successful.
- COVID-19 sparked a pandemic unlike anything the world has seen before. We are eternally grateful for the healthcare workers who continue to care for our communities and everyone who is helping to keep us safe.
- Congratulations to the graduate students who completed oral exams and written exams and to those that graduated in 2020! Your hard work has not gone unnoticed.
- Thank you to everyone that held or participated in the many online social events. 2020 was a tough year for everyone, but the support of the EEOB community was encouraging.



*Professor Rich Cardullo performing experiments on himself for his human physiology course.*

Credit: Stan Lim/UC Riverside

## Call for submissions – Spring newsletter

Have announcements you would like to share with the department?

Upcoming events, resources, new publications, grants, awards, stories, photos, etc.?

Please send them to me to be included in the next newsletter!

[aherb012@ucr.edu](mailto:aherb012@ucr.edu)

Amanda Herbert, Ph.D. Student UCR EEOB