

## **Christopher Banotai**

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### **Education**

**2018- PhD of Wildlife Management and Conservation, University of Arizona**

**2017-Masters of Science in Biology** Western Kentucky University

Thesis title: "Selection of Seeds and Seedlings of Four Tree Species by South African Bushveld Savanna Rodents"

**2015-Bachelor of Science in Biology with concentration in ecology, evolution and organismal biology, St.**

Louis University

Capstone Project: "Bee Diversity in the Shrinking City: The Influence of Infrastructure, Economic Status, and Ethnicity"

### **Research Experience**

**2016-Field work in Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo, South Africa (February-August 2016).**

**Thesis scope:** Investigated interactions between South African bushveld savanna rodent species and seeds and seedling of several tree species.

**2014-15-Investigating pollination ecology in urban environments, analyzing 16 gardens within the Saint Louis, Missouri city limits.**

**Thesis scope:** Investigated spatial relationships between organic community gardens along the North-South socioeconomic gradient in St. Louis.

Responsible for pollinator identification, dispatch, and pinning, as well as GIS analysis.

**2012-14-Research assistant to Dr. Kerstin Edberg on project pertaining to genetic and ecological research on three species of darters (*E. erythrozonum*, *E. blennioides*, and *E. flabellare*) in the Meramec River drainages within the state of Missouri**

Participated in kick seining, electroshock collection, fish identification, PCR, and gel electrophoresis.

### **Publications**

**Under review: Banotai, Christopher, Whitney Walker, Brooke A. Barber, Craig Spencer, and Michael Stokes.** "Selection of Seeds and Seedlings of Four Tree Species by South African Bushveld Savanna Rodents." African Journal of Ecology.

### **Conference Presentations**

**2018:** "Selection of Seeds and Seedlings of Four Tree Species by South African Bushveld Savanna Rodents", Presented at the Southern African Wildlife Management Association Meetings (Bela Bela, South Africa)

**2017:** "Selection of Seeds and Seedlings of Four Tree Species by South African Bushveld Savanna Rodents", Christopher Banotai, Michael Stokes, Craig Spencer), Presented at Ecological Society of America Meetings (Portland, OR).

**2015:** "Bee Diversity in the Shrinking City: The Influence of Infrastructure, Economic Status, and Ethnicity" Chris M. Banotai, Paige M. Muñiz, and Gerardo R. Camilo, Presented at Saint Louis University Undergraduate Research Symposium and Ecological Society of America Meetings (Baltimore, MD).

**2015:** "Bee Diversity Across a Range of Socio-economic Neighborhoods in St. Louis, MO", Paige A. Muñiz, Alex Vavra, and Gerardo R. Camilo (Chris Banotai guest presenter). Presented at Ecological Society of America Meetings (Baltimore, MD).

**2013: “The more things change, the more you stay the same: Habitat selection in three species of Missouri Darters”** Kerstin L. Edberg, Justine McGauley, Gerardo Camilo, and Robert M. Wood. Presented at the Saint Louis Evolution, Ecology, and Conservation Retreat 2013 held at the Saint Louis Zoo.

## **Grants and Awards**

**2017:** Western Kentucky University Foundation Scholarship: \$500  
**2015:** Western Kentucky Graduate School Research Grant: \$1,500.00  
**2015:** Western Kentucky Graduate School Travel Grant: \$500.00

## **Professional Skills**

Field collection skills: kick seining, aquatic electroshocking, small mammal livetrapping.

Camera trap placement and surveying  
Radio telemetry monitoring  
Basic proficiency with Esri ArcGIS Software  
Basic proficiency with R computing environment  
PCR and gel electrophoresis  
Offroad 4x4 driving

## **Professional Service and Outreach**

**2017:** Instructor for Alvaton Middle School biology-themed educational visit

**2017:** Guest instructor for WKU science education outreach program

**2017:** Guest lecturer at Russellville Junior/Senior High on pursuing education and careers in science

**2016:** Guest instructor of Bush Babies Environmental Education Program, Phalaborwa, Limpopo, South Africa  
Consulted in project covering rodent-marula interactions, that allowed for female middle school student to travel to Los Angeles and participate in Broadcom International Programme

## **Work Experience**

**May-August 2018:** Animal care intern at Endangered Wolf Center  
Diet preparation, capture, habitat construction and maintenance, for eight species of canids including Red Wolves, Mexican Grey Wolves, African Painted Dogs, Swift Foxes, Fennec foxes, Red Foxes, Artic Foxes, and Maned Wolves.

**March-August 2018:** Self-employed  
Foundation maintenance, carpentry, landscaping

**May-August 2017:** Habitat management for Green River Preserve  
Planned and executed of mammal survey by camera trap and livetrapping on Western Kentucky University Green River Preserve and WKU owned properties. Identified and eliminated invasive vegetation.

**Fall 2015-Fall 2017:** Graduate assistant instructor, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University.  
Introduction to Evolution, Ecology, and Behavior Lab

**May 2015-August 2015:** Paid team leader and GIS analyst on project pertaining to pollination ecology in urban environments

**2007-2014:** CPR, first aid, and AED certified lifeguard for Lifeguards Unlimited.

**January 2015-May 2015:** Lead cinematographer for Saint Louis University Men’s Lacrosse Program.

**2012-14:** Clerical duties for “Freshwater Fishes of North America” reference series.

## **Leadership**

### **2016-Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo, South Africa**

Led teams of volunteer workers in habitat evaluation, vegetation identification, rodent capture, mark, and release, rodent food preference trials, tree seed germination and husbandry for several native species including the protected marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*).

### **2015-Paid team leader**

Responsible for pollinator identification, capture, dispatch, and pinning, GIS analysis using Esri ArcGIS software.

## **Membership in Professional Societies**

Ecological Society of America 2015-Present

## **References**

### **Dr. Michael Stokes**

Principal investigator on “Selection of Seeds and Seedlings of Four Tree Species by South African Bushveld Savanna Rodents” at WKU

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### **Dr. Gerardo Camilo**

Principal investigator on “Bee Diversity in the Shrinking City: The Influence of Infrastructure, Economic Status, and Ethnicity” at SLU

[camilogr@slu.edu](mailto:camilogr@slu.edu)

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### **Dr. Carl Dick**

Head of WKU’s graduate teaching assistantship program

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### **Dr. Richard Mayden**

Professor & Endowed Chair of Natural Sciences Chair, Department of Biology, SLU

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