

# MEET THE MVZ

A newsletter highlighting members of our community

California Ground Squirrel, *Otospermophilus beecheyi*

Photo by Erin Person



## WELCOME TO THE MVZ

For our October issue, we would like to introduce some of our newest members to the MVZ. Please read on to learn more about our new graduate students, affiliated members, and post-doctoral fellows!



# INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS!



**Majo's favorite  
vertebrate is *Cruziohyla  
craspedopus*, the fringed  
leaf frog!**



## **MAJO NAVARRETE- MENDEZ**

*PhD Student, Tarvin Lab*

### **TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!**

I am from the Ecuadorian Andes. I like amphibians and my favorite ecosystem is the cloud forest.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?**

I am interested in studying the symbiotic conversations between TTX-producing bacteria and amphibians. I am also interested in skin phenotypic plasticity and morphological convergence in rain frogs.

### **WHAT WORK OUTSIDE OF YOUR RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?**

I am the co-founder of an organization called HerNature. Our goal is to empower indigenous and black women through conservation.

### **FAVORITE DEI INITIATIVES YOU ARE CURRENTLY FOLLOWING RIGHT NOW?**

Hermanas unidas, #blacklivesmatter, #BlackandSTEM, #LatinasinSTEM @GirlsWhoCode, @BlackGirlsCode, #applaudHer #CienciaCriolla

# DANIELLE PERRYMAN

*PhD Student, Beissinger Lab*

## TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I was previously at Oklahoma State and San Jose State, and I'm excited to be back in my Bay Area home!

## WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

My broader interests are in conservation biology and physiology and behavior of endotherms. I'm currently studying niche plasticity of Mojave Desert small mammals.

## FAVORITE DEI INITIATIVES YOU ARE CURRENTLY FOLLOWING RIGHT NOW?

Black Mammalogists and Black Birders!

Check out the following hashtags!



#BlackMammalogists  
#Blackbirders  
#Inclusivebirding



**Danielle's favorite vertebrate is *Lanius ludovicianus*, the loggerhead shrike!**







# LAWRENCE WANG

*PhD Student, Full Lab*

## TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

[I'm] interested in board games, Dungeons and Dragons, and numerous other nerdy pursuits. I acquire books at a faster rate than I can read them and cannot be trusted to be alone in any bookstore with used books. Oh, I also make balloon animals.

## WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

I'm investigating the jumping biomechanics of squirrels from the perspectives of morphology, dynamics, and learning/cognition.

## WHAT HAS BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE MVZ MEANT TO YOU OR YOUR CAREER?

The specimens in the MVZ have been instrumental to my morphological research, and I have greatly enjoyed engaging with the MVZ community in both the scientific and social spheres. It's been a great community to be a part of.

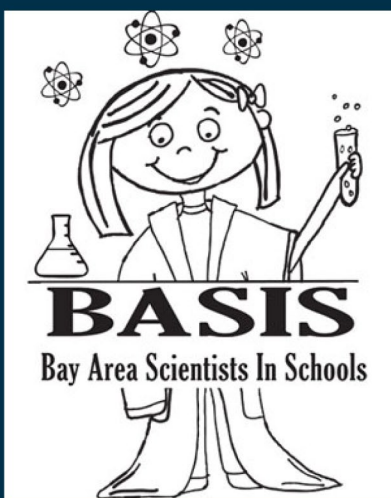
## WHAT SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT BLOWS YOUR MIND?

Honestly I'm still dumbfounded that powered flight could have evolved not just once but multiple times. So many factors go into successfully flying that it's a wonder that evolutionary processes managed to ever get there at all!

**Lawrence's favorite vertebrate is *Falco peregrinus*, the Peregrine Falcon!**



"... I've loved them ever since I first read about them in Animorphs"



Lawrence also volunteers for BASIS, a program that helps connect scientists to elementary and middle school students in the community!



# UMILAE LA ARIFIN

*Post-Doctoral Fellow, McGuire Lab*

## TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I am a dream chaser who believes that being perseverance and keeping my morale high are the keys to get me closer to what I have been dreamt of. I fell in love with frogs since my undergraduate time and this love eventually allowed me to travel around the world (of course including traveling across my beautiful home country, Indonesia). I love meeting people and make friends with various backgrounds because it enriches my intercultural sensibility and made me realize the beauty of living in diversity.

## WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

My current research focus is on diversity, ecology, and evolution of the Asian ranids with gastromyzophorous (belly-sucker) tadpoles (the belly-sucker used to cling on to rock in torrential streams).

## WHAT WORK OUTSIDE OF YOUR RESEARCH IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

I have done several public outreaches, either via story telling (e.g., Frogs scientist and the Sumatran tiger) or public talks (e.g., I travelled around the world because of frogs).

*Check out more of Umilaela's work*



**Umilaela's favorite vertebrate(s) are all frogs!**



Java White-lipped Frog (*Chalcorana chalconota*)



Bleeding Toad (*Leptophryne cruentata*)







# AUSTIN H. PATTON

*Post-Doctoral Fellow, Martin Lab*

## TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I'm a first year Postdoctoral Scholar in Chris Martin's lab, having recently acquired my Ph.D. from Washington State University.

## WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS

I am broadly interested in evolutionary radiations, both adaptive and nonadaptive, with a particular interest in the contribution of interspecific hybridization to these processes.

## WHAT HAS BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE MVZ MEANT TO YOU OR YOUR CAREER?

Becoming a member of the MVZ has presented me with an immense opportunity to engage with a community of organismal and evolutionary biologists whose passion for their research is contagious.

## FAVORITE DEI INITIATIVES YOU ARE CURRENTLY FOLLOWING RIGHT NOW?

I'm likely biased, but I am a part of a Mentorship Working Group that is making an effort to better understand the mentorship culture in the MVZ. With that understanding, we hope to provide resources and initiatives aimed at improving that culture, both for mentors and mentees. We hope these changes to the mentorship culture will help to improve not only recruitment, but retention of members of historically underrepresented communities in academia.

**Austin's favorite vertebrate(s) are Plethodontid salamanders!**



Sierra Nevada Ensatina (*Ensatina platensis*)



# MAGGIE GRUNDLER

*PhD Student, Rosenblum Lab*

Interested in the evolution of dietary specialization and ecological speciation in reptiles and amphibians.



# MARCO SUÁREZ-ATILANO

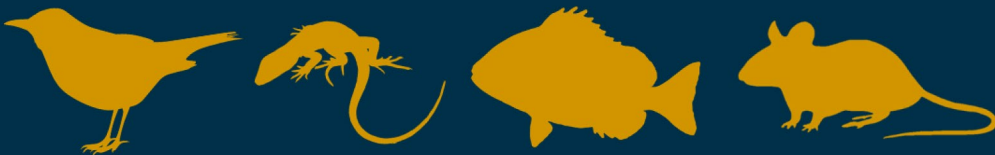
*Post-Doctoral Fellow, McGuire Lab*

Interested in understanding how different evolutionary processes shape diversity and the divergence of reptile lineages at different spatial and temporal scales.

# LAWRENCE URICCHIO

*Post-Doctoral Fellow, Tarvin Lab*

Studies competitive processes within and between species using both mathematical models and empirical data, and is interested in how evolutionary processes shape genetic and phenotypic diversity.



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