



MEET THE MVZ

A newsletter highlighting members of our community



Humpback Whale, *Megaptera novaeangliae*
Photo by Erin Person

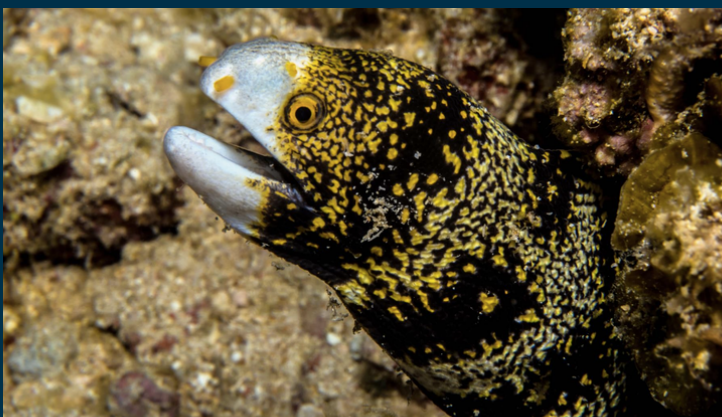
WELCOME TO THE MVZ

Please help us welcome our newest members to the MVZ! Read on to learn more about our new graduate students and affiliated members!

INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS!



**Charles' favorite
vertebrate is the
Snowflake Moray Eel!**



CHARLES TRALKA

PhD Student, Martin Lab

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

Before coming to the MVZ, I did my undergrad at UCSC in marine biology working with seals and moray eels. I have been working in the MCB department at UC Berkeley for the last two years. In my free time, I like to swim, read, and think too much about Star Wars.

WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

I am interested in studying convergently evolved traits associated with diet specializations in fish through phylogenetic and anatomical perspectives. Previously, I have examined the anatomy and physiology of both moray eels and pinnipeds, and studied the behavior of neural crest cells using the marine lamprey as a model organism.

Check out Charles with a lamprey to the left!

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY?

When I was 5 years old, my family took me to the Monterey Bay Aquarium and standing in front of the open ocean exhibit blew my mind. Seeing fish of all different body shapes and sizes swimming in an exhibit that's a giant window of blue water started a lifelong obsession with morphology and biodiversity.

VERONARINDRA (VERO) RAMANANJATO

PhD Student, Razafindratsima Lab

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I was born and raised in Antananarivo (Madagascar) until I moved to Berkeley in 2021. I am currently a 3rd-year student in the Razafindratsima Lab. I received my BSc and Master's degree in Animal Conservation biology at the Université d'Antananarivo, Madagascar.

WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

I am interested in plant-animal interactions and how they contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity in the tropics. My current research focuses on the impacts of stochastic and anthropogenic disturbances on mouse lemurs, and how changes in mouse lemurs affect their ecological roles in Malagasy rainforests. I am also involved in projects related to seed dispersal, mouse lemur ecology, and the application of research results of research results for forest conservation in Madagascar.

BESIDES THROUGH YOUR RESEARCH, HOW DO YOU PROMOTE SCIENCE?

Exposure is key to engage the younger generations in science, especially in Madagascar. I do so by mentoring young students interested in biological science. I take them with me in the field and then support them in their own research project development and implementation.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST SURPRISE SO FAR ABOUT BEING A SCIENTIST?

More of a realization than a surprise: great scientists started small too! Even the best of us did not become those highly performing scientists in one night. It takes time and practice.



**Vero's favorite vertebrate
is the Indo-Pacific
Bottlenose Dolphin!**





ISAAC LINN

PhD Student, Nachman Lab

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I'm a former student of UNC-Chapel Hill, where I worked with Maria Servedio. I'm as driven by empathy as I am by curiosity, and I like to share about new or unique interests, when I get the chance.

WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

I'm interested in leveraging computational methods to understand mechanisms of speciation through population genetics methods. Whether that's equation or agent based modeling, quantitative genomics or transcriptomics, computation can let us get more in-depth answers about adaptation and life histories.

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

I'm now in a close research community, where I'm surrounded by peers in ecology and evolution, and I look forward to learning from all members of the community.

BESIDES THROUGH YOUR RESEARCH, HOW DO YOU PROMOTE SCIENCE?

I've been a mentor to underrepresented minority students in STEM through the Chancellor's Science Scholars program at UNC, and have led some of them in Mathematical Modeling competitions, and I look forward to becoming more involved here!

WHAT EVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT BLOWS YOUR MIND?

Carcinization – frequent convergent evolution into crabs – is fascinating 🦀

Isaac's favorite vertebrate is a Ruby-Throated Hummingbird!



ANUSHA BISHOP

PhD Student, Wang Lab

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I am a fourth year PhD student in ESPM studying how landscapes shape genetic diversity. I also work as a consultant for the D-Lab (plug to check us out for free, fast, and friendly support with anything related to data science!) In my free time I love drawing, hiking, herping, and tidepooling.

WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

I study how the processes of evolution play out across landscapes with the goal of understanding species vulnerability to environmental change. My work involves building and applying tools for discovering patterns of genomic variation, connectivity, and adaptation. As part of the Landscape Genomics Team for the California Conservation Genomics Project, I am also working with Anne Chambers (another awesome MVZ affiliate!) developing analysis pipelines to help inform conservation across the state.

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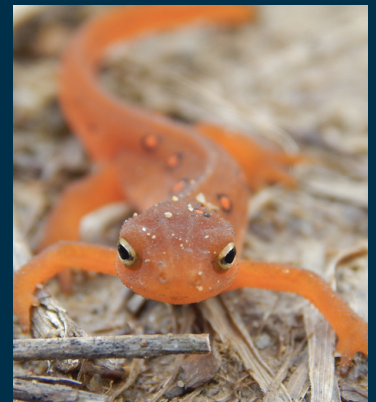
Growing up in NYC, I was obsessed with the American Museum of Natural History. Being a part of a museum is fulfilling a childhood dream!

FAVORITE DEI INITIATIVES YOU ARE CURRENTLY FOLLOWING RIGHT NOW?

Científico Latino is doing great work advancing minoritized groups in STEM, particularly through the Graduate Student Mentorship Initiative and the Graduate Student Engagement & Community programs. They recently published a great paper on increasing equity in graduate admissions based on data from their initiatives.



Anusha's favorite vertebrates are Western Fence Lizards, Red-Spotted Newts, and Subway Rats!



Check out Científico Latino here! →



← Check out the paper here!



JENNIFER HOEFLICH

PhD Student, Liu Lab

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF!

I am a fourth year graduate student in the department of Integrative Biology in Juan Liu's lab. I went to the University of Florida for undergrad and did research with the Florida Museum of Natural History.

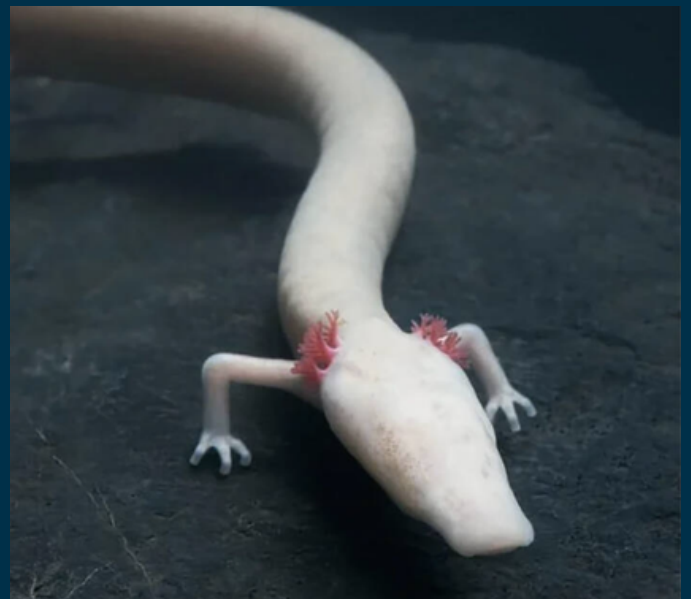
WHAT ARE YOUR RESEARCH INTERESTS?

My thesis research is focused on the Weberian apparatus of Ictalurid catfishes, which is used for conductive hearing. I'm particularly interested in how ecological factors influence the morphology and how the morphology in turn impacts the function.

Jennifer's favorite vertebrate is the Olm, an aquatic salamander!

HOW DID YOU GET INTERESTED IN EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY?

I failed as a chemistry major, and then took a reading group class on "How to Clone a Mammoth", which led to me getting a research assistant position, which I enjoyed!



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