



...PRESENTS:

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WHS SCIENTIST IN RESIDENCE, 2014-2015

Some stuff about me:



Can you see the net strung across the pond behind me? I use mist nets, which are like fine volley ball nets, to catch bats at night. In this photo, I'm at Wilder Ranch State Park in Santa Cruz.

- **Age:** 30
- **Where I grew up:** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- **High School:** Quaker Valley High School
- **Favorite subjects in high school:** Art, Biology
- **College (undergraduate):** Penn State
- **Some of my favorite things:** cooking, climbing, mountains, desert canyons, crafts, birds
- **Something weird about me:** When I was a kid, I was obsessed with dinosaurs and Egyptian culture. I thought it would be really cool to dig up remains, but I couldn't decide if fossils or pharaohs would be more fun. Now, I am happy to study living organisms.
- **What I think or do when I get frustrated:** If I only have a few minutes, I cuddle with my dog or play with my birds. When I have more time, I go for a run in the woods. I feel strong when I can come back fresh and face a problem.



This bat is called a Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*) and it is the second most common species in the Central Coast. You can see it feeding over ponds at dusk!

After college, I studied coyotes in Yellowstone National Park. Coyotes are both predators and prey. We took this coyote to a lab to figure out what it ate for its last meal, and what ultimately ate it.



My intern, Caitlin Boise, extracting a bat from a mist net. Guano (fecal) samples collected from bats contain little pieces of insect DNA. We use a special technique to analyze this DNA and figure out which insects bats ate.

What I study

I always want to know more about bats! I study bats on farms in the Central Coast and am interested in understanding how bats and farmers can benefit from each other. Bats eat tons of insects each night, and they especially love night-flying moths, many of which can damage crops. **Are bats on farms near Watsonville eating agricultural pests? Do pesticides affect where bats choose to forage?** My approach is to understand how bats use different kinds of farms, and to figure out which farming practices bats prefer.

In general, I am interested in how humans influence predator-prey interactions. In studying bats and insects on farms, I ask how changes in the landscape from farming and development impact bats and their insect prey.

This year will be my first year as a SCWIBLES Fellow. I am excited to get to know you all this year. Feel free to ask me questions about how I became a scientist and what I love about my job!



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