

# ...PRESENTS: VERONICA YOVOVICH

## WHS SCIENTIST IN RESIDENCE, 2013-2014

### Some stuff about me:



- Ⓢ Age: 31
- Ⓢ Where I grew up: Chicago, IL
- Ⓢ High School: Evanston Township High School
- Ⓢ Favorite Subject in High School: Biology
- Ⓢ College (undergraduate): University of Chicago
- Ⓢ Some of my favorite things: Backpacking, playing soccer, and drawing blood
- Ⓢ Something weird about me: I licked a roadkill deer for a dollar.
- Ⓢ What I think or do when I get frustrated: There are a lot of times when my work takes frustrating turns (they don't call it RE-search for nothing!). When that happens, I try to work on something I can make some progress on and come back to the frustrating part with a different perspective.



### What I study

I study the species interactions between mountain lions, deer, and plants in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Habitat loss and fragmentation are major causes of species loss and decline worldwide. The decline of large predators, in particular, over the last century and a half has led to major shifts in ecosystem structure. My research addresses 4 interlocking questions: 1) how do landscape attributes influence predation risk, 2) how does predation risk influence prey behavior, 3) how do changes in prey behavior influence vegetation, and 4) how do all these factors play out in the context of habitat fragmentation. To do all this, my lab traps and collars mountain lions so we can study how they use their environment. For more information about our research and activities check out our website:

[santacruzpumas.org](http://santacruzpumas.org)

When I was in high school, I got to be involved in a program similar to SCWIBLES. It was a wonderful experience for me and now that I'm a grad student I am very excited to be able to participate and try and make our experience at WHS as much fun as our program in Chicago.

Please don't hesitate to contact me (about anything!) at [vyovovic@ucsc.edu](mailto:vyovovic@ucsc.edu)

