

COS Young Professional Award 2015, to Jared Wolfe, and to Elizabeth Gow

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AWARDS

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The Cooper Ornithological Society is pleased to recognize Dr. Jared Wolfe and Dr. Elizabeth Gow as the 2015 recipients of the Young Professional Award. First awarded in 2009, the Young Professional Award recognizes early-career researchers for their outstanding scientific research and contributions to the ornithological profession.

Jared Wolfe conducts research focused on disentangling the effects of habitat and climate change on bird populations in forested landscapes. In 2014 Jared finished his Ph.D. at Louisiana State University where he measured changes in avian survival across disturbance gradients in the Amazon to determine the ecological value of regenerating and fragmented forests to birds. As part of his Ph.D., Jared also examined how different disturbance regimes result in divergent biogeographic processes by comparing bird assemblages in Amazonian forest fragments to those found on similarly sized forested islands, bounded by water. Results from this research suggest that many forest-dwelling birds are highly sensitive to fragmentation, exhibiting stark decreases in survival. However, these same birds rely on regenerating second growth to recolonize previously depauperate fragments despite an inherent demographic cost. Conversely, forest-dwelling birds were incapable of dispersing across water to recolonize forested islands resulting in species-poor island bird communities. These results indicate that forest fragments are recolonization-driven systems and islands are extinction-driven systems at his study site. Recently, Jared and collaborators have expanded this research to central Africa where he participates in annual ornithological expeditions to Equatorial Guinea, examining how habitat change affects bird communities in lowland Congolese forest. Currently, Jared works for the United States Forest Service and studies bottom-up effects of climate change on birds and their food resources with long-term bird monitoring datasets from the western United States, Hawaii, and Costa Rica. Jared is also a bird molt enthusiast who regularly contributes scientific papers detailing novel molt patterns and theory. His work on bird molt led him and a team of collaborators to develop a transformative new system of age classification which allows practitioners to precisely determine the age of captured birds using plumage and molt cycles, irrespective of location and hatching date. In addition to his scientific



Jared Wolfe

pursuits, Jared regularly conducts bird banding courses for university students in the United States, Africa, and Brazil, and is the co-founder of the Louisiana Bird Observatory. Jared presented his research at the 2015 Cooper Ornithological Society Annual Meeting. He would like to thank the Society, funding sources, collaborators, mentors, and friends for supporting his continuing ornithological research.

Elizabeth Gow is interested in research that spans the fields of ecology, demography, conservation, behav-



Elizabeth Gow

ioral ecology, and ecophysiology. During her M.Sc. at York University, she examined breeding and molting behavior in the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) and with colleagues conducted the first study using light-level geolocators to examine migration. In particular, she investigated how the timing of molt influenced the timing of fall migration. For her Ph.D. research at the University of Saskatchewan, she examined sex-related patterns of foraging, habitat use, and parental care in the Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) during nestling and post-fledging periods. Using radio-telemetry of each member of a pair and feather corticosterone, Elizabeth examined how the sexes responded to physiological and ecological stimuli. As a side project, she used geolocators on flickers to examine migration and cavity use throughout the annual cycle. For her postdoctoral research, Elizabeth is using a 40+ year dataset from a pedigreed island population of Song

Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) to examine parental care and the relationship between end of breeding and feather corticosterone. She is also developing occupancy models with colleagues to identify critical habitat of Olive-sided Flycatchers (*Contopus cooperi*) in British Columbia, Canada.

The Cooper Ornithological Society (COS) Young Professional Award (YPA) recognizes early-career ornithological researchers for their outstanding contributions to ornithology. Two awardees are selected annually to present on their work at the Young Professional Award Plenary session held at the Annual Meeting. The two awardees also receive a cash prize, travel support to the meeting, and are honorary guests at a reception attended by the COS President and other officers and the YPA committee. For eligibility criteria and how to apply, go to <http://www.americanornithology.org/content/young-investigator-awards#cos-young-investigator-award>.