

# Nicholas J. Russo

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PhD Candidate  
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
University of California, Los Angeles

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<https://nicholasjrusso.github.io>

## EDUCATION

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University of California, Los Angeles, CA Ph.D., Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, expected 2024 Advisor: Dr. Thomas Smith	Los Angeles, CA 2018-present
University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT Bachelor of Science, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology University Scholar, STEM Scholar, Honors Program	Storrs, CT 2014-2018

## PUBLICATIONS

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- Russo, N.J.**, A.B. Davies, R.V. Blakey, E.M. Ordway, and T.B. Smith. 2022. Feedback loops between 3D vegetation structure and ecological roles of animals. *Authorea Preprints*. DOI: 10.22541/au.166853520.01182525/v1
- Valenti, V.L., E.C. Carcelen, K. Lange, **N.J. Russo**, and B. Chapman. 2020. Leveraging Google Earth Engine user interface for semi-automated wetland classification in the Great Lakes Basin at 10 m with optical and radar geospatial datasets. *IEEE Journal of Selected Topics in Applied Earth Observations and Remote Sensing* 13:6008-6018
- Robertson, M.W.\*, **N.J. Russo\***, S.J. McInnes, B. Goffinet, and J.E. Jiménez. 2020. Potential dispersal of tardigrades by birds through endozoochory: evidence from sub-Antarctic White-bellied Seedsnipe (*Attagis malouinus*). *Polar Biology* 43:899–902. \*Shared first authorship
- Russo, N.J.**, M. Robertson, R. MacKenzie, B. Goffinet, and J.E. Jiménez. 2020. Evidence of targeted consumption of mosses by birds in sub-Antarctic South America. *Austral Ecology* 45:399-403.
- Russo, N.J.**, C.S. Elphick, N.P. Havill, and M.W. Tingley. 2019. Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for the hemlock woolly adelgid. *Biological Invasions* 5:1585-1599.
- Featured by *Audubon*, Feb 20, 2019
- Russo, N.J.**, C.A.S.-J. Cheah, and M.W. Tingley. 2016. Experimental evidence for branch-to-bird transfer as a mechanism for avian dispersal of the hemlock woolly adelgid (Hemiptera: Adelgidae). *Environmental Entomology* 45:1107-1114.
- Featured by *Entomology Today*, Aug 1, 2016

## INVITED SEMINARS AND SYMPOSIA

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- Internet of Animals Symposium, Yale University, New Haven, CT, USA. 2022. *Movements of Congo Basin seed dispersers in relation to vegetation structure, phenology, and forest degradation.*
- All-Biology Undergraduate Symposium, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA. 2018. *Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for a forest insect invasion.*
- Yale-Myers Forest Summer Seminar Series: Eastford, CT, USA. 2017. *Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for an invasive insect pest.*
- Northeast Natural History Conference, Cromwell, CT, USA. 2017. *Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for an invasive insect pest.*
- Holster Scholar Project Summer Research Presentations, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA. 2015. *Avian dispersal of the hemlock woolly adelgid.*

## CONTRIBUTED PRESENTATIONS

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- American Geophysical Union Meeting, Chicago, IL, USA. 2022. *Effects of 3D canopy structure on seed dispersal by hornbills in Cameroon.* Oral presentation.
- Wilson Ornithological Society Meeting, Remote. 2021. *Movement ecology of hornbills and spatial patterns of seed dispersal in Cameroon.* Oral presentation.
- Wilson Ornithological Society Meeting, Cape May, NJ, USA. 2019. *Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for a forest insect invasion.* Oral presentation.
- International Ornithological Congress, Vancouver, BC, CA. 2018. *Consumption of bryophytes by montane, sub-Antarctic birds.* Oral presentation and e-Poster.
- American Ornithological Society Meeting, Tucson, AZ, USA. 2018. *Spring bird migration as a dispersal mechanism for a forest insect invasion.* Oral presentation.
- Connecticut Entomological Society Meeting, Storrs, CT, USA. 2017. *Avian spring migration as a dispersal mechanism for the hemlock woolly adelgid.* Oral presentation.
- Wilson Ornithological Society Meeting, Ft. Myers, FL, USA. 2017. *Avian spring migration as a dispersal mechanism for an invasive insect pest.* Oral presentation.
- Fall Frontiers Undergraduate Research Exhibition, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA. 2016. *Temporal differences in avian dispersal of Adelgidae crawlers.* Poster.
- Fall Frontiers Undergraduate Research Exhibition, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA. 2015. *Avian dispersal of the hemlock woolly adelgid.* Poster.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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“Using Google Earth Engine to Monitor Effects of Climate Change in Cameroon”  
*Invited Workshop Leader*

22-24 June 2021  
National Climate Change  
Observatory of Cameroon

EEB 100L: Introduction to Ecology and Behavior  
*Teaching Assistant*

Winter 2020, Winter 2019  
*Instructors: Dr. Leryn Gorlitsky,  
Dr. Alison Lipman*

EEB 151A: Tropical Ecology  
*Teaching Assistant*

Fall 2019  
*Instructor: Dr. Leryn Gorlitsky*

Bird Identification Workshop, Yale-Myers Forest  
*Workshop Leader*

Summer 2018

Bryophyte Ecology, Tracing Darwin's Path,  
Sub-Antarctic Biocultural Conservation Program  
*Informal Teaching Assistant*

Winter 2018  
*Instructor: Dr. Roy MacKenzie*

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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Partnership for Forests  
*Collaborating GIS Scientist*

Remote Work

Feb-Aug 2021

NASA DEVELOP Program  
*Applied Earth Science Intern*

Jet Propulsion Laboratory  
Pasadena, CA, USA

Jan-Apr 2020

Sustainable Ebony Project  
*Collaborating Scientist*

Congo Basin Institute  
Yaoundé, Cameroon

Sept 2018

Bird Genoscape Project  
*Collaborating Scientist*

University of California,  
Los Angeles, CA, USA

Apr 2018-present

Great Hollow Ecological Research  
Center  
*Collaborating Scientist*

New Fairfield, CT, USA

May-Jun 2018

Sub-Antarctic Biocultural  
Conservation Program  
*Student Researcher*

Navarino Island, Chile

Dec 2017-Jan 2018

UConn Writing Center  
*Writing Tutor*

Storrs, CT, USA

Aug 2016-May 2018

Saltmarsh Habitat Avian Research  
Program  
*Volunteer Field Assistant*

CT and RI, USA

Jul 2016

National Audubon Society  
*Volunteer Bird Banding Intern*

Sharon, CT, USA

Jun-Aug 2015

Tingley Lab, UConn  
*Bird Banding Data Specialist*

Storrs, CT, USA

Jan 2015-May 2018

Urban Lab, UConn  
*Laboratory and Field Analysis  
Specialist*

Storrs, CT, USA

Oct 2014-Jan 2016

## FELLOWSHIPS

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- 2020-23 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship  
2020 Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (Declined for NSF award)
  - Featured by *UCLA Newsroom*, Aug 27, 2020  
2018 Alumni Fellowship, UCLA  
2018 Lida Scott Brown Fellowship, UCLA  
*Awarded to outstanding applicant in avian biology*

## RESEARCH FUNDING

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- 2022 Greenville Zoo Conservation Continuing Grant (\$3000)  
2022 Explorers Club Exploration Fund (\$4000)  
2021 Sigma Xi Grant-in-Aid of Research (\$965)  
2021 Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Award, UCLA (\$1000)  
2021-23 NASA ROSES Program Element A.7: Biodiversity, “Understanding seed disperser movements and their consequences across rainforest gradients of structural and phenological diversity” (\$619,840)  
PI and Co-PI: T.B. Smith, S. Saatchi  
Co-Is: A. Ferraz, E. Ordway, M. Crofoot  
Collaborators: **N.J. Russo**, M. Luskin, M. Wikelski, V. Deblauwe, V. Zaunbrecher, M. Lebreton, N. Barbier
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- 2020 IDEA Wild (\$1000)  
2020 Greenville Zoo Conservation Grant (\$865)  
2020 Association for Tropical Biology Seed Grant (\$1000)  
2020 Sigma Xi Grant-in-Aid of Research (\$916)  
2020 Hesse Award, American Ornithological Society (\$2500)  
2020 Animal Behavior Society (\$1000)  
2019 GoFundMe campaign: “Rainforest Bird Research in Cameroon” (\$1650)  
2019 Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Award, UCLA (\$2500)  
2019 Lida Scott Brown Research Stipend, UCLA (\$1000)  
2018 Katie Bu Memorial Fund Botany Award, UConn (\$1480; returned)  
2017 Office of Undergraduate Research Supply Award, UConn (\$500)  
2017 Jed Burt Mentoring Grant, Wilson Ornithological Society (\$1000)  
*Advisor: Dr. Morgan Tingley*
- 2017 Great Hollow Ecological Research Center Grant (\$1000)  
2017 DeMaio Family Summer Undergraduate Research Fund Award, UConn (\$4000)  
2016 IDEA Grant, UConn (\$4000)  
2015 Holster Scholar, UConn (\$4000)

## CONSERVATION FUNDING

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- 2017 Connecticut Ornithological Society Mini-grant, UConn Birding Club (\$400)  
*Wrote grant proposal and oversaw project to plant native plant species and construct an interpretive panel for the birds of the UConn EcoGarden*

## TRAVEL FUNDING

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- 2022 Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Conference Travel, UCLA (\$1500)  
2018 American Ornithological Society Travel Award (\$400)  
2017 Office of Undergraduate Research Travel Award, UConn (\$500)

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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- 2018 Phi Beta Kappa  
2018 Margaret F. Ertman Award for Excellence in Biology, UConn  
*Highest honors given to one graduating student for achievement in undergraduate biological research*  
2018 Fulbright U.S. Student Program Alternate  
2018 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention  
2017 Nancy Klamm Best Undergraduate Student Oral Paper, Wilson Ornith. Soc.  
2017 Connecticut Entomological Society Best 5-minute Talk  
2017-18 University Scholar, University of Connecticut  
*Award given annually to 30 UConn students for exceptional engagement in research*  
2017 Barry Goldwater Scholarship Honorable Mention  
2016 Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall Foundation Environmental Scholar  
• Covered by *UConn Today* May 10, 2016  
2016 American Ornithologists' Union Student Membership Award  
2014-18 UConn STEM Scholarship for Academic Excellence

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIPS

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- 2019-present Reviewer: *Biological Invasions, Ecology and Evolution, Wilson Journal of Ornithology*  
2018-present Bruin Audubon Society and Birding Club, UCLA  
Vice President: 2018-2020  
2018-present Bruin Naturalists Club, UCLA  
Board Member: 2018-present  
2017-present Wilson Ornithological Society  
Student and Early Professional Board Member: 2018-present  
Co-chair: 2020-present

- 2018 Environmental Literacy Task Force, UConn  
Designed implementation plan for UConn general education requirement in Environmental Literacy
- 2016-18 UConn ECOalition member  
Alliance of environment-focused student organizations, petitioned for general education requirement in Environmental Literacy
- 2015-18 UConn Birding Club: Co-founder and president
- Professional memberships: Animal Behavior Society, American Ornithological Society, Sigma Xi, Wilson Ornithological Society, American Geophysical Union

## **OUTREACH AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

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- 2022 Invited guest speaker: Congo Basin Institute Student Association, UCLA
- 2022 Invited guest speaker: School for Indigenous and Local Knowledge, Cameroon
- 2022 Science Education and Sensitization in the “Boucle” Region of Cameroon
- 2021 Invited guest speaker: EEB 151A Tropical Ecology course, UCLA
- 2020 National Audubon Society Birding Buddies: Mentored university student virtually in bird identification
- 2019-20 GreenShorts Environmental Film Contest, UCLA: Mentored two high school students in the creation of an environment-focused short film and judged entries
- 2019 Invited guest speaker: Advanced Business Communication course, Johnson & Wales University, Providence, RI, USA
- 2019 Public presentation on radio-tracking birds to community members of Bifolone, Cameroon
- 2015-17 Connecticut BioBlitz: Bird and bryophyte expert and public bird walk leader, 24-hour natural history survey, once per year
- 2015-17 Rhode Island BioBlitz: Bird and bryophyte expert, 24-hour natural history survey, once per year
- 2016-present Christmas Bird Count: Sector leader in Scituate, RI and Chaplin, CT, continually one day per year
- 2016 Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection: Banded purple martins and Canada geese for annual population survey

## **SOFTWARE AND PROGRAMMING PROFICIENCY**

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R; QGIS; Google Earth Engine JavaScript API; Adobe Illustrator

## **LANGUAGES**

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English (Native); French (Advanced); Spanish (Rudimentary)