

# CICR

## CONNECTIONS

SPRING 2023

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*Students gather to celebrate the new CICR office in the UGA Printing Building  
(Photo credit: Talley Vodicka)*

# ICON Wraps Up Another Successful Year!

The **Integrative Conservation (ICON) Program** has finished another year with many achievements! Overall, we graduated six students, including two in Summer 2022, two in Fall 2022, and two in Spring 2023. ICON student Cydney Seigerman won the 2023 ICON Agile Scientist Award in recognition of their work across the academic and non-academic spheres, and Kristen Morrow won the Ashley Block Memorial Award in recognition of her outstanding dedication to the ICON program. CICR faculty affiliates also received various awards, with Puneet Dwivedi winning a First-Year Odyssey Teaching Award; Krista Capps winning a Russell Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching; and Sonia Hernandez being named a Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor. Congratulations to our graduates, students, and faculty!

The **ICON Agile Scientist Award** went to Cydney Seigerman for their versatility in engaging with diverse audiences and notable academic production. Cydney's transdisciplinary work across the academic-practitioner interface includes leadership of a scientific article on the incorporation of social equity in water infrastructure projects. The article was written in collaboration with anthropologists

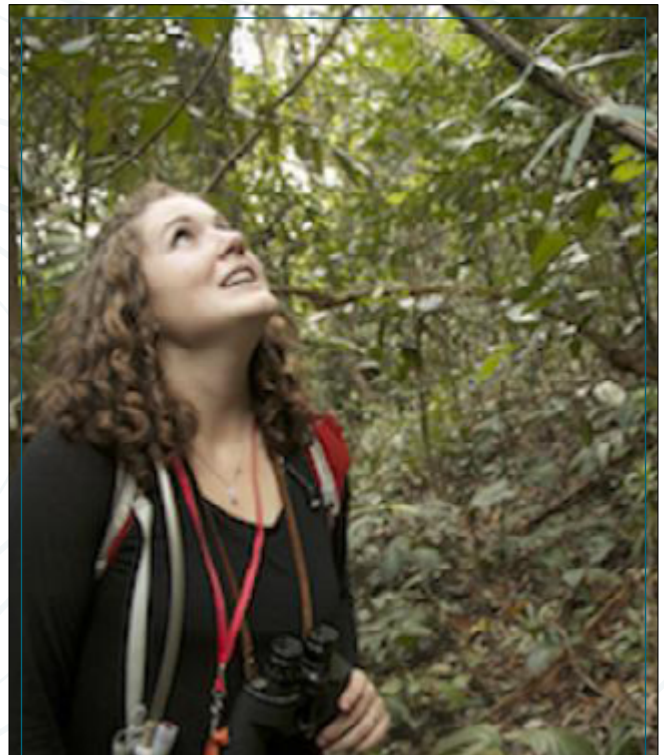


*Ph.D. candidate Cydney Seigerman (ICON and Anthropology) received the 2023 ICON Agile Scientist Award*

at UGA and members of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and was recently published in the *Journal of the American Water Resources Association (JAWRA)*. Cydney was also a supporting author of "Chapter 4: Water" of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report, contributing to data collection and analysis. Additionally, they co-authored a WWF/USAID Topic Brief on biodiversity and corruption in the infrastructure cycle, and have developed videos for non-governmental and governmental organizations - including USACE. They have also incorporated their theatre background into their research and outreach in Athens and in Ceará, Brazil, co-leading community theater workshops focused on incarceration, race, and gender in Georgia, and organizing community theater workshops in Ceará on challenges

related to water access in semi-arid areas. Siegerman also contributed to *Presents: By Our Hands*, a Georgia Incarceration Project performance. Additionally, in collaboration with multi-media artist Alden DiCamillo, Cydney developed the workshop series "Exploring Research as Craft," which brought together graduate students from across UGA to examine the process and materiality of research as acts of craft. The workshop series was supported by UGA's Ideas for Creative Exploration and culminated in a pop-up gallery show at Athens Institute for Contemporary Art.

The **Ashley Block Memorial Award** went to Kristen Morrow for her demonstrated commitment to the ICON program. Kristen’s engagement with the ICON community started with a presentation of her master’s research at the Symposium on Integrative Conservation (SIC) in 2018. She has subsequently presented her cohort’s research on Georgia Shrimp Fisheries at the 2018 Integrative Conservation Conference (ICC); served as Co-Chair of the Communication and Publicity Committee of the 2020 Integrative Conservation Conference (ICC); and served as Co-Chair of the 2022 ICC, an event focused on decolonizing conservation research and practice. In 2022, she co-organized a session for the Gender, the Body, and Fieldwork Across Disciplines Symposium on the challenges faced by graduate students with parenting or caretaking responsibilities. Kristen has also strived to sustain involvement with ICON’s student organization, the Organized ICON Network and Cooperative (OINC). This work involved serving as the OINC Secretary (2017–2018), Website Coordinator (2018–2019), and Student–Faculty Representative (2019–2020).



*Ph.D. candidate Kristen Morrow (ICON and Anthropology) is the recipient of the 2023 Ashley Block Memorial Award*

## Congratulations to our 2022–2023 INTEGRATIVE CONSERVATION PH.D. GRADUATES!

**Bryan Bozeman, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Forestry and Natural Resources**

*“Fish and Films: Multidimensional Conservation of Freshwater Ecosystems in Southern Appalachia”*

**Dina Rasquinha, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Geography**

*“Hewers of Wood, Drudges of Waves”*

**David Hecht, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Anthropology**

*“Citadels of Conservation: Mapping More than Human Worlds of Environmental Protection in Bhutan”*

**Linda Kosen, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Anthropology**

*“Ways of Knowing, Ways of Being: The Role of Relational Citizen Science in the Conservation and Care of Laysan Albatross in the Hawaiian Islands”*

**Jeff Beauvais, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Ecology**

*“The Lowcountry Lifestyle: Coastal Infrastructure, Ecotourism, and Environmental Justice in South Carolina”*

**Tara Crawford, Ph.D., ICON with an area of emphasis in Forestry and Natural Resources**

*“Towards a Decision–Making Culture in Wildlife Management: An Integrative Study of Science–Based Decision Support”*

# Welcome to the New CICR Faculty Affiliates!



**Dr. James Beasley** | *Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources*

*“My lab seeks to address complex environmental challenges related to the conservation and management of wildlife across the globe. Tackling these challenges requires a highly integrative and collaborative approach to develop science-based solutions that benefit both humans and wildlife. This is a central mission of the CICR, so I am excited to join as an affiliated member alongside other faculty with shared goals and approaches to wildlife conservation.”*



**Dr. Marie Boudreau** | *Terry College of Business*

*“I am looking forward to interacting with other CICR Faculty Affiliates and Students, along with attending CICR talks and events. I love the interdisciplinary aspect of CICR and I am eager to learn from others and see how my expertise can be of value.”*



**Dr. Kelly Robinson** | *Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources*

*“I was excited to join CICR because a lot of my work is in decision analysis for natural resources conservation and management, which requires bringing in knowledge and participation from multiple disciplines. I’m new to the faculty at UGA, so becoming an affiliate with CICR seemed like a great way to form collaborations across disciplines and find colleagues who have similar interests but use different approaches.”*



**Dr. Sechindra Vallury** | *Odum School of Ecology*

*“Affiliating with CICR has allowed me to connect with faculty and graduate students from different disciplines and units across campus who are engaged in resource conservation and environmental decision-making. One aspect that particularly excites me is the opportunity to engage in events like Catalytic Conversations, which reveal the remarkable breadth of research being pursued by faculty and students alike, deepening my understanding of the field.”*



**Dr. Charles Van Rees** | *Odum School of Ecology*

*“I’m particularly excited to be affiliated with CICR because it’s an organization working at the cutting edge of biodiversity conservation. While people often see this in a technological sense, which is flashy and impressive, CICR students and faculty are getting down to the difficult and often inglorious work of effective, lasting conservation solutions. The ones that reconcile important conservation science and policy with the hard realities of the world, and seek to make it fairer and more equitable through conservation practice. I’ve learned a tremendous amount already in my short time interacting with CICR faculty and staff and feel privileged to be a part of their community. It’s refreshing and exciting to see a group of scholars engaging with some of the hardest and most important questions in effective biodiversity conservation, and questioning long-held and problematic practices in the field. I truly think that the work coming out of CICR is what’s needed to mature conservation science into something more effective and relevant to the world’s needs.”*



*Students and faculty gather to celebrate the new CICR office in the UGA Printing Building.  
(Photo credits: Wezddy del Toro and Talley Vodicka)*

Formerly housed in the historic Holmes–Hunter Building, CICR moved to our new campus location in the UGA Printing Building off of River Road in late September 2022. The new CICR office includes multiple conference rooms, informal lounge spaces and kitchen, plus graduate student and administrative offices. We invited the entire community to join us for an open house reception on October 25th; nearly thirty attendees enjoyed refreshments and live music, displays of CICR and ICON work, and enjoyed gathering in-person!

*We look forward to catching up with you all in Fall semester!*



*Jeff Gerenscer (friend of CICR) and Hannah Morris (ICON & Forestry and Natural Resources) share their musical talents at the CICR Open House.*



# ICON Students Organize Discussion about Decolonizing Conservation

Jorge Rojas  
Suneel Kumar

In December 2022, CICR hosted an online roundtable discussion entitled, “Decolonization in Research & Science Practice” to continue conversations that emerged during the 2022 Integrative Conservation Conference. We had three distinguished speakers, to whom we asked what decolonization means, what it looks like in academic and conservation practices, and how—as researchers and practitioners—we can be more attentive and anticolonial in our educational and research practices. They shared their work experiences, thoughts, and hands-on tips to understand decolonization as a practice in academic and environmental management arenas.

Dr. Joseph M. Pierce, Associate Professor of Literature at Stone Brook University, called on universities established on Indigenous lands to take practical steps to give land back to those Indigenous nations and on academics to demand concrete steps towards these goals from university administrations. Dr. Daanish Mustafa, Professor of Critical Geography at King’s College London, discussed the issue of language in academic writing. He believes we must decolonize our writing and urged us to bring back local and Indigenous stories, narratives, and folklore within academic writing. Dr. Caleb Hickman, Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, discussed the importance of Indigenous scientists in conservation practice. He emphasized the need for academics to get beyond buzzwords like “traditional ecological knowledge” or “decolonization” and focus on what is important to tribes.

We want to acknowledge and thank Katie Foster, a Ph.D. candidate in Anthropology and ICON, for moderating the event, and all the event participants (more than 35 students and faculty members) for taking time to attend. The event would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsoring units at UGA – Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, the Graduate School, Willson Center for Humanities and Arts, and the Department of Anthropology. We would also like to thank the Institute of Native American Studies (INAS) for co-hosting this event.

The flyer features a world map with colorful dots representing various locations. The text is centered and includes the event title, date, time, and a brief description of the event's focus. It lists three speakers with their photos and titles. A QR code and a Zoom registration link are provided. At the bottom, logos for the University of Georgia and its various departments are displayed.

**Center for Integrative Conservation Research**  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

**A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON  
DECOLONIZATION IN RESEARCH & SCIENCE PRACTICE**

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022 | 12 PM EST**

**About the event:** "What is decolonization?" and "What does decolonization look like in academic practice?" Recent scholarship has called for addressing colonial legacies within academic research and practice. Yet a number of Indigenous scholars have critiqued the use of decolonization to refer to anything other than the undoing of (settler) colonialism. In the words of Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 1). How can we as researchers best respond to calls for anti-oppressive practices without doing further harm? And how can we be more reflexive about our academic practices and the work they do in the world?

**Speakers:**

**Dr. Joseph M. Pierce**  
Cherokee Nation Citizen,  
Associate Professor,  
Stone Brook University

**Caleb R. Hickman** (ᎠᎯᎿᎿᎿᎿᎿᎿ)  
Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist,  
Certified Wildlife Biologist\*,  
Citizen of the Cherokee Nation (ᎠᎯᎿᎿᎿᎿᎿᎿ)  
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

**Dr. Daanish Mustafa**  
Professor in Critical Geography,  
Department of Geography,  
King's College London

**Register here or scan QR code**  
<https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/UETcuGtpjyGNDQ6L6yqB0oUT0qf6NSwvP>

**Sponsoring units**

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
Warnell School of Forestry  
Graduate School  
Department of Anthropology  
Willson Center for Humanities and Arts

# GBF Events Advance Understandings of Student Fieldwork Safety

Gender, the Body and Fieldwork (GBF) events have provided a platform for graduate students to have open dialogue about the experiences of people with diverse identities, genders, bodies, and abilities while undertaking fieldwork. The inaugural GBF Symposium in 2018 was co-founded by Christina Crespo, a Ph.D. candidate in the Integrative Conservation and Anthropology program, and Dr. Samm Holder, who recently completed her doctoral degree in Anthropology here at UGA. The 2018 event, “Women and the Field in the Social Sciences,” was followed by GBF Symposia in 2019 and 2020. The objective of these events is to create space for graduate students to discuss their embodied experiences as diverse researchers conducting fieldwork. This year’s GBF events included a moderated session, “Researcher Safety: Reducing Harm During Fieldwork” last Fall which aimed to relocate questions and conversations often understood as “private” into the “public” sphere of academia. It also included a cross-departmental discussion about fieldwork safety held in Spring 2023. Read more about both events below.

## Gender, the Body, and Fieldwork Symposium 2022: Field Safety for Researchers

Kate Pitts  
Shishir Rao

The GBF panelists discussed their embodied experiences as diverse researchers conducting fieldwork, prioritizing practical ways to ensure field safety and addressing common barriers and safety concerns.

This year’s GBF event was designed to generate practical ways to ensure field safety for researchers with diverse gender identities, bodies, and abilities, and to identify ways faculty mentors, departments and institutions can prepare students of all identities to have safe field experiences. The goal of this conversation was two-fold: to identify common risks faced by researchers in diverse disciplines and “fields,” and to constructively work towards strategies to minimize those risks and prepare researchers and institutional support networks to best respond to these challenges. We believe this focus on action is necessary to enact change in fieldwork practices and safety, as awareness of the risks associated with fieldwork will have limited impacts on actual safety unless addressed at the level of institutions, departments, labs and field teams.

Our panelists this year were SJ Dillon, a Ph.D. student at Emory University; Dr. Patricia Richards, Director of Women’s Studies and Professor of Sociology at UGA; and Vice Provost

and Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Ron Walcott. The panelists have a range of institutional experiences and roles, each offering unique perspectives on this issue. Several key themes and recommendations for students and researchers emerged from this conversation: the need to set firm boundaries (that is, clarity about what is acceptable behavior and what is not); the need for contingency plans; the importance of keeping close contact with advisors, mentors, family or friends outside the field site; and the need to learn basic cultural norms before initiating fieldwork.



*The GBF panelists discussed their embodied experiences as diverse researchers conducting fieldwork, prioritizing practical ways to ensure field safety and addressing common barriers and safety concerns.*

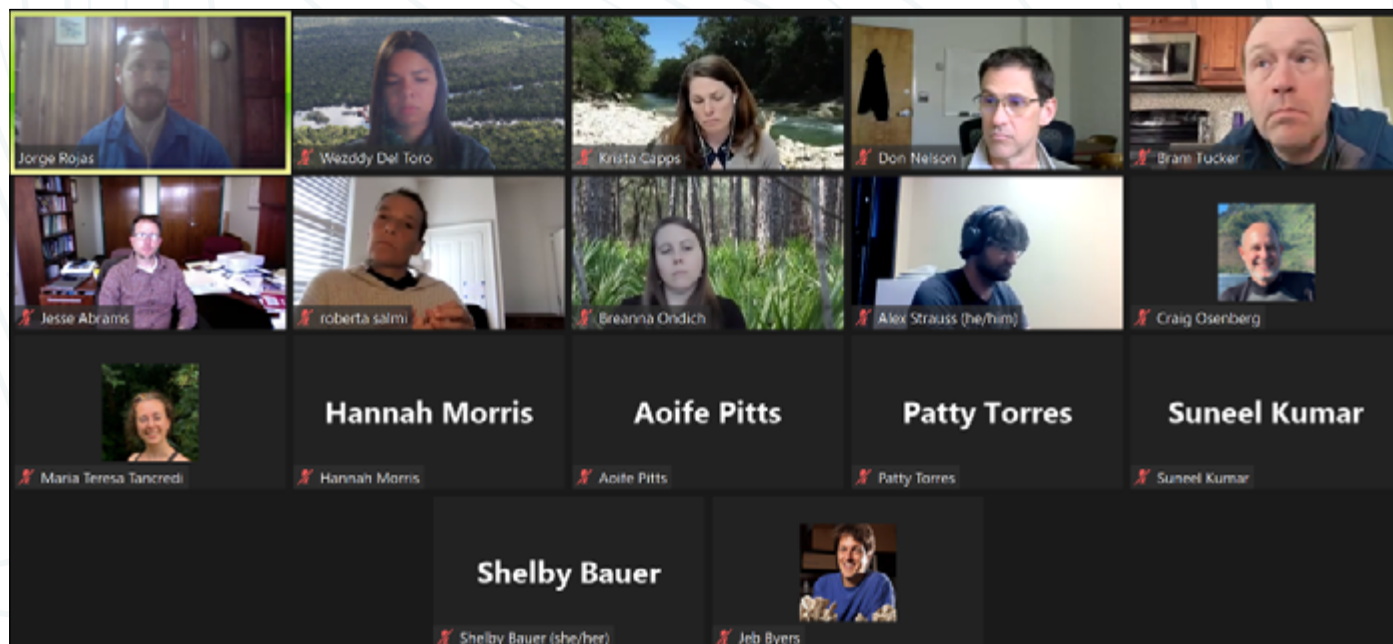
The panelists also stressed that students, their mentors and departments must prioritize safety. This means students could choose to modify or abandon their project or field site due to safety or mental health concerns, if necessary. Additionally, the panelists emphasized the need for student field safety to be a top priority across all graduate school sectors: labs, departments, and the Graduate School. On this note, panelists also suggested training faculty to better navigate their positionality relative to their students. In other words, advisors' gender, class, and lived experiences influence their views about field safety, may differ from students' perspectives, and may create blind spots.

We hope this conversation will serve as a catalyst for campus-wide shifts in how we as a research community think about fieldwork, risk and safety, and responsibility at all levels of the academy. We extend our deepest thanks to our panelists for lending their valuable time and energy to this important discussion, as well as to our moderator, Dr. Lizzie King. We would also like to thank our event planners, Shishir Rao and Aoife Kate Pitts, and CICR staff, Dr. Laura German and Talley Vodicka. We also extend our sincerest gratitude to our co-sponsors: the Center for Integrative Conservation Research, Willson Center for Humanities and Arts, the Department of Anthropology, and Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.



# Cross-unit Conversation for Promoting Safety in the Field

Jorge Rojas



*Participants from all affiliated units (Anthropology, Ecology, Geography, Marine Sciences, and Forestry/Natural Resources) gathered online to discuss graduate student safety in the field.*

This event aimed to continue field safety discussions held at the GBF Symposium. To start, ICON and Forestry/Natural Resources Ph.D. student Wezddy Del Toro Orozco presented her investigation about existing safety resources and field research protocols. The presentation was followed by a discussion with several representatives from ICON units about establishing safer fieldwork conditions for students.

The session benefited from the active participation of seventeen students and faculty from ICON-affiliated units, including Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, Odum School of Ecology, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, and the Department of Anthropology. The discussion started with Wezddy Del Toro presenting the resources available on campus and current field research protocols. She also presented the main findings of two surveys that she conducted with ICON students and graduate coordinators of ICON-affiliated units to get a baseline on the topic and better understand the gaps that need to be addressed regarding field safety. The survey indicated that field safety information and resources are mainly shared between students, showing the importance of promoting more spaces for student-to-student interactions. Wezddy concluded with a call to “take action” at the departmental level to improve student safety in the field.

In order to foster cross-unit synergies and explore what additional steps could be taken to improve field safety, Wezddy's presentation was followed by a conversation about what units are currently doing. Dr. Roberta Salmi highlighted the variations in fieldwork settings and methods, as well as countries' legislations and cultures, raising challenges for any uniform approach. For instance, some projects focus on ecological assessments, others on interviews and close contact with local communities; moreover, ICON student research is spread across the globe. Dr. Don Nelson pointed out that documenting students' experiences – including difficult fieldwork situations – would be valuable. He reinforced the idea of providing spaces for information sharing among students, as some may have concerns about communicating sensitive topics with their advisors. Dr. Krista Capps mentioned that federal funding agencies increasingly require statements about or plans to create safe field conditions as part of the grant submission process, yet went on to note that “though requiring these documents is an important first step, even the best written plans will not prepare students to deal with the psychological, physical, or professional ramifications of harassment or assault in the field.” Dr. Jesse Abrams encouraged the University to have a list or collection of resources on different topics: mental health, LGBTQ+ safety, economics, insurance, policies, training, and risk management.

CICR/ICON acknowledges the importance of guaranteeing field safety conditions for students and will continue working collaboratively towards promoting safety in the field, bearing in mind the diversity of the students and faculty of the ICON Program. For instance, as a following step, some key points will be shared through the ICON Lab Handbook, and additional conversations could be planned for the coming semesters. We want to thank all participants that made this an enriching discussion, creating lots of insight into creating safer conditions for students.

# CICR Launches a Reading Club about the History and Potential Futures of Conservation

Bruno Ubiali  
Laura German

ICON and CICR launched a reading club in Spring 2023 to explore equitable and just paths for conservation. Reading club participants gathered once a month to discuss shared readings and collectively explore the underlying ideas and implications of distinct conservation pathways in diverse contexts. The objective was to take stock of the difficult history and related criticisms of the conservation field, including issues arising from the influence of (settler) colonial practices and narratives on the modern conservation movement, and to examine alternative visions for the future of the field that address these concerns. By bolstering our collective knowledge about the controversial history of conservation research and practice, the reading club sought to inform the organization and facilitation of future CICR events that directly engage with these issues. The hybrid events (in person/zoom) were held in February, March, and April as roundtable discussions moderated by ICON research assistants. The events were attended by students and faculty from CICR-affiliated units and beyond.

The first theme was “The troubled histories (and presents) of conservation.” One reading explored the persistence of colonial land and conservation ideologies within contemporary conservation practices, such as the ongoing displacement of Indigenous peoples in the name of biodiversity conservation, and the tendency to cast them as criminals (with the language of “poachers” or “squatters”) on lands they stewarded for millennia. A second reading explored how anti-Indigenous rhetoric was deployed historically in the name of science, in order to justify forest management agendas that were themselves of questionable ecological validity. These articles gave participants a platform for exploring the social and ecological legacies of fortress conservation and for questioning the presumed objectivity of science – which does not occur in a social vacuum and has been implicated in colonial and imperial projects.

The second meeting focused on “interrogating our assumptions,” especially the assumptions within Western thought that humans are separate from “nature” (the nature-culture divide), and the tendency to reduce the non-human world to mere “resources” for human use. Participants noted that the nature-culture divide is a key assumption that shapes conservation practice in the West, yet is largely absent within Indigenous thought. For example, the idea of “managing” or “saving” nature is very much informed by the nature-culture divide, where non-human species are thought to be best “saved” by removing humans from landscapes of high conservation value. Indigenous societies often relate to the non-human world not as “resources” or “property” but in ways that center caretaking, responsibility (to both non-humans and future generations) and even kinship – and tend to see human action within these landscapes as key to the well-being of the non-human world. Participants identified the colonial history behind this nature-culture dichotomy and argued for moving beyond it. The frictions

and misalignment of Western concepts with Indigenous and local worldviews pose significant challenges to conservation practice. One participant suggested employing a feminist approach that centers caretaking at the center of conservation work and supporting Indigenous people to take the lead in conservation to center other forms of relationality with the more-than-human world.

The third meeting explored “new visions for conservation.” This discussion revolved around envisioning alternative futures to conservation research and practice that address and move beyond identified critiques. A main theme of this discussion was the interface between Indigenous epistemologies, worldviews, and knowledge and Western science, and how to avoid the reinforcement of existing knowledge hierarchies. One view for the future is conservation led by Indigenous peoples where westerners take the back seat for a change. Many Indigenous languages lack a word for “conservation,” because their worldviews tend to emphasize relations and practices of mutual thriving and center an ethic of care in all spaces and within all of their relations. Do we need to think beyond this word? Some participants emphasized the similarities between researchers’ and local communities’ views about conservation, and asked what opportunities might emanate from there.

The reading club was valued by all for providing a platform for meaningful engagement with one another, and with the controversies and potential futures for the field. We thank CICR director Dr. Laura German and ICON Ph.D. students Suneel Kumar and Aoife Kate Pitts for moderating these discussions.

## SAVE THE DATE for the Integrative Conservation Conference (ICC) 2024!

The next **Integrative Conservation Conference** will take place February 23-24, 2024, with the theme “New Visions for Conservation.” The organizers are working to create a pluralistic space where people from different countries and sectors (academic, tribal, government, civil society), and who bring diverse worldviews, experiences and forms of knowledge and creative expression, are welcomed to convene and envision a world where all thriving is mutual. The conference will build upon the last ICC theme of “Decolonizing Conservation Research and Practice” but aim to move beyond it both in its inclusion of multiple environmental arenas (beyond biodiversity conservation) and focus on crafting visions for more liveable and just futures.



# Students Undertake Film Project in Collaboration with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

Matthew Tatz  
Janaki Mohanachandran  
Aoife Kate Pitts  
Evan Crispell  
Colin Peterson



*The 2023 ICON cohort at EBCI's territory in North Carolina (from left to right): Colin Peterson, Matthew Tatz, Aoife Kate Pitts, Janaki Mohanachandran, and Evan Crispell (Photo credit: Chelsea Wilson)*

Initiated in 2020, the ongoing partnership between the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) Natural Resources Department (EBCI NR), the USDA Forest Service, and ICON/CICR engages in projects in direct support of EBCI aspirations in the forestry sector on both EBCI lands and federal lands falling within traditional Cherokee homelands. Prior ICON cohorts (2020, 2022) produced scientific reports to clarify harvesting rules pertaining to tribes on national forest land; document the history of Cherokee-forest-fire relations; identify areas where prescribed burns would be most likely to restore White Oak; identify key elements of burn monitoring plans, with consideration for culturally important species; and explore how restoration paradigms have changed over time.

This year, EBCI partners expressed an interest in a project that would help them communicate the work they are doing to enrolled members, federal partners, and the wider public. Their desire to produce a film in collaboration with ICON/CICR led to a new partnership with the

Grady College Department of Entertainment and Media Studies and the Film Studies unit in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences – specifically MFA student Chelsea Wilson and instructor Leandro Tadashi. The 2023 ICON cohort (Janaki Mohanachandran, Aoife Kate Pitts, Evan Crispell, Colin Peterson and Matthew Tatz) is working with Chelsea Wilson to produce a film profiling EBCI’s long-standing relationship with forests, fire, and federal land management agencies with the support of Leandro Tadashi and CICR Director Laura German (Department of Anthropology).

As research partnerships with Indigenous communities are often extractive, serve the interests of researchers more than Indigenous partners themselves, and can cause harm, the team has focused on trust-building and co-construction with core EBCI partners. These key partners are Forest Resource Specialist Tommy Cabe, Conservation Outreach Coordinator Desirae Kissell and Natural Resources Director Mike Lavoie. To further bolster trust-building, collaborators have co-constructed a set of norms for the collaboration that will serve as a framework guiding the film project being developed with the EBCI over the course of 2023.



Chelsea Wilson  
Grady College of Journalism  
& Mass Communication

### Chelsea Wilson

Chelsea Wilson is a 1st year MFA Film, Television, and Digital Media student. She is interested in pursuing a career in producing and screenwriting. She has a passion for storytelling and exploring unique stories about minority groups. Chelsea’s contribution to this project as a filmmaker will be in producing, directing, and editing the documentary film. She hopes to provide a cinematic approach to capture the focus of the project and research as it relates to conservation and environmental stewardship with the EBCI.



Leandro Tadashi  
Grady College of Journalism  
& Mass Communication

### Leandro Tadashi

Writer-director Leandro Tadashi has been a UGA Entertainment and Media Studies instructor since 2020. He completed his MFA in Film & TV Production at the School of Cinematic Arts at USC. In Los Angeles, he co-directed the feature “Actors Anonymous”, which was produced by Elysium Bandini Studios and was based on the book written by James Franco, who also acted in the film. Leandro has recently finished development of a TV series he created for Warner Bros. Discovery. From Fall 2023, Dr. Tadashi will start a new position with the Department of Theatre and Film Studies in the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences.

# ICON Students Promote Program's Accomplishments through Social Media Platforms

Rachel Arney  
Alli Hoffner



*Tweet promoting CICR's reading club launched in the Spring.*

The CICR and ICON social media platforms promote departmental, faculty, student, and integrative conservation successes and ideas across Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Over the last few months, these platforms have increased followership, promoted student opportunities, highlighted student and faculty successes, and have worked to more deeply broaden and engage with the integrative conservation community. We have over 1,000 ICON Twitter followers and over 2,200 CICR Twitter followers, signifying an increase in followership since the beginning of the 2022–2023 academic year. Recent social media trends demonstrate that social media followers have steadily increased each month across both ICON and CICR contexts, with new followers coming from academic, industry, non-profit, and non-governmental sectors. The CICR Twitter profile is especially working to engage with the broader conservation community in discussions on the future of conservation in the face of calls for decolonization. Excitingly, the CICR Twitter account promoted the new CICR Reading Group that was engaged by followers in and beyond the University of Georgia. Across Instagram and Facebook, engagement is most prevalent with posts about current student success and achievement. On Twitter, followers are engaging with content that promotes student success, participation in conferences, and post-graduate job opportunities. On Instagram and Facebook, followers are engaging with content that promotes student success via posts and the content of other pages (jobs, internship opportunities, and news) via Instagram Stories. Thus far, Instagram remains under 300 followers, and we will need to cross-post with other pages to increase our following. We will continue to promote these topics across all social media platforms, curating additional interest and followership in the broader conservation community.

# ICON Alumna Michelle Evans Wins 2022 Rachel Carson Prize!

Bruno Ubiali



*Dr. Michelle Evans is a former student of the ICON program and a recipient of the 2022 Rachel Carson Prize.*

The British Ecological Society gives the Rachel Carson Prize annually to the early career author of the best article published in the journal *People and Nature*. Dr. Michelle Evans graduated from the ICON and Ecology program in 2020 and won the 2022 award for her paper “Socio-ecological dynamics in urban systems: An integrative approach to mosquito-borne disease in Bengaluru, India” (Michelle V. Evans, Siddharth Bhatnagar, John M. Drake, Courtney C. Murdock, and Shomen Mukherjee; *People and Nature*, 4:3).

The article is based on her doctoral research on the dynamic interactions between people and mosquitoes in urban spaces. The research team used multiple disciplinary perspectives to understand the spatial patterns associated with mosquito populations in Bengaluru, a fast-growing city in India. The authors combined ecological surveys of mosquitoes as well as semi-structured interviews and sketch mapping exercises with community members. They found that people’s differential experiences with changing mosquito abundances were influenced by their social vulnerability, particularly their ability to utilize public spaces. The approach integrated disciplines and scales of analysis, with each scale highlighting specific spatial patterns of people-mosquito interactions.

After concluding her ICON Ph.D., Michelle has focused on public health research. Currently a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute of Research and Development (*Institut de Recherche pour le Développement*) in France, she has been using participatory methods to collaboratively design models for understanding infectious diseases in rural Madagascar.



UGA hosts a number of interdisciplinary centers, institutes, initiatives and programs (CIIP) focused on environment and society. While a number of affiliated faculty move between these entities, there has to date been no formal effort to coordinate efforts to enhance synergy, effectiveness or name recognition. Over the past few years, faculty from the River Basin Center, the Institute for Resilient Infrastructure Systems and the Center for Integrative Conservation Research have been working to explore a collective vision for interdisciplinary work on the environment at UGA while retaining the identity of our constituent units. This spring, the working group has grown to include the Georgia Initiative on Climate and Society and the Office of Sustainability. Significant progress was also made on a shared vision, which includes a focus on re-thinking current paradigms (to biodiversity, infrastructure, watershed management); and an approach focused on epistemological pluralism, systems thinking and deep knowledge convergence with non-academic partners. It also includes a focus on researching and delivering solutions to addressing societal problems, with a focus on strategic leverage points and alternative ways of doing things. The group also made progress in identifying the benefits that would come from greater coordination, such as:

- Benefits to individual CIIP from a more purposeful cross-fertilization: a more intentional thematic focus on equity, policy engagement or social science integration for some; and a more successful funding or partnership model or geographical reach for others.
- Better coordination of education and training programs, and more streamlining of research and outreach efforts across UGA.
- Greater name recognition for UGA and each CIIP because they are contributing to this common mission.
- A coordinated effort to evaluate the incentive structures for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, teaching and outreach at UGA, and a “go to” entity for the administration as it seeks to deepen this work on campus.
- More consistent and specialized research and communications support.



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