# Melanie Florkowski

Texas A&M University
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Interdisciplinary Degree Program mflorkow@tamu.edu
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## EDUCATION

2018 – Present **Texas A&M University**, College Station, TX
Ph.D.; Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
College of Science
Advisor: Dr. Jessica Yorzinski

2014 – 2018 **University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor, MI
B.S.; Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

## PUBLICATIONS

**Florkowski, MR**, Yorzinski, JL. Captive environment reduces diversity and alters composition of the gut microbiome in songbird. *(In Prep)* Target Journal: Journal of Avian Biology

**Florkowski, MR**, Yorzinski, JL. Gut microbiome diversity associated with exploratory behavior in a wild-caught songbird. Animal Microbiome *(In Review)*

**Florkowski, MR**, Yorzinski, JL. 2022. Dopamine receptor activation elicits a possible stress-related coping behavior in a songbird. PeerJ.

## AWARDS & HONORS

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| 2022 | Finalist | Animal Behavior Society Allee Award |
| | $24,000 | Texas A&M University Dissertation Fellowship |
| | $380 | Animal Behavior Society Student Travel Grant |
| | $400 | Ecology and Conservation Biology Open Access Publication Grant |
| | $500 | Ecology and Conservation Biology High Impact Travel Grant |
| | $700 | Schubot Center Avian Research Travel Grant |
| 2021 | $1,500 | Ecology and Conservation Biology High Impact Grant |
| 2020 | $1,179 | American Ornithology Society Student Research Award |
| | $820 | Sigma Xi Grant-in-aid of Research |
| 2019 | Honorable mention | Ford Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellowship |
| | $500 | Office of Graduate and Professional Students Travel Grant |
| | $300 | Charlotte Magnum Student Support Award |
| 2018 | $142,052 | Texas A&M University Graduate Merit Fellowship |
| | $5,000 | Office of Graduate and Professional Students Graduate Student Scholarship |
| 2016 | $800 | University of Michigan Biological Station Student Award |
| 2015 | $800 | Clover & Jotter-Cutter Scholarship |

## INVITED SEMINARS

2022 Max Planck Institute of Developmental Biology. Tübingen, Germany
University of Michigan Department of Microbiology and Immunology. Ann Arbor, MI

**PRESENTATIONS**

2022 **Florkowski MR,** Yorzinski YL. Gut Microbiota Diversity and Composition is Associated with Exploratory Behavior in a Wild-Caught Songbird. Animal Behavior Society, San Jose, Costa Rica

**Florkowski MR,** Hamer SA, Rosenthal GG, Yorzinski YL. Relationship between exploratory behavior and the gut microbiome in a wild songbird. Ecological Integration Symposium, College Station, TX

**Florkowski MR,** Hamer SA, Rosenthal GG, Yorzinski YL. Relationship between exploratory behavior and the gut microbiome in a wild songbird. Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology, Pheonix AZ.

2021 **Florkowski, MR.** Relationship between exploratory behavior and the gut microbiome in a wild songbird. Schubot Seminar Series, College Station, TX

**Florkowski, MR.** Behavior and the Microbiome. Ecology and Conservation Biology Seminar Series, College Station, TX

2020 **Florkowski, MR** & Yorzinski JL. Dopaminergic Control of Stress Response in a Songbird. Sigma Xi Virtual Student Scholars Symposium.

**Florkowski, MR**, Hamer, SA, Rosenthal, GG, & Yorzinski JL. Avian Behavior, Physiology, and the Gut microbiome. Texas A&M University President's Excellence Fund Symposium.

**Florkowski, MR** & Yorzinski JL. Dopaminergic Control of Stress Response in a Songbird. Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology, Austin, TX.

2019 **Florkowski, MR** & Yorzinski JL. Dopaminergic Control of Stress Response in a Passerine Bird. Wildlife and Fisheries Seminar Series, College Station, TX.

2017 **Florkowski, MR**, Gilbert, NA, and Ferguson, PFB. A Comparison of Morning and Evening Point Counts. American Ornithological Society, East Lansing, MI.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2019 – 2021 Graduate Teaching Assistant. Texas A&M University, College Station

- Zoology (BIO 107)
  - o Instructed approx. 50 students per semester
  - o Provided instruction on laboratory methods
  - o Wrote and graded quiz and exam questions

**RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

**Graduate Research Assistant** | Texas A&M University, Yorzinski Lab

Aug. 2018 - Present

- Design and test hypotheses on bird behavior and the gut microbiome
- Molecular lab work including culturing bacteria and extracting DNA
- Analyze and visualize complex datasets of behavioral and sequencing data

**Graduate Research Assistant** | Texas A&M University, Agrilife Dean's Office
Sept. 2021 – Present

- Produce visualization in Tableau of college analytics for use by administrators

**Field Technician** | Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Golden-Winged Warbler Working Group
May – July 2018

- Conducted population surveys of threatened passerine species

**Research Assistant** | University of Michigan, Winger Lab
Jan. 2017 – April 2018

- Extracted DNA from museum tissue samples to determine genetic structure of populations

**Field Technician** | University of Alabama, Ferguson Lab
May – July 2017

- Conducted population surveys of grassland birds in a biologically understudied area

**Museum Technician** | University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Bird Division
Jan. – Sept. 2016

- Organized and digitized specimens in an extensive natural history collection

**Research Assistant** | University of Michigan, Baucom Lab
Jan. – Dec. 2015

- Maintained greenhouse plants and measured plant traits

## ACADEMIC SERVICE & OUTREACH

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| 2022 | Animal Behavior Society Outreach Fair, San Jose Costa Rica |
| 2021-2022 | Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Interdisciplinary Student Organization Treasurer |
| 2021 | Expanding Your Horizons Conference Volunteer |
| 2021 | Texas Junior Academy of Science Competition Judge |
| 2019, 2020, 2021 | Texas A&M Darwin Day Volunteer |
| 2020-2021 | Academy for Future Faculty Executive Committee Member |
| 2020 | Ecological Integration Symposium Poster Judge |
| 2018, 2019 | Bird banding demonstrations with the Schubot Avian Health Group |

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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| 2019 | Deciphering the Microbiome NSF sponsored workshop – Virtual participant |
| 2019 | Academy for Future Faculty Certificate Program |
| 2019 | LAUNCH Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers Workshop |
| 2018 | Open Source for Open Science Workshop |

## UNDERGRADUATE MENTEES

Kirstin DeBlonk (Summer 2021-Present)

- Assisted in observed behaviors in preening in peafowl and measuring feather color

Margaret Guy (Fall 2018 – Spring 2019)

- Assisted with experimental protocols in measuring stress related behavior
- Awarded the Texas A&M University Wildlife and Fisheries Science Undergraduate Research Award