

Valerie R. Milici
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EDUCATION

- In Progress* Ph.D. Student in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Connecticut.
Advisor, Robi Bagchi
Research Project: Effects of Decreased Precipitation on Plant-Fungal Interactions
- 2013 B.Sc. Biology, Indiana University, *with distinction, with departmental honors*.
Advisor, James Bever
Honors Thesis: Growth Responses of Plants in a Prairie Restoration to Soil Microorganisms

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2010-2013 **JAMES BEVER LABORATORY, INDIANA UNIVERSITY**
Worked as undergraduate researcher under the guidance of Anna Larimer, PhD and later James Bever, PhD. Studied the effects of arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and rhizobia bacteria on plant growth in a prairie restoration. Discovered that the relationship between plant species and their symbionts is unpredictable. This research was analyzed and presented for my undergraduate honors thesis.
- 2012 **ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY (RMBL), GOTHIC, COLORADO**
Worked as an advanced independent researcher under the guidance of Paul CaraDonna. Studied the nesting habitat and nesting requirements of Megachilidae bees. Discovered that available nesting material is a predictor for Megachilidae nest site choice. Developed a method for quantifying available nesting material.
- 2011 **CIEE COSTA RICA, TROPICAL ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION PROGRAM**
Studied changes to the ground invertebrate community along a forest regeneration gradient under the guidance of Pablo Allen. Discovered that the invertebrate community increases in species richness as regeneration progresses.

TEACHING

- 2016-Present **GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT, UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT**
Lead lab sections of introductory biology for majors
- 2015-2016 **TEACHER, MANATEE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS, PALMETTO, FL**
Biology and Physical Science, grades 9 & 10
- 2014-2015 **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER, MANATEE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS, PALMETTO, FL**
Long-term substitute teacher for Biology and Physical Science, grades 9 & 10
- 2012 **UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT, INDIANA UNIVERSITY**
Assisted an introduction to Biology course taught by Al Ruesink, PhD. Lead a weekly discussion, created worksheets, proctored exams, and graded exams.

AWARDS & PRESENTATIONS

- 2017 **HOW MUTUALISTIC FUNGI SHAPE OUR FORESTS AND GARDENS**
Presented at the Goodwin Nature Center over the importance of AM Fungi.
- 2016 **TINKER FOUNDATION GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP (\$4000)**
Fellowship to support research abroad in Panama during the 2017 field season.
- 2013 **DEFENSE- UNDERGRADUATE HONORS THESIS**
Successfully presented and defended research on the effects of soil microbes on prairie restoration to obtain departmental honors.
- 2012 **ROCKY MOUNTAIN BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
Presented research on nesting biology of Megachilidae bees.
- 2012 **INDIANAPOLIS DAFFODIL SOCIETY (\$1000)**
Scholarship awarded on behalf of prairie restoration research at Indiana University.
- 2012 **WOMEN IN SCIENCE RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
Presented poster summarizing prairie restoration research at Indiana University.
- 2011 **CIEE TROPICAL ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
Presented research on changes to the invertebrate community along a forest regeneration gradient.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- 2013 & 2015 **TERRA CEIA PRESERVE STATE PARK, PALMETTO, FL.**
Worked on invasive species management projects, helped construct a road that preserves the natural hydrology of the park, set up project to compare the post-burn effects of different ground cover species in reducing invasive species re-growth.
- 2014 **GREENE'S ORGANIC FARM, MELBOURNE, AUS.**
Planted, fertilized, harvested, and sold produce. Managed co-planting to optimize produce growth.
- 2013 **SEA TURTLE TRACKERS, ST. PETE BEACH, FL**
Monitored sea turtle nests, informed the public, and ensured the safe passage of hatchlings to the bay.