

Dr. Nadjé Najar

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Education

- Ph.D. University of Northern Colorado – August 2018** Biological Education, School of Biological Sciences
 Dissertation: Geographic variation in rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) song complexity
Graduate Dean's Citation for Excellence
- B.A. University of California, Berkeley – August 2010** Neurobiology, Molecular and Cell Biology
 Undergraduate Research: Variation in Fuelleborn's Sunbird (*Nectarinia fuellebornii*) song on Tanzanian sky islands

In review

Najar, N., Wilcox, S., Fernandez, L., & Clark, C. (*in review*) Wingbeat kinematics and muscle size affect maximum flight speed in hummingbirds *Journal of Experimental Biology*.

Preparing for submission

Najar, N., Benedict, L., McCullough, J., Spellman, G., & Andersen, M., (*In prep*) Migratory behavior correlates with morphology but not genetic population structure in rock wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus*)

Peer-Reviewed

- Klicka, L., **Najar, N.**, Vazquez-Miranda, H., & Zink, B. (2024) Relationships among North American deer based on mitochondrial DNA and ultraconserved elements, with comments on mito-nuclear discordance. *Mammal Research* <https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-3006994/v1>
- McEntee, J. P., Zhelezov, G., Werema, C., **Najar, N.**, Peñalba, J. V., Mulungu, E., ... & Bowie, R. C. (2021). Punctuated evolution in the learned songs of African sunbirds. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, 288(1963), 20212062.
- Benedict, L., N. B. Warning, **N. A. Najar**, S. G. Pitt, P. E. Lowther, D. E. Kroodsma, and G. H. Farley (2021). Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), version 2.0. In *Birds of the World* (P. G. Rodewald and B. K. Keeney, Editors). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. <https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.rocwre.02>
- Dargis, L., Benedict, L., & **Najar, N.** (2021). Female bird song rates do not covary with population density in a North American species. *Ethology*, 127(12), 1042-1052.
- Zink, R. M., **Najar, N.**, Vázquez-Miranda, H., Buchanan, B. L., Loy, D., & Brodersen, B. W. (2020). Geographic variation in the PRNP gene and its promoter, and their relationship to chronic wasting disease in North American deer. *Prion*, 14(1), 185-192.
- Mitchell, L., Benedict, L., Cavar, J., **Najar, N.**, & Logue, D. (2019) The evolution of vocal duets and migration in New World warblers (Parulidae). *The Auk: Ornithological Advances* DOI: 10.1093/auk/ukz003
- Benedict, L. & **Najar, N.** (2019) Are commonly used measures of bird song complexity correlated? *The Auk: Ornithological Advances*. DOI: 10.1093/auk/uky008
- Najar, N.** & Benedict, L. (2018) The relationship between latitude, migration, and the evolution of bird song complexity. *Ibis*. DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12648
- Najar, N.**, Benedict, L., Doll, A., & Spellman, G. (2017). Highlighting the use of museum collections in avian research. *Auk and Condor Joint Special Collection*, https://academic.oup.com/aosjournals/pages/museum_collections
- Najar, N.** & Benedict, L. (2015). Female song in New World wood-warblers (Parulidae). *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* DOI: 10.3389/FEVO.2015.00139

In preparation

- Najar, N.**, & Clark, C. (*in prep*) Seasonal variation in male and female hummingbird flight performance.
- Najar, N.**, Clark, C., Brelsford, A., & Myers, B. (*in prep*) Genomic underpinnings of courtship display differences in hybridizing *Selasphorus* hummingbirds.

Spellman, G., **Najar, N.**, McCullough, J., Benedict, L., & Andersen, M. (*In prep*) Origin and evolution of the extinct San Benedicto Island rock wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus exsul*) revealed by phylogeographic analysis of genome-wide variation.

Funding

American Ornithological Society Travel Award (2024) \$500
California Conservation Genomics Project Grant (2020) \$47,048
Animal Behavior Society Student Research Grant (2016) \$1000
Colorado Field Ornithologists Research Grant (2016) \$1406
American Ornithologists' Union Student Research Grant (2015) \$2300
University of Northern Colorado Graduate Student Association Student Research Grants (2013-2018) \$1770
University of Northern Colorado Natural and Health Sciences Student Research Grant (2014) \$400
University of Northern Colorado Summer Funding Grants (2014-2017) \$12,800

Awards

UC Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship (2020-2022) two years salary and \$10k research grant
University of Northern Colorado Graduate Dean's Citation for Excellence (2018)
American Ornithological Society Mark E. Hauber Award (2018)
American Ornithological Society Student Travel Award (2018)
Cooper Ornithological Society Student Presentation Award (2015)
American Ornithologists' Union/Cooper Ornithological Society Student Travel Award (2015)
Front Range Student Ecology Symposium Best Student Presentation (2015)

Employment

Visiting Assistant Professor (Fa 2025 – Sp 2026) – BIO 101: Biology for non-majors, BIO 539: Biogeography, BIO 550: Statistics for biologists, BIO 573: Ornithology, MSU, Springfield, MO
Adjunct Instructor (Sp 2025) – BIOL 005C: Introduction to Ecology and Evolution, UCR, Riverside, CA
Adjunct Instructor (Su 2022, 2023) – BIOL 110: Biology of Human Problems, UCR, Riverside, CA
Adjunct Instructor (Fa 2022 – W 2023) – BIOL 005B: Introduction to Organismal Biology, UCR, Riverside, CA
Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow (2020-2022) – University of California at Riverside, Riverside, CA. Use whole genomes to identify regions associated with migratory behaviors in *Selasphorus* hummingbirds. Postdoc advisors – Alan Brelsford and Chris Clark
Postdoctoral Fellow (2020) – University of California at Riverside, Riverside, CA. Use whole genomes to identify regions associated with courtship phenotype in *Selasphorus* hummingbirds. Postdoc advisors – Alan Brelsford and Chris Clark
Postdoctoral Researcher (2019) – University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE.
Identify PRNP alleles associated with resistance to chronic wasting disease in white-tailed and mule deer, use sequence capture to study local adaptation in wild and captive ring-necked pheasants. Postdoc advisor – Bob Zink
Instructor of Record (2014) BIO 438/538: Ornithology – School of Biological Sciences, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley CO
Museum of Natural History Manager (2013-2018) – University of Northern Colorado, Greeley CO
Responsibilities included collections management, specimen preparation (birds, mammals, herps), organizing public events, and managing up to 8 undergraduate and graduate students at a time.
Teaching Assistant (2012-2018) – BIO 111: Organismal Biology, BIO 245: Human Anatomy, SCI 266: Earth and Life Sciences, School of Biological Sciences, University of Northern Colorado, Greeley CO. Taught 7 semesters of labs with occasional guest lectures.

Presentations

Greater Ozarks Audubon Society (May 2026) – invited talk
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (2026) – poster presentation
American Ornithological Society (Oct 2024) – invited talk, Female Birds symposium
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (2024) – oral presentation
Max Planck Institute, Plön, Germany (2023) – invited talk, Vocal Complexity Symposium
International Ornithological Congress (2022) – oral presentation
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (2022) – oral presentation
Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (2021) – oral presentation
Animal Behavior Society Meeting (2019) Chicago, IL – Allee Symposium, invited talk
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Behavior Group (2018) Lincoln, NE - invited seminar
American Ornithological Society Meeting (2018) Tucson, AZ - oral presentation - *Winner of an AOS Mark E. Hauber student presentation award*
School of Biological Sciences, University of Northern Colorado (2018) Greeley, CO - invited seminar
American Ornithological Society and Society of Canadian Ornithologists Joint Meeting (2017) Lansing, MI - oral presentation
Colorado Field Ornithologists Meeting (2017) Steamboat Springs, CO - oral presentation
Animal Behavior Society Meeting (2016) Columbia, MO - oral presentation
American Ornithologists' Union and Cooper Ornithological Society Joint Meeting (2015) Norman, OK - oral presentation - *Winner of a COS Student Presentation Award*
Front Range Student Ecology Symposium (2015) Fort Collins, CO - oral presentation - *Winner of a FRSES Best Student Presentation Award*
American Ornithologists' Union, Cooper Ornithological Society, and Society of Canadian Ornithologists Joint Meeting (2014) Estes Park, CO - oral presentation.
Animal Behavior Society Meeting (2013) Boulder, CO - poster presentation

Service

Judge (2026) volunteer for Ozark Science and Engineering Fair for K-12 students
Committees - 2025: Anna Faust, 2025: Kaitlyn Pankratz, 2025: Nathan Wendland
SICB (2022-2026) Volunteer student presentation award judge
Secretary / Graphic Designer (2021-2022) Riverside Postdoc Association
Peer Reviewer: Bioacoustics, Evolution Letters, Journal of Avian Biology, Animal Behaviour, Ornithology, Journal of Ornithology, Behavioural Processes, Ibis
Public Outreach (2016) Billie Martinez Elementary School 3rd grade class
Public Outreach (2015) Cub Scout Pack of Greeley
Judge (2013-2015) Longs Peak Science and Engineering Fair for middle and high school students

Mentorship

Dalton Brown (undergraduate) – MSU – research – faculty
Julio Gardea-Varela (undergraduate) – MSU – research – faculty
Soumyadeep Chatterjee (graduate) – UCR – research – postdoc
Jenny Wong (graduate) – UCR – research – postdoc
MR Tucker (graduate) – UCR – research – postdoc
Ayala Berger (graduate) – UCR – research – postdoc
April Arquilla (graduate) – UCR – mentor – postdoc
Leen Ismail (undergraduate) – UCR – mentor – postdoc