BENJAMIN TJEPKES

Wildlife Ecologist & Geospatial Scientist

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SUMMARY

- Dedicated spatial ecologist and data-driven geographer with **7+ years** of continuous professional advancement.
- Leveraging my **interdisciplinary expertise** in GIS, data science, and ecology to drive success in technical projects.
- Specializing in reproducible science, biogeography, landscape ecology, and imperiled species conservation.

PROFICIENCIES

Geospatial Modeling • Biological Research • Project Management • Web Development • Technical Reporting

- **Languages:** R, Python, ArcPy, Arcade, HTML, CSS/SCSS, SQL, LaTeX, Markdown
- **Environments:** RStudio, VSCode, Jupyter Notebook, R Markdown, Quarto, Google Workspace, M365
- **Geospatial:** ArcGIS Pro, ArcGIS Online, Esri Field Maps, ModelBuilder, QGIS, Leaflet, ERDAS Imagine, GEE
- **Miscellany:** Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, Teams, SharePoint, git/GitHub, WordPress, Super, Notion, Zotero

EDUCATION

Master of Arts, Geography (4.00/4.00, GIS Emphasis, Thesis Option) ------------------------------ **Exp. 05/2025**
University of Missouri   Columbia, MO

Bachelor of Science, Wildlife Ecology (3.76/4.00, *Cum laude*) ------------------------------ **05/2019**
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point   Stevens Point, WI

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATIONS

- **Data-Focused:** Data Analysis with R, Advanced GIS, Bayesian in R, Data Management for Long-Term Wildlife Monitoring
- **Field Operations:** Wildlife-Human Incident Response, First Aid/CPR/AED, Chemical Immobilization, Wildland Fire
- **Equipment:** Watercraft, ATV/ORVs, Heavy Equipment, Tractors, Chainsaw, Firearms, Pesticide Apps, RTK/VRS/GNSS

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Assistant -- **08/2023–Present**
University of Missouri, Department of Geography   Columbia, MO
- Deliver engaging instruction to 50+ students on world regional geography, spatial analysis, and remote sensing.
- Manage syllabus development, assignment evaluation, and online course management systems.

Student Teaching Assistant -- **01/2019–05/2019**
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Wisconsin Center for Wildlife   Stevens Point, WI
- Prepared lecture and laboratory materials for an advanced undergraduate-level course on ungulate ecology.
- Assisted with the grading of quizzes, exams, and writing assignments while adhering to all University policies.

RECENT EXPERIENCE

Assistant Wildlife Diversity Coordinator --- **08/2022–08/2023**
Missouri Department of Conservation, Wildlife Diversity Program   Jefferson City, MO
- Led data reporting efforts for an inter-branch team implementing the Missouri Bat Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Drafted 10+ technical reports on statewide habitat management and bat monitoring using RStudio.
- Developed custom geoprocessing tools and visualization workflows to summarize tabular and spatial data.

Wildlife Biologist --- **03/2022–08/2022**
Missouri Department of Conservation, Furbearer Program   Columbia, MO
- Served in a technical role for a statewide science program to monitor and research fur-bearing species in Missouri.
- Generated population summaries, visualizations, and other data-driven reports for diverse stakeholders.

Assistant Natural History Biologist -- **05/2020–03/2022**
Missouri Department of Conservation, Black Bear Program   Columbia, MO
- Led field and technical operations for a statewide black bear research and management program in Missouri.
- Coordinated black bear monitoring via ground/aerial telemetry, satellite web services, and physical capture.
- Maintained 10 years of observation and biological data using desktop GIS software and relational databases.

EARLIER EXPERIENCE

Assistant Natural History Biologist — 05/2019–05/2020
Missouri Department of Conservation, Deer & Elk Program — Columbia, MO

Office Support Assistant — 06/2019–05/2020
MU Veterinary Health Center, After-Hours Emergency — Columbia, MO

Biological Science Technician — 05/2019–10/2019
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Agassiz National Wildlife Refuge — Middle River, MN

Student Project Assistant — 12/2017–05/2019
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Wisconsin Center for Wildlife — Stevens Point, WI

Wildlife Biological Support Trainee — 05/2018–08/2018
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Necedah National Wildlife Refuge — Necedah, WI

Wildlife Management Intern — 05/2017–08/2017
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources — Navarino, WI

Research Technician — 09/2016–12/2016
University of Wyoming — Laramie, WY

Conservation Technician — 07/2016–08/2016
Becker Soil and Water Conservation District — Detroit Lakes, MN

Laboratory Analyst — 06/2014–08/2015
RMB Environmental Laboratories, Inc. — Detroit Lakes, MN

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Influence of Climate Extremes on Forest Phenology & Wildlife (Project Lead) — 08/2023–Present
University of Missouri Department of Geography — Graduate Thesis
- Using remote geospatial technologies to assess the relationship between climate, phenology, and wildlife occurrence.

Bald Eagle Nest-Site Selection (Project Lead) — 12/2017–05/2019
Wisconsin Center for Wildlife & U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — Cooperative Project
- Used 23 years of bald eagle nest monitoring data, spatial modeling, and GLMMs to determine nest-site selection.

Ruffed Grouse Drumming Log Selection (Project Co-Lead) — 10/2015–05/2019
UWSP Student Chapter of The Wildlife Society — Undergraduate Research
- Used auditory surveys, habitat assessments, and live capture of individuals to determine drumming log selection.

Raccoon Space-Use and Home Ranges (Project Lead) — 09/2016–05-2017
University of Wyoming Animal Behavior and Cognition Lab — Undergraduate Research
- Used ground-based telemetry relocations and spatial analysis techniques to determine sex-specific space use.

FUNDING

Academic Scholarships	$ 72,929
Research & Professional Grants	$ 5,158
Total Awarded	$ 78,087

SERVICE

MU Geography Graduate Representative	2023–Present
Missouri TWS Officer-at-Large	2020–2022
UWSP-TWS Vice President	2018–2019

RECOGNITIONS

National Honor Society for Geospatial Technology	2023
MDC Science Branch Employee of the Year	2023
UWSP Chancellor's Leadership Award	2019
Janice Lee Fenske Memorial Award Finalist	2017

INVOLVEMENT

The Wildlife Society	2015–Present
American Society of Mammalogists	2016–Present
Society for Conservation GIS	2022–Present
Ecological Society of America	2023–Present

REFERENCES

Grant Elliott, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Geography
University of Missouri
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Laura Conlee, M.Sc.
Science Branch Chief
Missouri Department of Conservation
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Shawn Crimmins, Ph.D.
Research Ecologist/Wildlife Biologist
AK Cooperative F&W Research Unit
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