

ASPEN A. ELLIS

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. University of California, Santa Cruz** 2021 – present
Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Dissertation: *Strategizing Renewable Energy Offsetting to Address the Coupled Climate and Biodiversity Crises*
Advisor: Donald Croll
- M.A. University of California, Santa Cruz** 2024
Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
- B.S. University of Michigan** 2014 – 2017
Program in the Environment

WORK EXPERIENCE

- Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge | Homer, AK** Summers 2020 & 2021
Wildlife Technician
- Worked solo and as part of a team to study and monitor breeding seabird populations on St. Lazaria Island. Carried out research remotely in 2020 following cancellation of field research due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Common Murre Restoration Project | El Granada, CA** 4/19 – 8/19
Wildlife Technician
- Worked solo and in a 2-person team to monitor seastack colonies of seabirds with a focus on Common Murres and Brandt's Cormorants, using scopes and digital cameras to conduct research remotely
- Save Our Shearwaters | Lihue, HI** 9/18 – 12/18
Avian Technician
- Monitored and rehabilitated native Hawaiian seabirds and waterbirds; entered, managed, and proofed data; performed community outreach
- Conserve Wildlife Foundation New Jersey | Trenton, NJ** 4/18 – 8/18
Crew Leader – Beach Nesting Birds Project
- Led five-person field crew resighting, censusing, nest searching, and productivity monitoring for threatened and endangered coastal species; beta-tested NestStory, an application for field data collection; produced monthly reports for collaborators throughout season; produced final report for 2018 field season.
- Mackinac Straits Raptor Watch | Mackinaw City, MI** 8/17 – 11/17
Fall Waterbird Counter
- Worked independently to complete eight-hour count daily for the duration of the Fall migration period to monitor waterbird migration in the Straits of Mackinac, produced daily reports and season report summarizing local bird ecology and season counts.
- USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center | Jamestown, ND** 5/17 – 7/17
Crew Leader – Piping Plover and Least Tern Project
- Led two-person field crew on Lake Sakakawea resighting, nest searching, trapping, and banding Piping Plovers and Least Terns.

Audubon Seabird Restoration Project – Project Puffin Bremen, ME	2013 – 2016
<i>Island Supervisor</i>	5/16 – 8/16
• Led field crew, carried out predator control, maintained data quality, produced season reports.	5/15 – 8/15
<i>Research Assistant</i>	5/14 – 8/14
• Performed breeding censuses, daily point counts, feeding studies, productivity surveys, trapping and banding, band resighting, habitat maintenance, invasive vegetation control, and predator control for seabird colonies on seven islands in the Gulf of Maine for four field seasons.	5/13 – 8/13
University of Michigan Museum of Zoology Ann Arbor, MI	2011 – 2018
<i>Avian Specimen Preparator</i>	
• Prepared skeletons and study skins of eastern bird species, collected biological samples and morphometrics on all specimens, trained new employees and university class groups.	

HONORS, AWARDS, & GRANTS (TOTAL: \$339,810)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship (\$196,000)	2022
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (declined, \$138,000)	2022
Myers Trust Research Award (\$2,260)	2022
Ecological Society of America George Mercer Award	2022
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship – Honorable Mention	2021
University of California, Santa Cruz Regents Fellowship (\$2,000)	2021
Student Travel Award for Pacific Seabird Group Annual Meeting (\$550)	2017
Tim Schantz Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)	2014

PUBLICATIONS

In the Pipeline

3. Payne, A.R., Ellis, A.A., Queer Ecologies. Target: CourseSource. *In prep – first draft of open-source curriculum in progress*
2. Ellis, A.A., Adams, J., Balance, L., Cook, A.S.C.P., Czapanskiy, M.F., Holmes, N., Keitt, B.S., Kelsey, E.C., Leirness, J.B., Lyons, D.E., Rockwood, R.C., Shaffer, S., Suryan, R., Zilliacus, K.M., Croll, D.A. Prioritizing Seabird Species for Mitigation of Offshore Wind Energy Development Impacts in the California Current Ecosystem. Target: Biological Conservation. *In prep – main analysis complete, first draft in progress*
1. Ellis, A.A., Adams, E.M., Cook, A.S.C.P., Goodale, M.W., Goyert, H.F., Gulka, J., Searle, K.R., Masden, E.A., Williams, K.A., Croll, D.A. Conservation at the Strategic Scale: Considerations to Effectively Offset Cumulative Impacts of Offshore Wind to Marine Birds. Target: Trends in Ecology & Evolution. *In prep – incorporating co-author feedback on first draft*

Peer-reviewed Publications

3. Ellis, A.A., Beck, J.N., Howard, E.A., Rabearisoa, A.L., Alissa, L.M., Barasi, S., Beltran, R.S., Bernardi, G., Bernier, K., Cronin, M.R., Cruz, N., Flores, I.T., Gerraty, F.D., Goetz, L.C., Harenčár, J.G., Kroeker, K.J., Kurle, C.M., Lai, E.Y., Lederman-Beach, R., Malakooti, N.J.V., Mason, S.E., McElfish, M.M., McNelis, M.G., Molinari, M.M., Munro, C.M.O., Nazario, E.C., Payne, A.R., Poudel, S., Rivera, M.G., Slimp, M.C., Sridhar, N.M., Tershy, B.R., Third, G.M., Uckele, K.A., Vilches, F.O., Walker, B.J., Wishingrad, V., Witte, E.C., Yeager, M.E., Young, J.K., Zilliacus, K.M., Croll, D.A.. (2024). Coalition-Building for Labor Actions in Life Sciences Departments: Lessons from the Largest Academic Strike in History. *BioScience*. [\[PDF\]](#)

2. Croll, D.A., **Ellis, A.A.**, Adams, J., Cook, A.S.C.P., Garthe, S., Goodale, M.W., Hall, S., Hazen, E., Keitt, B.S., Kelsey, E.C., Leirness, J.B., Lyons, D.E., McKown, M.W., Potiek, A., Searle, K.R., Soudijn, F.H., Rockwood, R.C., Tershy, B.R., Tinker, M., VanderWerf, E.A., Williams, K.A., Young, L., Zilliacus, K.M. (2022). Framework for Assessing and Mitigating the Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy Development on Marine Birds. *Biological Conservation*. [\[PDF\]](#)
1. Weeks, B.C., Willard, D.E., Zimova, M., **Ellis, A.A.**, Witynski, M.L., Hennen, M., Winger, B.M. (2020). Shared Morphological Consequences of Global Warming in North American Migratory Birds. *Ecology Letters*. [\[PDF\]](#)

PRESENTATIONS

Ellis, A.A., Kelsey, E.C., Leirness, J.B., Adams, J., Ballance, L., Cook, A.S.C.P., Holmes, N., Keitt, B.S., Lyons, D.E., Rockwood, R.C., Shaffer, S., Suryan, R., Zilliacus, K.M., Croll, D.A. Prioritizing Seabird Species for Mitigation of Offshore Wind Energy Development Impacts in the California Current Ecosystem. Waterbird Society & Pacific Seabird Group Joint Meeting. 9 January, 2025

Ellis, A.A., Conceptual Overview of the Methods Available to Quantify Compensation. State of the Science Workshop on Wildlife and Offshore Wind Energy. 19 July, 2024

Ellis, A.A., Adams, E., Cook, A.S.C.P., Goodale, M.W., Goyert, H., Gulka, J., Searle, K., Masden, E., Williams, K.A., Croll, D.A. Developing a Process to Fund Offsets for Cumulative Residual Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy to Marine Birds. Pacific Seabird Group Annual Meeting. 22 February, 2024

Ellis, A.A. Framework for Assessing and Mitigating the Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy Development on Marine Birds. Western Society of Naturalists Annual Meeting. 12 November 2023.

Ellis, A.A. Panelist: What does Net Positive Impact on Biodiversity (NPI) in the Ocean Mean as it Relates to the Mitigation Hierarchy for Offshore Wind – Science Perspectives. Roger Williams University Marine Law Symposium: Can Offshore Wind Development Have a Net Positive Impact on Biodiversity? Regulatory and Scientific Perspectives and Considerations. 20 April 2023.

Ellis, A.A., Leirness, J.B., Cook, A.S.C.P., Kelsey, E.C., Zilliacus, K.M., Ballance, L., Keitt, B.S., Holmes, N., Lyons, D.E., Rockwood, R.C., Shaffer, S., Suryan, R., Croll, D.A. Offsetting to Achieve Net Positive Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy to Seabirds: Pacific Case Studies. Pacific Seabird Group Annual Meeting. 15 February 2023.

Ellis, A.A., Croll, D.A., Tershy, B. Considerations for Effective Compensatory Mitigation Planning for Marine Birds. Wind Wildlife Research Meeting. 17 November 2022.

Ellis, A.A., Croll, D.A., Tershy, B. Considerations for Effective Compensatory Mitigation Planning for Marine Birds. State of the Science Workshop on Wildlife and Offshore Wind Energy. 26 July 2022.

Ellis, A.A., Shannon, P., Forage Fish Abundance in Common Tern Diets, and its Implications for Seabird Populations. American Ornithological Society Annual Meeting. 4 Aug 2017.

Ellis, A.A., Shannon, P., Forage Fish Abundance in Common Tern Diets, and its Implications for Seabird Populations. Pacific Seabird Group Annual Meeting. 24 Feb 2017.

POSTERS

Ellis, A.A., Croll, D.A., Tershy, B. Framework for Assessing and Mitigating the Impacts of Offshore Wind Energy Impacts on Marine Birds. State of the Science Workshop on Wildlife and Offshore Wind Energy. 27 July 2022.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, Santa Cruz

Course Designer & Instructor – Queer Ecologies Spring 2023, 2024, & 2025

- Co-designed and taught an identity-based seminar series for undergraduates and graduate students.

Graduate Teaching Assistant

- Ecology (BIOE 107) Spring 2022
- Ecology (BIOE 107) Winter 2022
- Ecology and Evolution – Active Learning (BIOE 20C AL) Fall 2021

University of Michigan

- Undergraduate Teaching Assistant for Ornithology. Assisted students with labs, led discussion sections and parts of lectures, provided learning resources and support to students. Fall 2016
- Taught ornithology labs for students on bird specimen preparation for museum collections. Fall 2013, 2014

Guest Lectures

University of California, Santa Cruz – Marine Conservation Biology 2023, 2024, 2025

California State University, Monterey Bay – Marine Conservation Biology 2023, 2024

MEDIA COVERAGE

BioScience Talks. *“Coalition-Building for Labor Actions in Life Sciences Departments, with Aspen Ellis”* (2025)

Power at Work. *“Scientists Strike: How Graduate Students Are Fighting for Their Future”* (2025)

BBC. *“Which is worse for wildlife – wind farms or oil drilling?”* (2025)

EcoRI. *“Scientists Dig Into Planning to Use Offshore Wind as Vehicle to Repair Ecosystem Damage”* (2023)

UCSC Newscenter. *“Offshore wind farms may harm seabirds, but scientists see potential for net positive impact”* (2022)

SERVICE

Presenter

Scotts Valley High School (2022)

Girl Scout Troop 15015 (2022)

Saginaw Audubon Society (2015)

Capital Area Audubon Society (2014)

Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival (2014)

Washtenaw Audubon Society (2014)

Ohio Young Birders Conference – Keynote (2013)

Panelist

Women in the Environment Future of Offshore Wind panel at the San Francisco Climate Week (2024)

UC Santa Cruz BIOE82 Career Panel (2023)

Younger Lagoon Reserve Intern Grad School Application Panel (2023)

Middlebury Institute of International Studies Center for the Blue Economy
(2023)

UC Santa Cruz Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Undergraduate Advising
Graduate School Panel (2022, 2024)

Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science
(2022)

Liaison Monterey Area Research Institution's Network for Education (2022-2023)

Journal Reviewer Marine Biology (x1)

Union Steward UAW4811 Academic Student Employees Union (2021-present)

Docent University of Michigan Museum of Zoology ID Day (2014-2017)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Data entry, organization, and management: Microsoft Access and Excel, live data collection applications including NestStory & Dunkadoo
- Programming: R, Git/Github
- Mapping: ArcGIS, QGIS, R
- Red Cross CPR certified
- Department of the Interior Motorboat Operator Certification Course certified