

# Felix Javier Berrios Ortega

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## EDUCATION

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**Ph.D., Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**  
University of Connecticut  
Advisor: James Bernot

2024 – Present

**B.S., Wildlife Management**  
University of Puerto Rico – Humacao (UPRH)

2019 – 2024  
*Magna Cum Laude*

## RESEARCH SKILLS

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**Data and Software:** R Statistical Software, Insight Maker, Basic ArcGIS, BORIS, ZIMS, ZooMonitor, SPSS, MEGA, 3D Slicer, Dragonfly 3D, Blender

**Wet Lab/Fieldwork:** Infrared spectroscopy, Chromatography (Gas, TLC, Column), Crystallization, Distillation, Flow, Aquatic Invertebrate Care, Dichotomous key identification, PCR

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

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**University of Iowa – REU in Interdisciplinary Evolutionary Sciences (May 2023 – August 2023)**

Mentor: Dr. Maurine Neiman

Project: “Evaluating the Interaction Between Heat Stress Expected Under Climate Change and Nutrient Limitation in a Freshwater Snail”

**Zoo Miami – FIU REU in Conservation Science (May 2022 – August 2022)**

Mentors: Dr. Molly McGuire, Dr. Jennifer Vonk and Taylor Crews

Project: “Human Voice Recognition by Exotic Cats in Human Care”

**University of California Santa Cruz Doris Duke Conservation Scholar’s Field Course (June 2021 – August 2021)**

Final Project: “The Effects of Disturbance on Streambank Plant Communities”

## LEADERSHIP, OUTREACH & SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

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**UNIDE Student Advisory Board (SAB) (April 2022 – Present)**

- Participated in the NSF-funded project UNIDE (Undergraduate Network for Increasing Diversity of Ecologists).
- Participated and conducted meetings to discuss and provide feedback for the UNIDE Steering Committee.
- Worked with the UNIDE Steering Committee to improve the recruitment and retention of underrepresented students in ecological and environmental sciences.
- Managed the SAB’s social media accounts, virtual discord community and the UNIDE website.

**SACNAS UPRH Chapter Founding President (December 2020 – May 2024)**

- Started a SACNAS chapter in UPRH with a team of students.
- Hosted virtual personal and professional development activities for all the university community during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Managed a team of fellow students to efficiently plan and execute activities.

### **500 Queer Scientists Intern (September 2022 – September 2023)**

- Assisted on the management of the social media platforms for 500 Queer Scientists.
- Managed and curated the profile submission spreadsheets.
- Worked with the organization to achieve our goal of providing role models for LGBTQ identifying scientists.

### **Founder of LGBTQ+ STEM Cast (March 2020 – December 2021)**

<http://anchor.fm/lgbtqstemcast>

- Created a podcast to highlight the diversity in the sciences by providing a platform for LGBTQ+ scientists.
- Interviewed scientists from different STEM fields and edited episodes using garage band.
- Published and promoted episodes via Instagram and Twitter, growing a following of over 9,000 people.

### **Mentor (Summer 2020, Summer 2021)**

PROUD (HHMI Sponsored) Pre-Semester Bootcamp, UPRH

- Mentored a group of 10 incoming freshmen about the transition to university and online courses.
- Guided students on their scheduling choices and oriented them on maintaining a work-life balance.

## **FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS**

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**2025** University of Connecticut EEB Department Summer Fellowship - \$2,000

**2024** Cientifico Latino Graduate Student Engagement and Community Scholarship - \$1,250

**2024** NSF Graduate Research Fellowship (\$111,000 + tuitions and fees)

**2023** Cientifico Latino Graduate Student Mentorship Initiative, *Selected Participant*

**2023** Purdue University Graduate Diversity Visitation Program

**2023** University of Puerto Rico, “Fondo Dotal Scholarship” - \$1,300

**2023** SEEDS Participation Award – National Field Trip

**2022** Princeton University EEB Scholar

**2022** SACNAS Chapter Officer Leadership October Retreat Participation Award

**2022** Envision EEB at Michigan State Participation Award

**2022** University of Puerto Rico, “Fondo Dotal Scholarship” - \$1,000

**2022** ESA Regional Fieldtrip Participation Award

**2022** USDA Puerto Rico Natural Resources Career Tracks (PRNCT)

**2021** Reclaiming STEM Participation Award

**2021** SACNAS Conference Registration Scholarship

**2021** SEEDS Participation Award – ESA Conference

**2021** University of California Santa Cruz Doris Duke Conservation Scholar

**2020** Undergraduate Research Program of the Puerto Rico Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (PR-LSAMP)

**2020** University of Puerto Rico, “Fondo Dotal Scholarship” - \$1,650

**2020** University of Puerto Rico, “PSES Merit Scholarship” - \$850

**2020** NSPN (National Science Policy Network) Personal Development Grant - \$200

## **Presentations**

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**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, Boxshall, G.A., & Bernot, J.P (2026, February 21). Towards clarity in caligids: Imaging and an interactive key for *Lepeophtheirus*. 35<sup>th</sup> EEB Graduate Student Symposium, University of Connecticut. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.** & Umanzor, A. (2025, September 27). Crafting a Competitive Graduate School Application: Telling Your Story with Impact. Pathways to PhD Conference. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, Boxshall, G.A., & Bernot, J.P (2025, August 3). Building tools for copepod systematics: Developing an interactive identification key for Lepeophtheirus. 5th International Workshop on Copepoda. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, Boxshall, G.A., & Bernot, J.P (2025, July 9). Towards clarity in caligids: Imaging and an interactive key for Lepeophtheirus. American Society of Parasitologists Annual Meeting. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.** (2024, August 8). Lessons Learned from Programs Focused on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) in Ecology. Ecological Society of America Annual Conference. Inspire Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J., UNIDE Student Advisory Board** (2024, August 5). Minoritized Student Perspectives on What Support Looks Like in Ecology: A Reassessment of Recruitment and Retention. Ecological Society of America Annual Conference. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J., UNIDE Student Advisory Board** (2023, August 7). Student Perspective on the Relationship Between Ecology Curriculum and Retention of Minoritized Students in Ecology Majors. Ecological Society of America Annual Conference. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, Najev, B., & Neiman, M. (2023, July 26). Evaluating the Interaction Between Heat Stress Expected Under Climate Change and Nutrient Limitation in a Freshwater Snail. Summer Undergraduate Research Conference, University of Iowa. Poster Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J., UNIDE Student Advisory Board** (2023, March 25). Making ecology more inclusive: Student Perspectives. Life Discovery Conference. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, McGuire, M., Crews, T., & Vonk, J. (2022, October 28). Human Voice Recognition by Exotic Cats in Human Care. National Diversity in STEM SACNAS Conference. Poster Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, McGuire, M., Crews, T., & Vonk, J. (2022, October 7). Human Voice Recognition by Exotic Cats in Human Care. Princeton University EEB Scholars Poster Session. Poster Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.**, McGuire, M., Crews, T., & Vonk, J. (2022, July 29). Human Voice Recognition by Exotic Cats in Human Care. Zoo Miami Research Experience for Undergraduates Symposium. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.** (2021, August 2). The Effects of Disturbance on Streambank Plant Communities. 6th Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program Annual Research Symposium. Oral Presentation.

**Berrios Ortega, F. J.** (2021, March 24). Using the Forest Inventory and Analysis Database to Analyze and Compare *Spathodea campanulata* and *Guarea guidonea*. 39th Puerto Rico Interdisciplinary Scientific Meeting (PRISM). Virtual Oral Presentation.

## **WORKSHOPS**

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**August 2025** – 5<sup>th</sup> International Workshop on Copepoda at Centre for Marine & Coastal Studies in Malaysia

**July 2022** – Science Coding Immersion Program for BIPoc students in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at San Francisco State University

## **Teaching**

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BIOL1108 – Principles of Biology II (Teaching Assistant) – Fall 2025, Spring 2026

## **References**

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### **Dr. James Bernot**

Assistant Professor – University of Connecticut

[James.bernot@uconn.edu](mailto:James.bernot@uconn.edu)

### **Dr. Denny Fernandez Del Viso**

Professor – University of Puerto Rico – Humacao

[Gamezdenny.fernandez@upr.edu](mailto:Gamezdenny.fernandez@upr.edu)

### **Dr. Erika Zavaleta**

Professor – University of California Santa Cruz

[zavaleta@ucsc.edu](mailto:zavaleta@ucsc.edu)