ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY

SEMINAR SERIES

Date: Fri., May 2nd
Time: 16:00 (UTC+8)
Venue: 3N01 + Zoom

Genomes, Ghosts, and Conservation:

Unraveling the Story of the Spix's Macaw and the Hidden Potential of Museum Specimens

The Spix's Macaw, once declared extinct in the wild, represents a symbol of biodiversity loss and a beacon of hope for conservation genomics. In this talk, we explore the population genomics of this iconic species, uncovering insights into its historical diversity, genetic bottlenecks, and the implications for its ongoing reintroduction efforts. Complementing this case study, we highlight the untapped potential of museum collections—genetic "ghosts" of the past—as powerful resources for conservation. By integrating ancient DNA techniques and modern sequencing technologies, we demonstrate how museum specimens can inform species recovery, reveal lost diversity, and guide future conservation strategies. Together, these stories underscore the transformative role of genomics in bringing species back from the brink.

Taylor Hains

Born and raised in Southern California, Taylor has a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Biology from Columbia University with a thesis on hybridization of scarlet macaw (Ara macao) subspecies in a captive population in Costa Rica. He worked at the American Museum of Natural History for this project. He completed a Master of Science in Environmental Science & Policy at Johns Hopkins University in 2021, with a thesis on genomic management of Blue-headed macaws (Primolius couloni). He is now pursuing his doctoral degree at the University of Chicago and the Field Museum studying chromosome evolution and conservation genomics in parrots.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

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