American Museum of Natural History

Center for Biodiversity and Conservation

View of an open spot in the Guam rainforest
Photo: Robin Lardon / Adobe Stock

Progress Update Spring 2026

American Museum of Natural History

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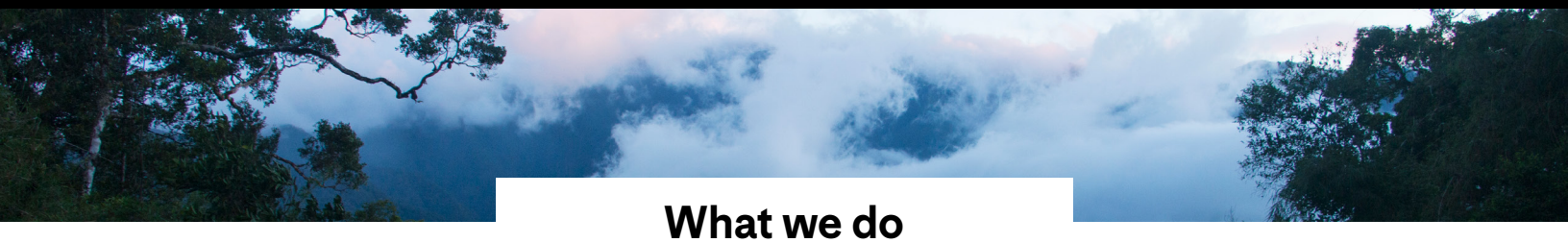
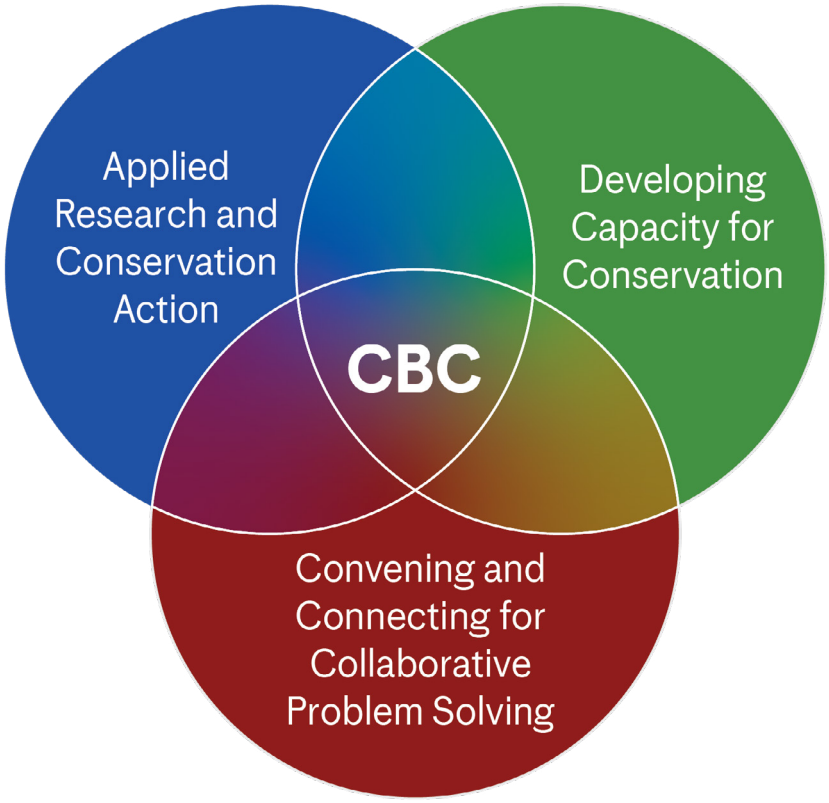


What we do

For over 30 years, the CBC has been transforming knowledge into conservation action to sustain life on Earth. The work of conservation is both scientific and social, so we approach it by **connecting different strands of knowledge in our research**, **connecting people to knowledge**, and **connecting people to each other**.



Both longstanding and new projects are helping us deepen synergies with other scientific work at the Museum, support decision-making under climate change, and contribute to local and regional biodiversity and climate resilience. We are pleased to share highlights from the winter and spring 2026 seasons through this progress report.

The Year in Numbers

20	Publications
	19 Peer-reviewed
	18 Open access
	7 With local partners
	6 With students, interns, mentees
10	Presentations at professional meetings
21	Invited talks
26	Contributions to the Museum's programs
4	Popular articles, media appearances or coverage
9	Funding proposals submitted
17	Interns, mentees, and trainees per semester
3	New or updated open access software tools
1,200	Number of registrants on CBC webinars

Appointments, Awards, and News

Dr. Mary Blair was invited to join the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's Species Survival Commission Primate Specialist Group. More specifically, Dr. Blair is joining a new Special Section on Asian and African Nocturnal Prosimians that is working on a global action plan for these threatened primates. Dr. Blair was also invited to join the Society for Conservation Biology's working group on Conservation Genetics to contribute expertise on museomics and collaborative partnerships.

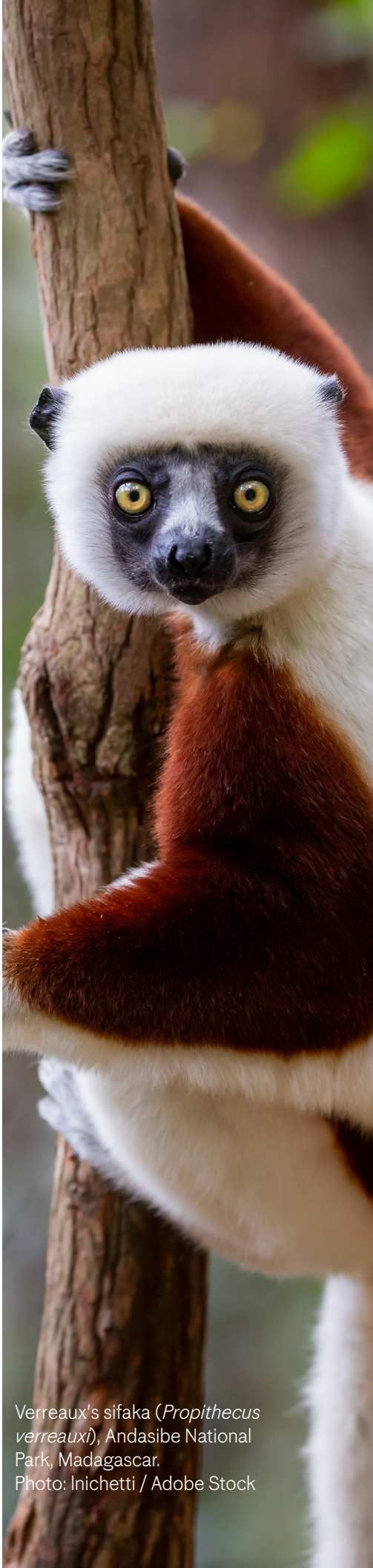
Dr. Nigel Anderson joined the CBC as Jaffe Postdoctoral Fellow in early May and will be leading research on sensory pollution impacts on bats, birds, and insects with Dr. Jesse Barber, Jaffe Chief Conservation Scientist and Curator of Conservation Science. An additional postdoctoral fellow, Dr. Soshi Yoshida, has joined Dr. Barber's lab and will be based in the Invertebrate Zoology Division and the Museum's Southwestern Research Station in the Chiricahua mountains of southern Arizona, leading new research on the impacts of light pollution on bat and moth interactions.

Dr. Ann Marie Gawel, Eleanor J. Sterling Postdoctoral Fellow, has accepted a faculty position starting this fall at Wartburg College, Iowa. In addition to teaching and continuing her research on the cultural value of forests, Dr. Gawel plans to start a new field course based in Micronesia for students from both the United States and Micronesia to foster student engagement, exchange, and conservation research in the region.

This Spring, seven scientists from the Museum were appointed as CBC Affiliated Scientists. The new role was created to encourage collaboration across departments and divisions on joint conservation projects. They occupy a variety of roles and units within the Museum:

- Dr. Yael Afriat, Lerner-Gray & Kalbfleisch Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Division of Invertebrate Zoology
- Dr. Yara Alshwairikh, Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Herpetology
- Dr. Melina Giakoumis, Associate Director, Institute for Comparative Genomics
- Dr. Christopher Raxworthy, Curator, Department of Herpetology
- Dr. Angelo Soto-Centeno, Assistant Curator, Department of Mammalogy
- Dr. Ryan Thoni, Curatorial Associate, Department of Ichthyology
- Dr. Mark Weckel, Director, Youth Initiatives, Education Department

We are developing new collaborations with these colleagues—ranging from new temporary exhibitions that highlight the critical role of public lands in the United States to new field research in Madagascar, Saudi Arabia, and New York City.



Verreaux's sifaka (*Propithecus verreauxi*), Andasibe National Park, Madagascar.
Photo: Inichetti / Adobe Stock

Research

Our research illuminates ecological relationships and generates valuable evidence for conservation planning and practice.

How can we mitigate the impacts of light and sound pollution on wildlife?

Dr. Barber's research program on how to mitigate the impacts of light and noise pollution on wildlife continues to grow through partnerships in several U.S. National Parks and Forests.

In January, Dr. Barber and colleagues at the U.S. Forest Service in Colorado, Montana and Wyoming, Colorado State University, and University of Montana published a study in *Biological Conservation* on how increased recreation exposure modulates fear of humans in wildlife at Bridger-Teton National Forest. They deployed an experimental noise playback system designed to discern whether recreation noise alone or various characteristics of the recreationists (e.g., type, group sizes) influenced mammal behavior and space use. By leveraging anonymized human mobility data from cellular phones used in the study area, Dr. Barber's team modeled the probability of wildlife fleeing after different rates of human visitation. They measured wildlife behavior in response to noise playbacks and found that wildlife was less likely to flee when greater numbers of outdoor smartphone users were in the area. This new evidence can inform the design of strategic spatial or temporal zoning of recreation, including densification of new trail systems, to help preserve refugia for sensitive species while sustaining recreation access.

As part of an ongoing collaboration with Pennsylvania State University, University of Vermont, and the National Park Service Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division, Dr. Barber and colleagues have completed data collection on the effects of replacing existing park lighting in three major U.S. National Parks (Great Smoky, Acadia, and Grand Teton National Parks). Dr. Barber and coauthors collected before and after data on the consequences for insects, bats, and people, and the results from this work—now being prepared for publication—will inform efforts to mitigate light pollution in these public spaces to protect biodiversity and enhance visitor experience.

A fisheye lens image of the night sky at a light pollution research site in Grand Teton National Park.

In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, Wilderness Society, and the University of Wyoming, Dr. Barber, CBC Biodiversity Specialist Amanda Sigouin, and Senior Software Developer Pete Ersts are working to understand how transportation noise—in particular, highways and off-highway vehicle use—impacts wildlife. And, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, Dr. Barber is using passive acoustic monitoring to understand if bats are disturbed by prescribed fire regimes in Utah and Idaho.

Finally, data collection is underway for Dr. Barber's research program on the sensory ecology of bat-moth interactions. In partnership with colleagues at the University of Florida, he is quantifying moth communities across the global tropics and recording the ultrasonic anti-bat sounds that they produce. Closer to home, he is analyzing data from the summer field season at the Museum's Southwestern Research Station in Arizona and this summer, will use the improved custom bat facilities to examine how insects' anti-bat defenses are compromised in light and whether this benefits predation of moths by bats. This work will be led by Dr. Soshi Yoshida, who began a postdoctoral fellowship in April funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

How do species introductions affect island ecosystems?

A new publication by Dr. Gawel and colleagues investigates whether invasive brown tree snakes may have indirectly benefitted trees in Guam by reducing rodent seed predators. The invasive brown tree snake is well known for devastating Guam's native bird populations, but it also eats invasive rodents like rats and mice. Since rodents often eat tree seeds, the researchers wondered if having fewer rodents might help native trees survive and reproduce. To test this, they placed seeds from six tree species in forests on Guam, where the snakes are common, and on nearby Saipan, which has no established snake population and many more rats. Surprisingly, they found little difference in how many seeds were eaten on the two islands. Only papaya seeds were removed more often on Saipan. Overall, seed loss was fairly low on both islands, suggesting that rodents may not strongly threaten these tree species. The study therefore found no evidence that the invasive snake is indirectly benefitting native forests by reducing seed-eating rodents. These results can inform tree conservation strategies moving forward.

Mixed agroforest and native forest in Pohnpei, Micronesia. Photo: Ann Marie Gawel

How can conservation be improved and accelerated through Indigenous guardianship and local knowledge?

The CBC supports and advances biocultural approaches to conservation through interdisciplinary research, evidence synthesis, and knowledge exchange. As part of this work, Dr. Blair traveled to the Arctic in January 2026 to advance activities for CBC's NASA-funded project on reindeer herding and resilience in response to global change. Together with project partners the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry as well as the Woodwell Climate Research Center, they hosted a mapping workshop for reindeer herders in Kautokeino/ Guovdageaidnu, Norway, on January 28–30. A total of 19 participants representing different herding communities joined and learned to make maps to support reindeer husbandry, land-use planning, and climate resilience. Herders shared their local experiences of land degradation, snow and ice conditions, and infrastructure impacts in reindeer herding areas to discuss how maps can support dialogue with authorities, planners, and researchers. Dr. Blair also spoke with students in the Reindeer Husbandry undergraduate program at Sami University College and held extended consultations with several local leaders of cooperative reindeer herds to discuss their concerns and priorities for project applications to their work. Dr. Blair visited herds on the tundra to witness what many herders called "the best winter in the past 30 years" with extensive *seaŋáš*, the Sámi word for sugar-like snow. Soft like granulated sugar, this type of snow is easy for the reindeer to dig and move through and prized by herders. We are pleased to report that the project has received additional funding from NASA to expand its scope in the coming years to include knowledge exchange activities with Inupiaq and other Indigenous Alaskan communities who have histories of reindeer herding.

Photo: Hoang Thach/CBC-AMNH

We also continue to build on biocultural research led by our late colleague Dr. Eleanor Sterling and collaborators. This past season, Dr. Ana Porzecanski joined a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars in authoring a short letter, published in the journal *Earth Stewardship*, that articulates the importance of centering Indigenous-led conservation and science and biocultural approaches in higher education.

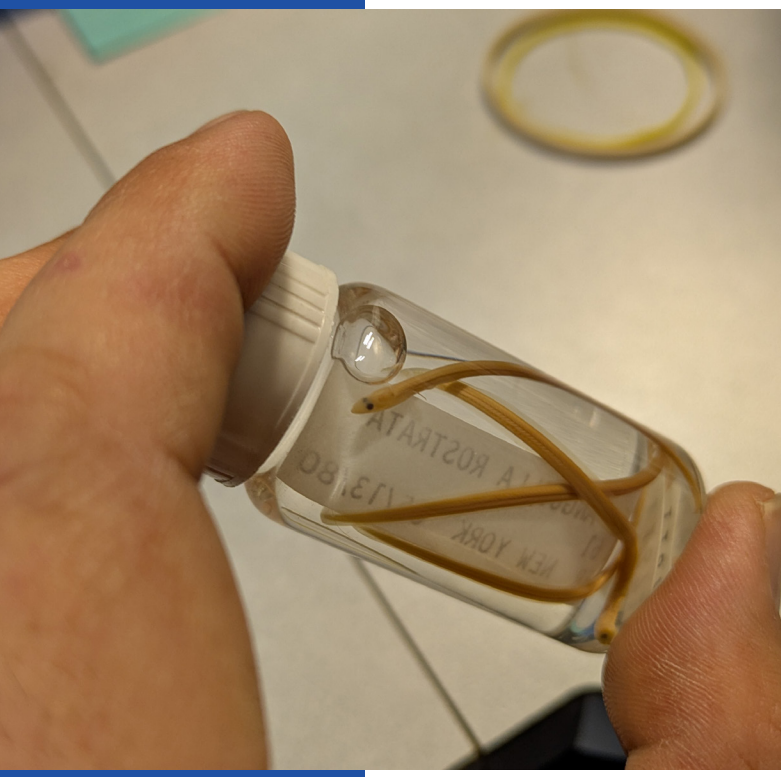
How can museum collections and tools inform conservation strategies today?

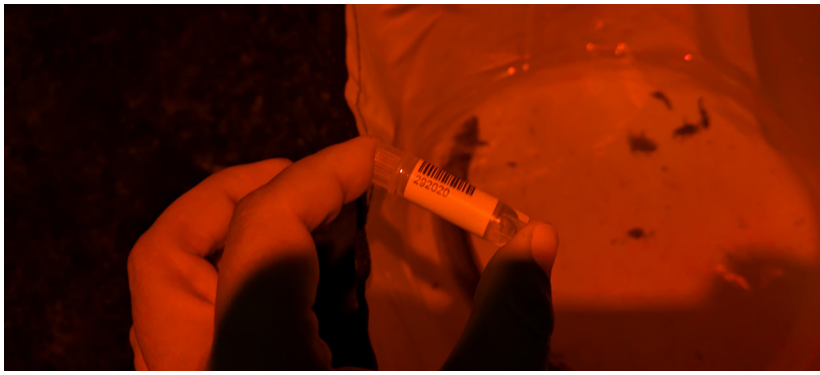
The CBC continues to make important contributions to the growing field of conservation museomics.

In Colombia, Dr. Blair and CBC Biodiversity Informatics Specialist Daniel Lopez are in the final stages of a NASA-funded project with the Colombia Biodiversity Observation Network and Protected Areas System. Along with local partners, they co-organized a symposium for researchers and organizations on "biodiversity information driving transformation," from October 21–24, 2025, in Bogota, Colombia. Both Dr. Blair and Mr. Lopez gave presentations at the conference highlighting CBC software *Wallace* and featuring advances from two NASA-funded projects towards an integrated biodiversity monitoring framework for the Colombia Protected Areas System.

Our NASA-funded partners in Colombia—the Alexander von Humboldt Institute and Colombia National Natural Parks System—have created a free, open-source tool that helps biodiversity data integrate more seamlessly across Colombia's national databases. The tool automatically converts species and ecosystem data into the widely used Darwin Core format, making it easier to share, combine, and use information across organizations. Built as a new plugin for the open-access mapping software *QGIS*, the tool streamlines how biodiversity monitoring data are managed across institutions supporting Colombia's National Parks system. It could also help improve biodiversity monitoring efforts in many other countries.

Closer to home in New York City, Dr. Adam Jadhav, Rizavi Innovation in Conservation Fellow, has launched local research to study fluctuations in American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) populations over time, including shifts in genetic diversity and sociocultural significance, while also generating data that directly address practical questions related to local biodiversity loss raised by managers at the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks). The study integrates contemporary field research and specimen collection with genomics, ecotoxicology, environmental DNA, critical cartography, and social and environmental history. Access to historical specimens is essential to enable comparisons with present-day populations and to establish historical baselines, and their study will be possible thanks to the specimens held in the Museum's Ichthyology collections. In addition, Dr. Jadhav has successfully collected close to 30 eel specimens from across New York State, identified relevant historical collections holdings, and successfully extracted DNA from a selection of these specimens. Genomic analyses are underway, and additional plans for environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys are being developed.





This work is part of the Museum's Climate Impact Initiative. As part of this initiative, Dr. Porzecanski and other CBC researchers are leading several additional small yet influential local research projects with local partners. These have allowed us to generate new evidence for community stewards of the Bronx River to inform adaptation to potentially increased rainfall, and to improve analysis pipelines for monitoring data from the Bronx River fishway at the 182nd Street dam, leading NYC Parks to change monitoring methods at the Bronx River fishway in the 2026 season. In addition, to answer management questions raised by NYC Parks staff, CBC Assistant Director for Capacity Development Dr. Suzanne Macey and Dr. Porzecanski are leading new research to study the impacts of predatory fish on American eel translocations in the Bronx River. Finally, our work is developing machine learning tools to reduce the amount of effort NYC Parks staff will dedicate to counting the fish that use the Bronx River fishway.

Other local CBC research seeks to collect key evidence on small-scale fishing in New York City to make it safer and more accessible. Through our ongoing social science research project, made possible thanks to support from the Hudson River Foundation, we are observing and collecting data in locations in all five boroughs. The research team, led by Dr. Jadhav and including Dr. Porzecanski, CBC Visiting Scientist Dr. Jesse Rodenbiker (Assistant Professor of Geography, Rutgers University), and two field assistants. The team has already spent over 200 person hours leading ethnographic observations and interviews at New York City's piers and other fishing locations. Initial observations have confirmed that the city's fishers are a diverse group with varied motivations and backgrounds, employing multiple fishing methods, and targeting a variety of fish and crustacean species. The research team is leading consultations and meetings with other scholars, managers, officials, civil society groups, and fishers, and has begun a new summer field season across the city.

At nearby Black Rock Forest, research done in previous years by Dr. Macey and her undergraduate mentees has been used to inform a new freshwater turtle population assessment in April 2026. During the spring, Dr. Macey and other CBC staff joined Black Rock Forest researchers to provide assistance and technical guidance over an intensive week of surveying and trapping in pond and wetland complexes in the Forest. Results from this assessment will not only expand the knowledge about turtle populations within Black Rock Forest but also provide insight for management strategies related to infrastructure improvements.

Eastern painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*).
Photo: J. Wall, Black Rock Forest

Dr. Macey and Ms. Sigouin setting up a turtle trap in Black Rock Forest.

Our research and tools continue to generate valuable evidence for conservation action.

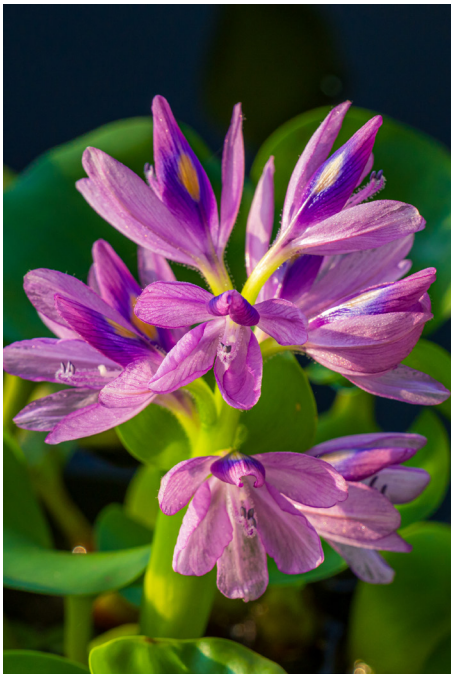
In response to previous CBC research on Southeast Asian primates, China has now followed Vietnam to update their national protected species list to include and prioritize the new pygmy loris species that was described by Dr. Blair and partners in Vietnam in 2023 using museum specimens. Informed by past CBC research, China has also created a mitochondrial genome reference database of state key protected wild mammals.

CBC software tools are used daily to support research and education and have been cited in thousands of peer-reviewed articles as well as government reports.

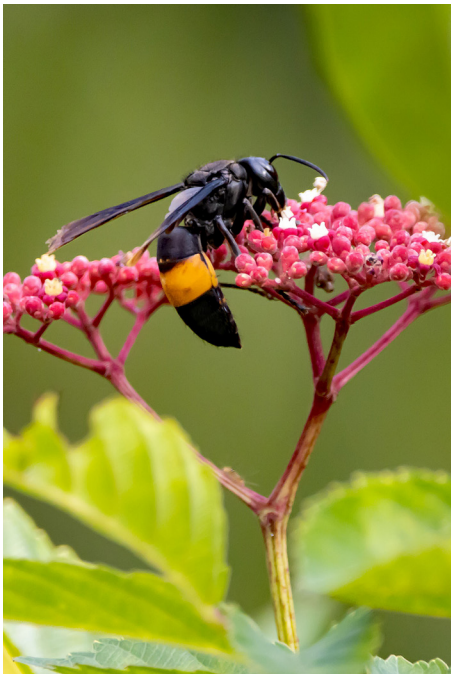
Maxent, the CBC-hosted software for modeling species niches and distributions, is used worldwide and has now been cited nearly 27,000 times. Since Fall 2025, *Maxent* has been used as a part of BON in a Box, a platform for biodiversity monitoring and indicator calculation intended to help countries generate their reports towards the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). While this United Nations framework sets ambitious targets for halting and reversing biodiversity loss, calculating indicators to track progress remains a major challenge for countries and organizations. BON in a Box addresses this challenge by providing an open, transparent, and community-driven platform that transforms raw biodiversity data into Essential Biodiversity Variables and policy-relevant indicators through reproducible analysis pipelines such as *Maxent*.

Maxent has also been used to model the risk of invasive species and to inform pest management and risks to agricultural systems, including from the expansion of invasive plants that present risks to agricultural systems, such as goose grass, giant reed, and water hyacinth; organisms such as hornets; and pathogens causing zoonotic diseases. In addition to assessing risk, *Maxent* has also been used to inform proactive conservation planning for the Golden Gate Biosphere reserve; to predict habitat for species such as the burrowing crayfish and the jungle cat; to assess human-leopard conflict hotspots in Nepal; and analyze the redistribution of global cold-water coral biodiversity induced by climate change. *Maxent* is also a part of the new AquaX, an enhanced and revised AquaMaps framework to model marine species distributions and biodiversity.

Giant reed (*Arundo donax*)
Photo: ScubaDiver/Adobe Stock



Water Hyacinth (*Pontederia crassipes*)
Photo: Anshuman/Adobe Stock



Greater Banded Hornet (*Vespa tropica*)
Photo: ChrWeiss/Adobe Stock

Beyond conservation, *Maxent* has been combined with Ancient DNA to demonstrate pre-Inca trans-Andean parrot trade for the first time, and to map dynamic landslide susceptibility using new remote sensing data from Synthetic Aperture Radar.

Flock of macaws flying in Manu National Park, Peru.
Photo: Miguel/Adobe Stock

Another CBC software tool, the species distribution modeling software *Wallace* is increasing in both downloads and use; it has been downloaded more than 139,000 times, and more than 50,000 times in the last year alone. *Wallace* is especially useful for teaching and training others to use best practices in the modeling of species distributions and was recently used by the Museum's Education Department in the Science Research Mentoring Program to successfully teach machine learning and AI concepts to high school students.

CBC researchers have also published work to advance tools for evidence synthesis. CBC Biodiversity Specialists Amanda Sigouin and Erin Betley, Dr. Porzecanski, and a diverse group of co-authors from academia and government agencies published an article on how to strengthen Rapid Evidence Assessments as a method in conservation in the journal *Conservation Letters*. These assessments of evidence aim to support decision-making on shorter time scales than other types of evidence assessments. The article provides an updated and more comprehensive definition of Rapid Evidence Assessments addressing the importance of rigor, multiple sources of evidence, and the need for transparency around trade-offs and risks—all important for consistency and confidence in the approach.

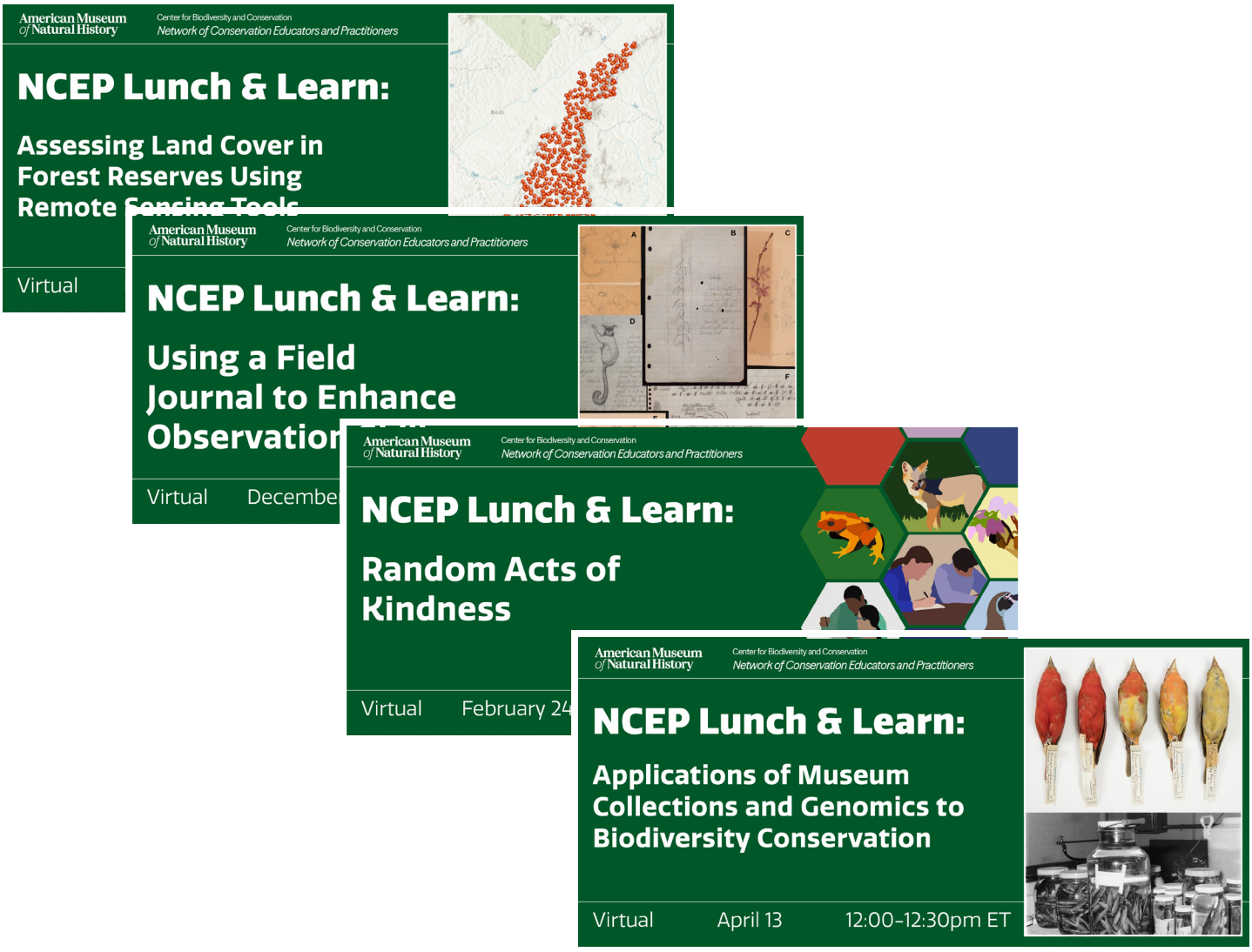
Finally, several CBC publications on biocultural conservation and engaging with Indigenous communities are cited in the new online repository, Conservation Monitoring Effectiveness Techniques (COMET), a collaborative learning project of the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP) with support from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

Capacity Development

The CBC creates resources and spaces to train and empower conservationists everywhere.

In everything we do, we continue to prioritize open access learning resources and the creation of environments where all academics, students, professionals, and community members can contribute solutions to urgent conservation problems.

This season, the Network of Conservation Educators and Practitioners (NCEP) hosted four webinars in our "Lunch & Learn" series highlighting articles published in the 14th volume of the CBC's open access ejournal *Lessons in Conservation*. These interactive presentations drew a cumulative audience of over 500 registrants and 40 new educator registrations to NCEP's digital resource collection. The topics ranged from incorporating nature journaling and acts of kindness into curricula, to guiding students and practitioners on the design of conservation genomics projects using museum collections and learning tools used in remote sensing studies.



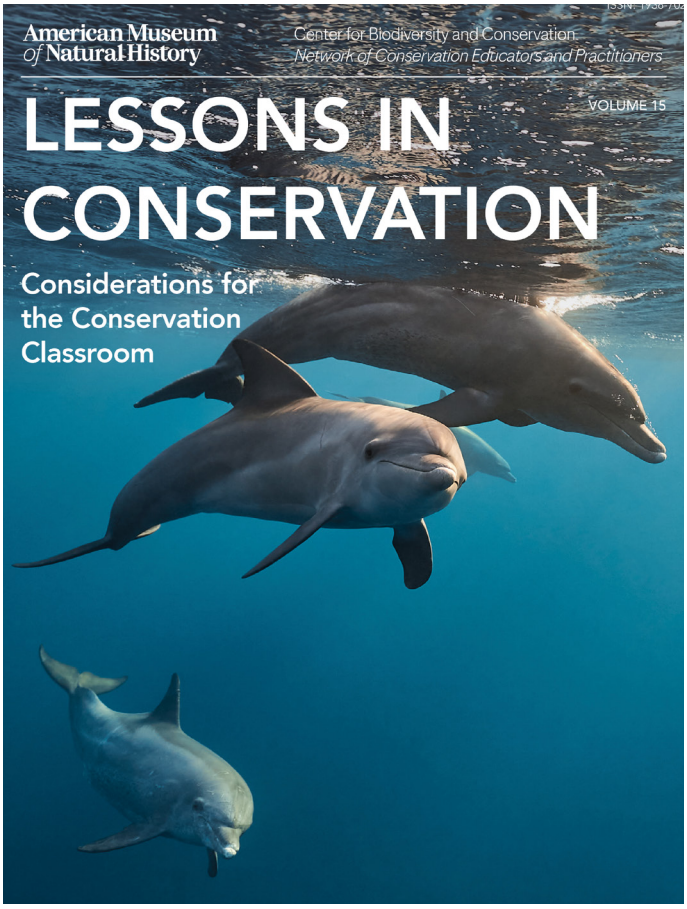


Photo: zimagine/Adobe Stock

Meanwhile, NCEP is in the final production stages of the 15th volume of *Lessons in Conservation*, themed "Considerations for the Conservation Classroom." Among others, this volume will include author perspective pieces and educational materials on the use of drawing and systems thinking skills to further understanding of complex systems; an exercise using acoustic monitoring for dolphin conservation in Panama; and the issue closes with an exercise and accompanying perspective piece on the importance of fostering and promoting allyship in the conservation field. CBC staff manage the editorial and peer-review process for these resources, which are highly valued by conservation educators, as shown by reviewer comments.

"It was especially exciting to see systems thinking, visual literacy, and collaborative learning approaches being brought together in such a timely and meaningful way.... I can see this becoming a very strong teaching resource. Please extend my appreciation to the broader team for the care and creativity reflected in the work."

- *Lessons in Conservation* Peer Reviewer.

CBC is also advising on the new Museum project "Tiny Nature," led by Dr. Mark Weckel, Director of Youth Initiatives in the Education Department and CBC Affiliated Scientist. This project will connect the Gilder Center's Insectarium with community-based biodiversity action. The project is piloting approaches to engage families to learn about native bee ecology and urban pollinators, plant native host plants in local street tree beds and document neighborhood biodiversity using *iNaturalist*, and return to the Museum to see their observations reflected in our exhibition spaces. This work was possible thanks to collaboration with NYC Parks and a seed grant from the Association of Science and Technology Centers. Dr. Macey is contributing her ecology expertise as an advisor.

Blue Wood Aster (*Symphyotrichum cordifolium*), one of the native species planted in the "Tiny Nature" project.

Photo: Konstantin/Adobe Stock

Convening and Connecting

The CBC catalyzes connections across actors working on biodiversity conservation and climate resilience.

Planning for the 17th Student Conference on Conservation Science-New York is underway, and over 220 applications have been received. The conference will be held October 14-16, 2026 and will feature Dr. Barber as keynote speaker.

In early March, we partnered with the Society of Conservation Biology North America to host a Community Exchange for conservation and climate change educators. The event convened over 35 educators from across the world and featured short presentations from educators in Brazil and at the Museum. Interactive group work allowed participants to exchange experiences and best practices for how to include students' voices in climate change education settings.

As part of the Museum-wide Climate Impact Initiative, Dr. Porzecanski was part of the team that organized and led a second convening in April 2026 to bring together close to 60 local partners working on climate impact, through education, research, advocacy and public engagement. Participants included educators, community organizations, local agencies, and scientists based in NYC, and the event provided a platform to learn about ongoing and new collaborations across this nascent network and concrete ways to support each other's work. Through an activity that matched participants' "needs" with "offers," participants reported feeling supported by this work. They remarked that "offering things to each other makes resources feel abundant rather than scarce" and that while "a lot of our needs were very small [they would] would make a big difference if met." The Museum is exploring ways to continue to support this network of NYC practitioners going forward.

Photo: Alvaro Keding/AMNH

Later in the spring, CBC staff represented the Museum at the 25th meeting of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (April 20–May 1, 2026). Drs. Blair, Gawel, Porzecanski, and Ms. Sigouin and Betley attended selected sessions to learn about global policy developments, support research partners and colleagues, and contribute expertise in plenary sessions and side events. In her remarks at a session on territories and mobility in light of International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, Dr. Blair emphasized the resilience of reindeer herding as a semi-nomadic form of Indigenous pastoralism and highlighted her NASA-funded project in partnership with the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry. Other Forum sessions focused on Indigenous Peoples' health and well-being, food systems, rights and sovereignty, language revitalization, nomadic pastoralist ways of life, and new financing mechanisms for forest conservation.

Voices from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues:

"Indigenous Peoples generate the truest form of wealth."
'Aulani Wilhelm
Nia Tero

"Our health is measured by our knowledge systems, our relationships to land, water, and our ancestors. Language is health. It is emotional and spiritual health. Humor, jokes, and laughter are valuable healing as well. Laughter is medicine."
Nacole Walker
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

"Our land is being used to solve much of the world's key problems while we are being pushed off of our land."
Mali Ole Kaunga
Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation

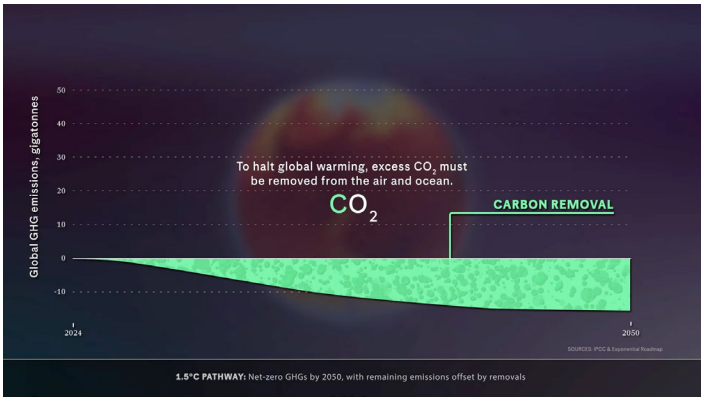
Exhibitions and Outreach

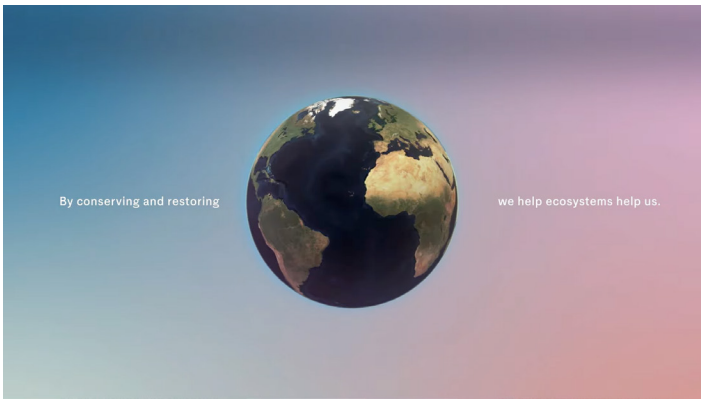
Catch the CBC online or onsite!

During Fall 2025, CBC researchers helped develop conservation stories featured in the final section of the Museum's current temporary exhibition, *Impact: The End of the Age of Dinosaurs*. Presented as short videos, these stories cover efforts to conserve bats, penguins, trout, and bog turtles, including the work by Dr. Macey on this species. Shared with a high volume of visitors, this section of the exhibit brings attention to important successes while highlighting the need for continued conservation efforts and focus to protect biodiversity and curb climate change.

Photo: Daniel Kim/© AMNH

Dr. Porzecanski and CBC Capacity Development Specialist and Visual Creative Nadav Gazit, along with Dr. Nathalie Goodkin (Curator, Earth and Planetary Sciences) contributed expertise to the most recent Earth Day educational video produced by the Museum's Science Visualization team. Titled "Carbon Catchers" the video uses examples, and some humor, to illustrate how animals and plants work together to store carbon and stabilize our climate.

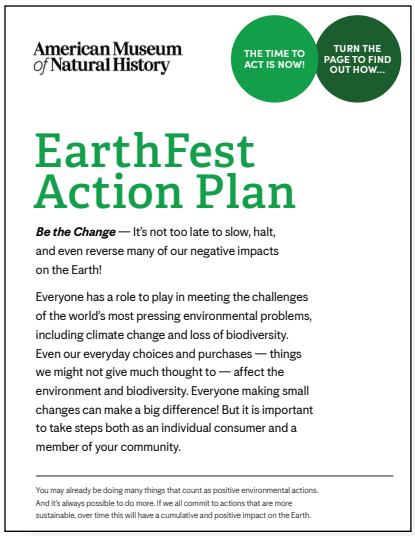




In January, Dr. Blair and NASA project co-leader Anders Oskal (Director of the International Centre for Reindeer Husbandry and Secretary General of the World Reindeer Herders) spoke at a Museum's SciCafe program entitled "Reindeer and Resilience." The sold-out SciCafe lecture drew a highly engaged audience to the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Hall of the Universe. Dr. Blair and Mr. Oskal shared a deeply personal and insightful discussion about the impacts of climate change on Sámi reindeer herding communities in the Arctic, highlighting how Indigenous Sámi herders are stewarding these vulnerable environments and adapting to unprecedented environmental shifts—from snowpack changes that block reindeer grazing to wind energy development to tourism infrastructure that disrupts traditional migration routes. Rather than positioning modern technology against ancient knowledge, the presentation emphasized the new NASA project and the great potential of partnerships between Indigenous expertise and scientific tools, such as using satellite data to monitor rain-on-snow events and pasture degradation in near-real-time. The discussion offered a powerful reminder of the resilience of Sámi communities and the importance of blending traditional ecological knowledge with cutting-edge science to navigate climate challenges. Dr. Blair was also an invited panelist at the Museum's Annual Spring Lunch event, on the theme of "Arctic Transformations: Resilience, Partnership, and Lessons from a Warming World."

Dr. Blair and NASA project co-leader Anders Oskal.
Photos: Daniel Kim/© AMNH

Most recently, the CBC collaborated with Exhibitions to develop interactive visitor stations during the Museum's EarthFest program on April 18, 2026. This included an area called "Be the Change" that allowed visitors to develop their own Earth Day Action Plans and consider how they are best positioned to contribute to work that responds to climate change and biodiversity loss.



American Museum of Natural History

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW!

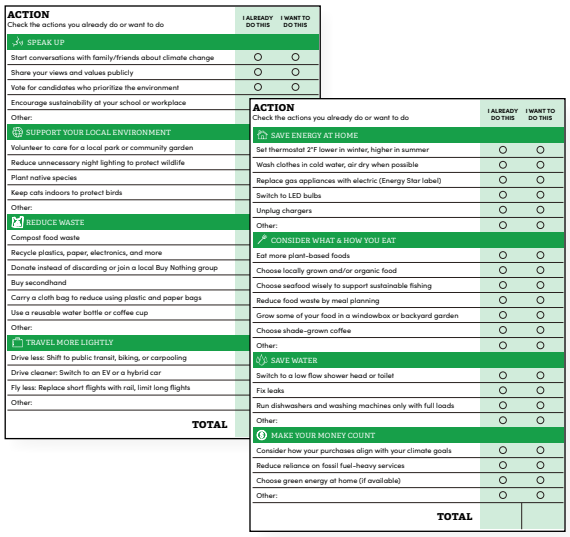
TURN THE PAGE TO FIND OUT HOW...

EarthFest Action Plan

Be the Change — It's not too late to slow, halt, and even reverse many of our negative impacts on the Earth!

Everyone has a role to play in meeting the challenges of the world's most pressing environmental problems, including climate change and loss of biodiversity. Even our everyday choices and purchases — things we might not give much thought to — affect the environment and biodiversity. Everyone making small changes can make a big difference! But it is important to take steps both as an individual consumer and a member of your community.

You may already be doing many things that count as positive environmental actions. And it's always possible to do more. If we all commit to actions that are more sustainable, over time this will have a cumulative and positive impact on the Earth.



ACTION Check the actions you already do or want to do	I ALREADY DO THIS	I WANT TO DO THIS
SPEAK UP		
Start conversations with family/friends about climate change	○	○
Share your views and values publicly	○	○
Vote for candidates who prioritize the environment	○	○
Encourage sustainability at your school or workplace		
Other:		
SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT		
Volunteer to care for a local park or community garden		
Reduce unnecessary night lighting to protect wildlife		
Plant native species		
Keep cats indoors to protect birds		
Other:		
REDUCE WASTE		
Compost food waste		
Recycle plastics, paper, electronics, and more		
Donate instead of discarding or join a local Buy Nothing group		
Buy secondhand		
Carry a cloth bag to reduce using plastic and paper bags		
Use a reusable water bottle or coffee cup		
Other:		
TRAVEL MORE LIGHTLY		
Drive less: Shift to public transit, biking, or carpooling		
Drive cleaner: Switch to an EV or a hybrid car		
Fly less: Replace short flights with rail, limit long flights		
Other:		
TOTAL		

ACTION Check the actions you already do or want to do	I ALREADY DO THIS	I WANT TO DO THIS
SAVE ENERGY AT HOME		
Set thermostat 2°F lower in winter, higher in summer	○	○
Wash clothes in cold water, air dry when possible	○	○
Replace gas appliances with electric (Energy Star label)	○	○
Switch to LED bulbs	○	○
Unplug chargers	○	○
Other:	○	○
CONSIDER WHAT & HOW YOU EAT		
Eat more plant-based foods	○	○
Choose locally grown and/or organic food	○	○
Choose seafood wisely to support sustainable fishing	○	○
Reduce food waste by meal planning	○	○
Grow some of your food in a windowbox or backyard garden	○	○
Choose shade-grown coffee	○	○
Other:	○	○
SAVE WATER		
Switch to a low flow shower head or toilet	○	○
Fix leaks	○	○
Run dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads	○	○
Other:	○	○
MAKE YOUR MONEY COUNT		
Consider how your purchases align with your climate goals	○	○
Reduce reliance on fossil fuel-heavy services	○	○
Choose green energy at home (if available)	○	○
Other:	○	○
TOTAL		

In addition, Dr. Jadhav and Dr. Porzecanski presented research on eels through an information table and talk. Dr. Jadhav and a team of high-school students from the Museum's Science Research Mentoring Program developed a simple game for visitors involving a "hunt" for facts about eels across Museum dioramas. These experimental activations illustrate the potential of collaboration across science, education, and public engagement.

Photos: Daniel Kim/© AMNH

We continue to share our work through social media, you can find us on LinkedIn and Facebook!

Spring 2026

Publications

Anderson, J.F., Ortiz, H.D., **Barber, J.R.** (in press, 05/2026 online early). Waterfall infrasound. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America. Authorea Preprints. https://doi.org/10.22541/au.176557931.12319292/v1

Bratman, E., **Jadhav, A.**, Martin, J.V., Henderson, J., Lipschutz, R.D. (2026). The global environmental politics of resistance, revisited. Global Environmental Politics, 26(1), 242-254. https://doi.org/10.1162/GLEP.a.719

Carver, R., **Jadhav, A.** (2025). The Blue Economy. In Hope, J., Apostolopoulou, E., Ariadne Collins, Y. (Eds.), The New Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology, pp. 341-351. Routledge.

Ditmer, M.A., et al. **(including Barber, J.R.)** (2026) The landscape of no worries? Increased recreation exposure decreases the landscape of human fear in wildlife. Biological Conservation 315, 111718. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2026.111718

Ersts, P.J., Jimenez-Mendez, O. (2026). Interactive Maps. How do you add a slippy map to a module?. OCELOTS, QUBES Educational Resources. doi:10.25334/6KVG-YP77

Saavedra, M.F., et al. **(including Porzecanski, A.L.)** (2026). On Tap, Not on Top: An urgent call for academia to support Indigenous science and equitable conservation. Earth Stewardship 3(2): e70038. https://doi.org/10.1002/eas2.70038

Moore, K.S., Rabinowitz, G., Ali, S., **Weckel, M.***, Lee, I., Gupta, P., Chaffee, R. 2026. Design of a science integrated secondary school AI literacy curriculum: A youth & AI expert guided design-based research approach. Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence (10): 100552. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2026.100552

Garcia Castro, L.S., et al. **(including López-Lozano, D.)** (2025). Modelos de distribución de peces e invertebrados marinos (Ficha 109). In N. Norden Medina (Ed.), Biodiversidad: Caribe. Estado y Tendencias de la Biodiversidad Continental de Colombia (1st ed.). Instituto de Investigación de Recursos Biológicos Alexander von Humboldt. https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11761/37077

Webb, J.A., et al. **(including Betley, E., Porzecanski, A.L., Sigouin, A.)** (2026). A standardized definition of rapid evidence asessment for environmental applications. Conservation Letters 14;19(1):e70005. https://doi.org/10.1111/con4.70005

Presentations & Workshops Led

Barber, J. 47th Winter Animal Behavior Meetings. Invited lecturer, organizer. A Tail of Moths and Bats. Steamboat Springs, CO. 17-23 Jan, 2026

Blair, M.E. Sustainable Development Program. Invited lecturer. Predicting the Future of Biodiversity Under Climate Change. Columbia University, New York, NY. 27 Apr, 2026.

Blair, M.E. University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Biology Seminar Series. Invited lecturer. Conservation Museomics: The Role of Museums for Innovation in Conservation Biology. Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. 6 Apr, 2026.

Blair, M.E. Bard College Department of Biology Seminar Series. Invited lecturer. Conservation Museomics. Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. 27 Feb, 2026.

Blair, M.E. Side event at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). Invited panelist. Rights to Lands, Territories and Mobility: Celebrating the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in Advance of UNCCD COP17. New York, NY. 24 Apr, 2026.

Blair, M.E. New York Consortium in Evolutionary Primatology's Core graduate course in Primate Evolution and Behavior. Invited lecturer. Primate Conservation and Conservation Genetics. New York University, New York, NY. 9 Dec, 2025.

Blair, M.E., Noguera-Urbano, E.A., Ochoa-Quintero, J.M., Paz, A., Lopez-Gallego, C., Echeverry-Galvis, M.A., Zuloaga, J., Rodríguez. P, Lemus-Mejia, L., et al. Living Data / Datos Vivos Conference. Invited symposium presentation. Software Co-design Between End Users and Developers to Enhance Utility for Biodiversity Conservation. Bogotá, Colombia. 21-24 Oct, 2025.

Blair, M.E., Paz, A., Pinilla-Buitrago, G.E., **López-Lozano, D.**, Johnson, B., Aiello-Lammens, M.E., Chang, S., Ersts, P.J., Gerstner, B.E., Grisales-Betancur, V., Kass, J.M., Merow, C., Suarez-Valencia, E., Noguera-Urbano, E.A., Velásquez-Tibatá, J., and Anderson, R.P. Living Data / Datos Vivos Conference. Invited symposium presentation. Expanding Wallace EcoMod to Calculate Biodiversity Change Indicators from Species Distribution Models for Conservation Management and Planning. Bogotá, Colombia. 21-24 Oct, 2025.

Gutierrez-Velez, V.H., Ceballos, V., Olaya-Herrera, M.H., Parra, C., **Blair, M.E.**, Jantz, P., Londoño, M.C. American Geophysical Union Annual Meeting. Invited lecturer. Evaluating the impact of NASA-supported data and applications on biodiversity conservation decision-making in Colombia. New Orleans, LA. 15 Dec, 2025.

Gutierrez-Velez, V.H., Ceballos, V., Olaya-Herrera, M.H., Parra, C., **Blair, M.E.**, Jantz, P., Londoño, M.C. Living Data / Datos Vivos Conference. Invited symposium presentation. Evaluating the Impact of NASA-Supported Biodiversity Products for Biodiversity Decision-Making in Colombia. Bogotá, Colombia. 21-24 Oct, 2025.

Gutierrez-Velez, V.H., Mejía, A., Rodriguez, J., Sarmiento, V., **Blair, M.E.** Living Data / Datos Vivos Conference. Invited symposium presentation. Integrating Expert Knowledge, Land Cover Data, and Post-Processing Workflows to Enhance Ecosystem Change Detection in Colombia's Protected Areas. Bogotá, Colombia. 21-24 Oct, 2025.

Macey, S.K. Science in the Virtual Pub. Invited lecturer. We Need to Conserve Biodiversity. Improving Our Teaching Will Help. Paleontological Research Institute, New York, NY. 12 Mar, 2026

Porzecanski, A.L. 9th Annual Youth Climate Summit, hosted by EcoReps, Columbia University's largest student-run environmental organization. Keynote speaker. Biodiversity and You. Lerner Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY. 18 Apr, 2026.

Media & Outreach

Blair, M.E., Oskal, A. "Reindeer and Resilience". Invited lecturer at American Museum of Natural History SciCafe. New York, NY. https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/adults/scicafe/sami-resilience 7 Jan, 2026.

Blair, M.E. "Arctic Transformations: Resilience, Partnership, and Lessons from a Warming World". Invited panelist at The Spring Lunch: Science, Society, and Our Environment. American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY. 22 Apr, 2026.

Porzecanski, A.L. Mending the Living World. Inaugural event for the Albertine Conservation series: Invited panelist on biodiversity decline and ecological resilience, featured with experts in environmental ethics and conservation. Moderated by Sarah Sax, in partnership with the Columbia Climate School. Maison Français, Columbia University. New York, NY. 28 Jan, 2026.

Porzecanski, A.L. The 100 Club. Invited speaker. Discussion and Q & A about Dr. Porzecanski's work at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH). New York, NY. 12 Feb, 2026.

Porzecanski, A.L. Carnival at the Museum. Moderator for closing panel at the American Museum of Natural History. Public event exploring extreme weather, green space losses, adaptation and community-led innovation in the Caribbean islands and also New York City. American Museum of Natural History. New York, NY. 19 Feb, 2026.