

# Welcome!

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
Spring 2026 Commencement Recognition  
Ceremony

May 2, 2026

Ceremony will begin at 1:00



SCAN ME FOR  
DIGITAL PROGRAM

# Introduction & Welcome

Dr. Lisa Corwin

The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "BOULDER" at the bottom, and "1876" at the bottom center. In the center of the seal, there is a figure holding a torch and a book, with the words "LIGHT SHINE" above it.

# Introduction to the Graduate Program

Dr. Valerie McKenzie

The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top and "BOULDER" at the bottom. In the center, it depicts a figure holding a torch and a book, with the motto "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" written below the figure.

# Graduate Student Degree Conferral

Dr. Valerie McKenzie  
PhD and Master's Students

From prairie plants to people: Determining barriers to and mechanisms for increasing the emergence and persistence of diverse populations and communities in a changing world

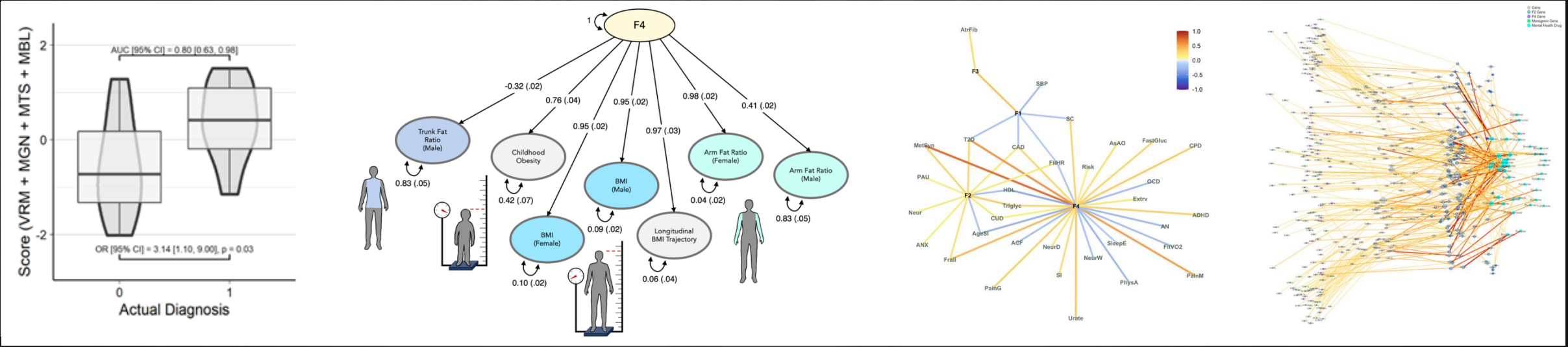
Sam Ahler, PhD

Dr. Katharine Suding & Dr. Nancy Shackelford



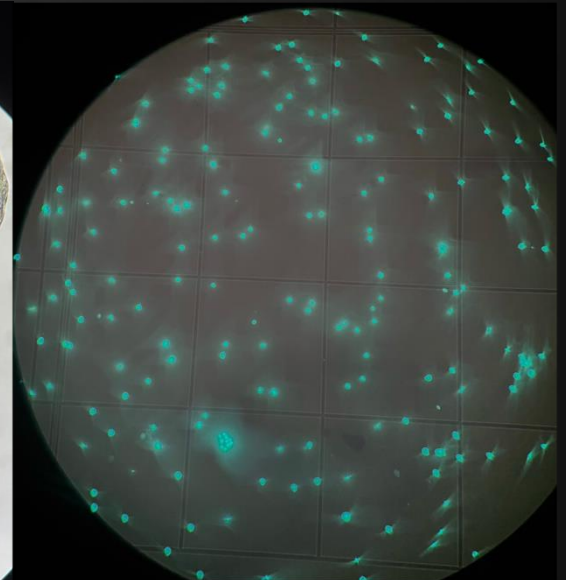
Multi-omic, multivariate, and network modeling approaches disentangle the genetic influences and biological pathways of complex traits

Christopher H. Arehart, PhD  
 Dr. Luke Evans



# Developmental genomics of catfish skin: Evolution of bony armor and denticles through redeployment of ancient gene regulatory toolkit

Vlonjat Lonnie Gashi, PhD  
Dr. David Stock



# Tropical Flowering Phenology

Skylar M. Graves, PhD  
Dr. Erin Manzitto-Tripp



# The landscape and socioecological drivers of insect biodiversity in cities

Asia Kaiser, PhD  
Dr. Julian Resasco



# The role of small mammal granivores in ecological speciation of two sunflower ecotypes

Katie Kariatsumari, PhD  
Dr. Andrew McAdam



# Multi-scale spatial, social, and phenotype determinants of mating outcomes in North American barn swallows

Heather Kenny-Duddela, PhD  
Dr. Rebecca Safran



# Rangeland sensitivity and resilience to changing precipitation regimes: Scaling from local experiments to regional patterns

Tom Merchant, PhD  
Dr. Katharine Suding



# Effects of Organic Matter Redox Reactions on Carbon Cycling in Boreal Peatland Ecosystems

Jessica Edith Rush, PhD  
Dr. Eve-Lyn Hinckley



Movement and demographic performance of plant populations in mountain landscapes: how life history patterns and anisotropic dispersal will shape temporal and spatial dynamics

Ellen Waddle, PhD  
Dr. Dan Doak



# Abrupt and Gradual Permafrost Thaw in Alaska: Multi-Scale Patterns, Processes, and Impacts

Hailey Webb, PhD  
Dr. Merritt Turetsky



# From seed to buffalo: Building resilience in Colorado grasslands

Hunter Geist-Sanchez, Master's  
Dr. Katharine Suding



# Understanding the Effects of Temperature on Wild Sunflower Seed Germination (*Helianthus spp.*) Across Altitude Gradients

Grace Yurkunas, Master's  
Dr. Nolan Kane



The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "BOULDER" at the bottom, and "1876" in the center. It also depicts a central figure holding a staff and a book, with the motto "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" visible around the inner edge.

# Introduction to the Undergraduate Honors Program

Dr. Barbara Demmig-Adams

The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" in the center, and "BOULDER" at the bottom. The year "1876" is also visible within the seal's design.

# Undergraduate Honors Student Degree Conferral

Dr. Barbara Demmig-Adams

# Close Relatives Reduce Invasive Cheatgrass Performance in a Front Range Grassland

**Kat Barr**

Dr. Katharine Suding  
*summa cum laude*



# Effects of Nest Insulation and Ambient Temperature on Incubation Behavior of Two Species of Chickadees

Nathan M. Carley

Dr. Scott Taylor

*summa cum laude*



# Assessing the Role of Pseudocyphellae and Thallus Traits in Modulating Water Relations of *C. aurata* Across Moisture gradient in the Premontane Tropical Forest of Costa Rica

**Edie Clark**

Dr. Erin Manzitto-Tripp  
*magnum cum laude*



# Comparing parental provisioning behaviors between two co-occurring chickadees in Colorado

Eva Lucia Corral

Dr. Scott Taylor

*magna cum laude*



Credit Georgy Semenov

# Exploring the Impacts of Human Disturbance on Bird Species Richness and Abundance at California Ponds

Jordayn Eichhorn  
Dr. Pieter Johnson  
*summa cum laude*



# Apple Trees as Ecosystem Engineers: The Effects of Orchard Management on Soil Chemistry and Microbial Communities

Andrea Gaccetta

Dr. Teresa Bilinski  
*magna cum laude*

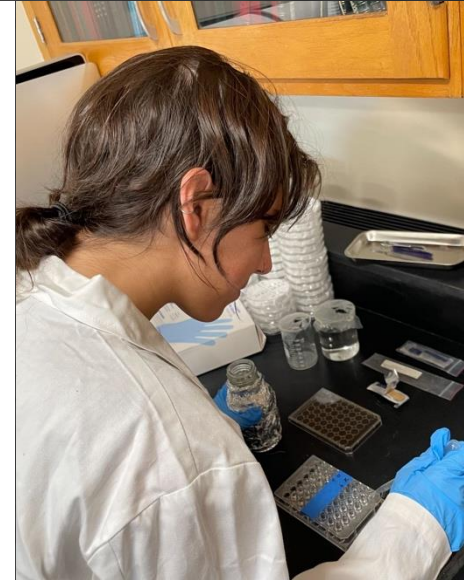


# Lack of Association Between Seed Mass and Viability in Diverging Ecotypes of *Helianthus petiolaris* Despite Differences in Emergence Patterns

Uma Gerweck

Dr. Andrew McAdam

*summa cum laude*

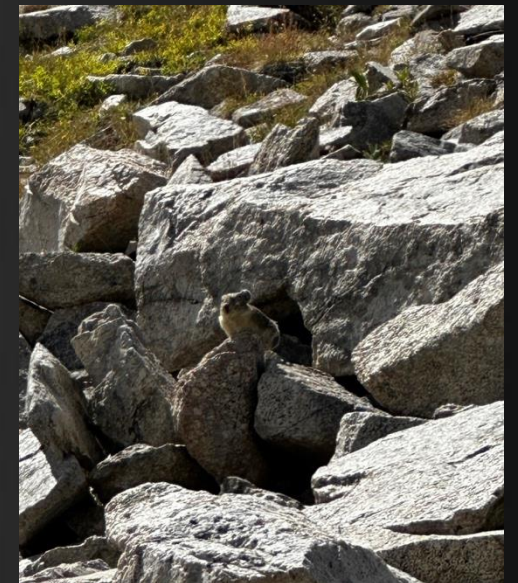


# Evaluating Trends in American Pika Habitat Occupancy at Niwot Ridge Long-Term Ecological Research Site

Ailey Elizabeth Golightly Pittman

Dr. Chris Ray

*magna cum laude*



# Foraging Behavior of Herbivorous Fishes: Effects of Rugosity and Sociality

Liam Gutiérrez Santos

Dr. Michael Gil

*summa cum laude*

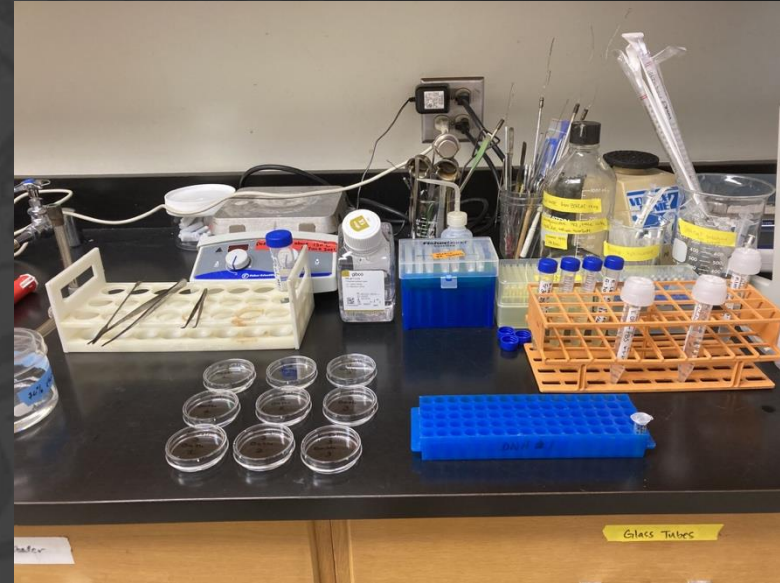


# The active fraction and community composition of microbes at different stages of soil development in the High Arctic

Easton Klein

Dr. Steve Schmidt

*magna cum laude*

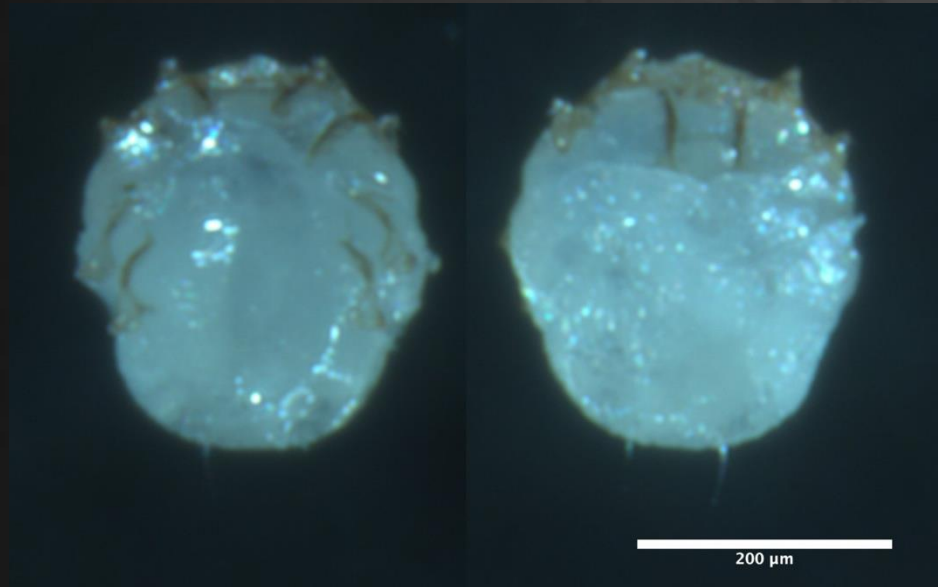


# Reproductive effects of scaly-leg mites (Knemidocoptes sp.) on mountain chickadees

Samantha M. Kruczek

Dr. Scott Taylor

*summa cum laude*



# City Slickers: How Urban Landscapes Affect Arthropod Herbivores and Their Natural Enemies

Noah Mayer

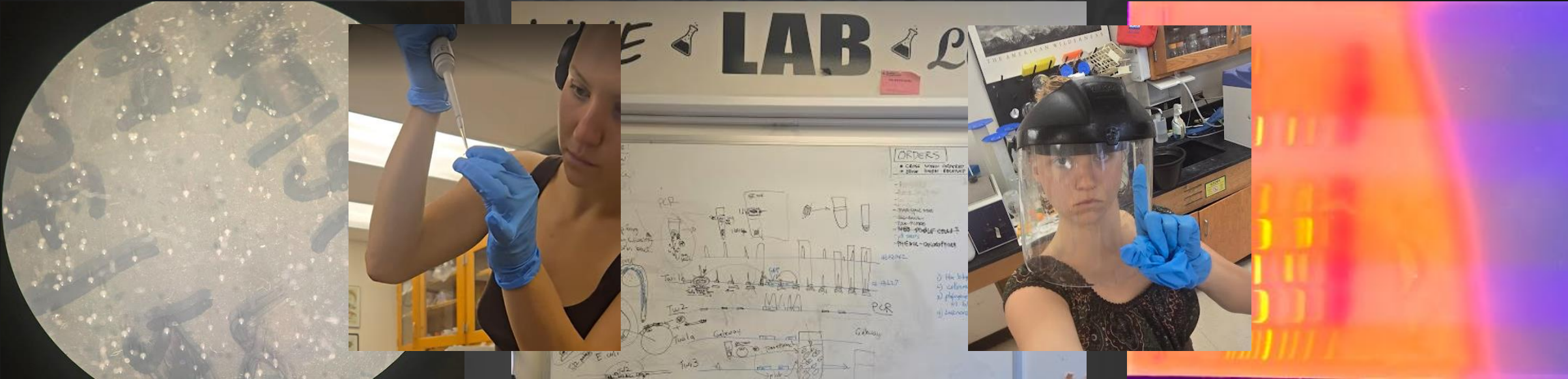
Dr. Julian Resasco

*summa cum laude*



# Methodological Advances for Understanding the Function and Evolution of Twist gene Cis-Regulatory Elements

Maia Avanel Parkin  
Dr. Daniel Medeiros  
*magna cum laude*



# Social Cues and Information Cascades within Garden Eel Communities

Naomi Pearlman

Dr. Michael Gil

*magna cum laude*



# Investigating Recent Ecological Change in Southwestern Colorado Mountain Lakes

Julia Pop

Dr. Isabella Oleksy  
*summa cum laude*



# A Loss of Life and Data: The Cultural Politics of Lab Animal Use in the Space Race

Dillan Rogers  
Dr. Abby Hickcox  
*summa cum laude*



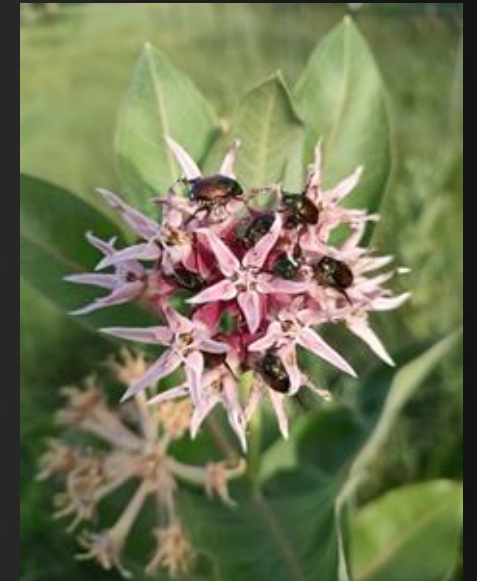
Photos curated from: *Animals in Space* (Burgess & Dubbs) and *The Laboratory Nonhuman Primate* (Fortman et al.).

# Plains Aflame: Effects of Fire on Plant Functional Composition in a Xeric Tallgrass Prairie in Boulder, Colorado

Gavin Schoew

Dr. Katharine Suding

*summa cum laude*



# Insects of the Boulder Apple Tree Project's Jay Road Orchard: Abundance of insect orders in a semiurban apple orchard

Peyton Vetter  
Dr. Warren Sconiers  
*cum laude*



The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "BOULDER" at the bottom, and "1876" at the bottom center. In the center of the seal is a figure holding a torch, with the words "LIGHT SHINE" above it.

# Introduction to the Undergraduate Program

Dr. Eve-Lyn Hinckley

The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top and "BOULDER" at the bottom. In the center, there is a figure holding a book and a torch, with the motto "LIGHT SHINE" below it.

# Undergraduate Student Degree Conferral

Dr. Eve-Lyn Hinckley



The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "BOULDER" at the bottom, and "1876" at the bottom center. In the center of the seal, there is a figure holding a torch and a book, with the motto "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" written above it.

# Introduction of Graduate Student Commencement Address

Dr. Eve-Lyn Hinckley





The background features a large, faint watermark of the University of Colorado Boulder seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO" at the top, "BOULDER" at the bottom, and "1876" in the center. It also includes the motto "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE" and a central figure holding a torch and a book.

# Introduction of Undergraduate Student Commencement Address

Dr. Katharine Suding



EBIO Spring 2026 Commencement



# Closing Remarks

Dr. Lisa Corwin

