SARAH DOBNEY

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EDUCATION

PRESENT
PHD INTEGRATIVE BIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
I began an MSc program from Sept 2020 to Dec 2021. Having successfully passed a transfer exam, I am now enrolled in the PhD program as of Jan 2022. Successfully passed the comprehensive exam Jan 2024.

APRIL 2015
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
I completed a major in Zoology and a minor in Psychology: Brain and Cognition.

SCHOLARSHIPS/AWARDS

2024
NSERC, PGS D
$120,000.00
QEII GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
DECLINED
$15,000.00

2023
VERDECCHIA FAMILY GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP,
$1,000.00
STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD, AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY,
$2,500.00
ONTARIO GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP,
$15,000.00

2022
BEST STUDENT PRESENTATION-EARLY PROGRAM AWARD,
SCO CONFERENCE
$300.00
QUEEN ELIZABETH II GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
$15,000.00
LYNDA CORKUM ESSEX COUNTY NATURE BURSARY,
$1,500.00
DR. ROSS H PAUL SCHOLARSHIP IN GRADUATE STUDIES AWARD,
$1,000.00
TAVERNER AWARD, SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS,
$2,000.00

2021

STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT, ANIMAL BEHAVIOR SOCIETY
$2,000.00
COVID-RELIEF RESEARCH AWARD, AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY,
$1,000.00
MITACS RESEARCH TRAINING AWARD,
$6,000.00

PUBLICATIONS

Nigam OK, Mueller SD, Jones, PL, **Dobney SL**, Norris DR (2026). Causes and consequences of incubation patterns in female Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). CANADIAN JOURNAL OF ZOOLOGY, 104, 1-10.

Hill MM, **Dobney SL**, Fanburg LK, Mennill DJ, Taylor LU (2026). Experimental study of social signalling through delayed plumage maturation in a colony-nesting seabird. ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, 237:123616.

Spina HA, Newman AEM, Wheelwright NT, Mennill DJ, Doucet SM, Burant JB, **Dobney SL**, Mueller SD, Mitchell GW, Norris DR (2026). Causes and consequences of within-population variation in interbrood interval of a migratory songbird. IBIS, 168, 182-200.

Spina HA, Newman AEM, Wheelwright NT, Mennill DJ, Doucet SM, Burant JB, **Dobney SL**, Mueller SD, Mitchell GW, Norris DR (2025). Multigenerational fitness outcomes of double-brooding: a 30-year study of a migratory songbird. BEHAVIORAL ECOLOGY, 36, araf040.

Mueller SD, Mennill DJ, Doucet SM, **Dobney SL**, Spina HA, Norris DR (2025). Environmental conditions and individual characteristics influence movement patterns in juvenile *Passerculus sandwichensis* (Savannah sparrow) throughout the post-fledging period. ORNITHOLOGY, ukaf016.

Mueller SD, Wheelwright NT, Mennill DJ, Newman AEM, Doucet SM, Burant JB, **Dobney SL**, Mitchell GW, Spina HA, Norris DR (2025). Population density and timing of breeding mediate effects of early life conditions on recruitment. BIOLOGY LETTERS, 21:20240689.

Mueller SD, Wheelwright NT, Mennill DJ, Newman AEM, Doucet SM, Burant JB, **Dobney SL**, Mitchell GW, Spina HA, Woodworth BK, Norris DR (2025). Reduced fitness of secondary females in a polygynous species: a 32-year study of Savannah sparrows. BEHAVIORAL ECOLOGY, 36:arae093.

Spina HA, Norris DR, Nong L, **Dobney SL**, Mueller SD, Freeman NE, Doucet SM, Mennill DJ, Newman AEM (2025). Corticosterone predicts double-brooding in female Savannah sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*). HORMONES AND BEHAVIOR, 168, 105679.

Suarez Sharma SP, **Dobney SL**, Norris DR, Doucet SM, Newman AEM, Burant JB, Moran IG, Mueller SD, Spina HA, Mennill DJ (2024). Effect of age, breeding strategy, population density, and number of neighours on territory size and shape in Savannah Sparrows. Submitted to ORNITHOLOGY (MS # ORNITH-S-24-00018).

Aubin JA, **Dobney SL**, Foreman SAM, Doucet SM, Norris DR, Williams H, Mennill DJ (2024). Birds respond more strongly to locally-common versus locally-rare songs: a playback experiment with Savannah sparrows. ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, 212, 127-135.

Williams H, **Dobney SL**, Robins C, Norris DR, Newman AEM, Doucet SM, Mennill DJ (2024). Familiarity and homogeneity affect the discrimination of a song dialect. ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, 209, 9-20.

Dobney SL, Bornais MMK, Norris DR, Newman AEM, Williams H, Doucet SM, Mennill DJ (2023). Quiet in the nest: the nest environment attenuates song in a grassland songbird. AVIAN RESEARCH, 14, 100148.

Hensel AJL, **Dobney SL**, Doucet SM, Norris DR, Newman AEM, Williams H, Mennill DJ (2022). Microgeographical variation in bird song: Savannah Sparrows exhibit microdialects in an island population. ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR, 188, 119-131.

Hensel AJL, **Dobney SL**, Moran I, Thomas IP, Burant JB, Woodworth BK, Doucet SM, Newman AEM, Norris DR, Williams H, Mennill DJ (2022). Passive acoustic monitoring provides predictable and reliable underestimates of population size and longevity in wild Savannah Sparrows. ORNITHOLOGICAL APPLICATIONS, 124, 1-11.

PRESENTATIONS

Dobney SL, Norris R, Doucet S, Williams H, Newman A, Burant J, Moran I, Mueller S, Spina H, Thomas I, Mennill D (2025). Songs of the studs: song predicts reproductive success in a grassland bird. IBAC Conference poster presentation.

Dobney SL, Norris R, Doucet S, Williams H, Newman A, Burant J, Moran I, Thomas I, Mennill D (2025). Songs of the studs: song predicts reproductive success in a grassland songbird. CSEE Conference talk presentation.

Dobney SL, Spina H, Norris R, Williams H, Doucet S, Mennill D (2024). Sexy singers or food bringers? A test of the parenting-mating trade-off hypothesis. ABS Conference poster presentation.

Dobney SL (2023). All quiet on the nestling front: the nest environment attenuates song. AOS/SCO talk presentation.

Dobney SL, (2023). Quiet in the nest: the nest environment attenuates song in a grassland songbird. ABS Twitter conference.

Dobney SL, (2022). Quiet in the nest: the nest environment attenuates song in a grassland songbird. SCO_SOC virtual conference talk presentation.

EXPERIENCE

JUNE 2019 – OCT 2019

MARBLED MURRELET RESEARCH TECHNICIAN, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

- Conducted dawn surveys for marbled murrelets to monitor breeding status and determine occupied versus unoccupied forest sites.
- Searched for active nest sites.
- Assessed vegetation at random locations throughout the forest to compare occupied and non-occupied sites
- Entered data and created maps of murrelet activity.

JULY 2018 – APRIL 2019

TEAM COORDINATOR, CARE PARTNERS

- Developed daily in-home nursing visits for multiple nurse teams in Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge.
- I maintained patient and nurse confidential information.
- I created positive relationships with nurses, patients, coworkers, and funders via email and phone.
- Processed routine incoming information from funders and private-pay clients.

OCT 2017 – JAN 2018

SAMPLE PREPARATION TECHNICIAN, LABSTAT INTERNATIONAL

- Prepared solutions for analysis from e-cigarette samples, in the chemistry department.
- Transferred samples, prepared solutions and performed chemical extractions for several compounds and substances.
- Utilized and maintained lab equipment, prepared and cleaned glassware.
- Maintained a clean and organized work station.
- Complied with health and safety policies and procedures by wearing personal protective equipment, and cleaning and disposing of used materials properly.

JUNE 2011 – SEPT 2017

FOREST BIRDS AT RISK FIELD TECHNICIAN, BIRD STUDIES CANADA

- Conducted forest surveys for breeding bird species at risk: Acadian Flycatcher, Cerulean Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Prothonotary Warbler.
- Conducted point count surveys and habitat assessments to monitor populations of all forest bird species in southwestern Ontario and Frontenac regions, with a primary focus on Cerulean Warblers and Acadian Flycatchers.
- Searched for and monitored nests of target species.
- Colour banded Louisiana Waterthrush young and adults at nest sites.
- Entered and analyzed data, created maps of breeding locations, and wrote annual summary reports.
- Created Forest Bird Species at Risk factsheets for stewardship aids.
- Created positive relationships with private and public landowners in order to gain permission to survey forests.
- Returned in 2017 as Field Supervisor, supervising other field technicians, coordinating and overseeing all field work and data entry, and preparing all documents in timely manner.

MAR 2017 – MAY 2017

RESEARCH ASSISTANT, KAUAI FOREST BIRDS RECOVERY PROJECT

- Conducted forest surveys for breeding Akikiki, Akeke'e and Puaiohi.
- Searched for and monitored nests.
- Assisted with egg collections from Akikiki nests for captive breeding program at the San Diego Zoo.
- Assisted with radio telemetry monitoring several Akeke'e pairs.

MAY 2016 – AUG 2016

SEASONAL AVIAN ECOLOGIST, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

- Conducted forest surveys for breeding black-throated blue warblers.
- Searched for and monitored nests.
- Colour-banded and blood sampled adults and nestlings at nest sites.
- Performed habitat, insect, and nest predator surveys in forest plots.

OCT 2015 – JAN 2016

RESEARCH ASSISTANT, AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

- Conducted forest surveys for breeding red-winged fairy-wrens.
- Searched for and monitored nests.

- Colour-banded and blood sampled all adults and nestlings at nest sites.
- Performed nest watches during nestling period to compare feeding rates of each individual in family groups.

SEPT 2012 – APR 2015
RESEARCH ASSISTANT, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

- Held positions during fall and winter semesters from 2012 to 2015 in Akerman lab.
- Cultured mussel species at risk.
- Fed and cared for various mussel and fish species in Hagen Aqualab.
- Entered and analyzed data. Researched new culturing methods.
- Directly supervised and trained two volunteers during winter of 2015.

SEPT 2011 – APR 2012
RESEARCH ASSISTANT, UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH

- Cultured fruit fly populations for a migration experiment in Norris lab.
- Entered and analyzed data from multiple ongoing projects in lab. Researched new culturing methods.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

SEPT 9, 2023
BIRDING WALK

I led a birding walk at Brunet Park, near LaSalle, Ontario. This event was coordinated by the Friends of Ojibway.

SEPT 28, 2022
BIRDING WALK

I led a birding walk for beginners at Black Oak Park, near Windsor, Ontario. This event was coordinated by the Friends of Ojibway.

TEACHING AND MENTORING

SEPT - DEC, 2024
ECOLOGY GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 2nd year undergraduate Ecology course.

JAN - APR, 2024
ORNITHOLOGY GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 4th year undergraduate Ornithology course.

SEPT - DEC, 2023
ECOLOGY GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 2nd year undergraduate Ecology course.

JAN - APR, 2023
SPECIATION GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead class seminars for a 4th year undergraduate Speciation course.

SEPT - DEC, 2022

ECOLOGY GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 2nd year undergraduate Ecology course.

JAN - APR, 2022

ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 3rd year undergraduate Animal Behaviour course.

SEPT - DEC, 2021

SPECIATION GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead class seminars for a 4th year undergraduate Speciation course.

JAN - APR, 2021

SPECIATION GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead class seminars for a 4th year undergraduate Speciation course.

SEPT - DEC, 2020

ORNITHOLOGY GRADUATE ASSISTANT – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I helped to lead laboratory assignments for a 4th year undergraduate Ornithology course.

2021 - 2026

TRAINED UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN FIELD DATA COLLECTION – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

During field seasons on Kent Island, New Brunswick, I trained the following undergraduate research assistants: Mikayla Bornais, Sarah Foreman, Sam Blackwell, Stephanie Gamboa, Sarika Sharma, Natalie Emerick, Madison Bygrove, and Maia Fregonese.

2024 - 2025

MENTORED UNDERGRADUATE HONOURS RESEARCH STUDENTS – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I mentored the following undergraduate students as they completed their honours thesis: Sam Blackwell and Callia Collard.

2022 - 2025

TRAINED UNDERGRADUATE VOLUNTEERS AND IGNITE STUDENTS – UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

I trained the following undergraduate students as they worked or volunteered in the Mennill Sound Analysis Lab: Ava Albonaimi, Callia Collard, Cameron Chevalier, Danielle Robinson, Hannah Schaefer, Jake Arsenault, Maia Fregonese, Manpreet Bhachu, Riya Boparai, Reagan Anger, Sarika Sharma, Savannah Ecclestone, Theranya Weerakoon, Theresa Chao, Victoria Ballo.