**Seminar abstract:**

In ecology, a shifted or shifting baseline describes a new basal state which has significantly diverged from the original system state. By contrast, Shifting Baseline Syndrome (SBS) describes a psychological phenomenon by which individuals, communities or generations compare change in the ecological system against a single point of reference or 'baseline', often set at the beginning of their life or career. Valuable historical information is therefore lost, as new conditions are readily accepted as the new normal. Although SBS was first described over 25 years ago, few studies have investigated empirical evidence of the syndrome or its impacts on conservation support, management and target-setting. I aimed to fill these gaps, investigating evidence of SBS in the context of bird species population change in the UK and Finland, and provided the first evidence that SBS negatively impacts perceptions of species conservation priority. In this talk I will give an overview of my PhD research, highlight my key findings and discuss the rewards and challenges of working with interdisciplinary datasets.

**About me:**

I am fascinated by the variation in people’s perceptions of nature; how do people perceive ecological change, what does nature mean to people in their everyday lives and what do people think about the future of conservation, rewilding and reintroductions? I believe that understanding the demographic, experiential and socio-economic factors that shape each individual’s perceptions of nature will help to inform impactful conservation policy, drive positive change and more sustainable use of natural resources. My PhD research investigated evidence for shifting baseline syndrome (SBS), identified patterns in the incidence of SBS and outlined the potential impacts of SBS on conservation management and support. I am also a member of the BES Policy Committee and passionate about sharing conservation with the wider public through blogs, articles and podcasts.