

Dr. Luis Carlos Beltrán

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DOB: November 12, 1992

EDUCATION

- University of Illinois at Chicago** Chicago IL, USA
• *Doctorate of Philosophy - Biological Sciences* August 2015 - May 2021
Dissertation: Planting Composition Effects on Tropical Forest Restoration
- Lake Forest College** Lake Forest IL, USA
• *Bachelor of Arts - Biology & Environmental Studies* August 2011 - May 2015
Thesis: Post-Dispersal Seed Fate of *Ocotea floribunda* (Lauraceae) in Monteverde, Costa Rica

PUBLICATIONS

- Polanco Vasquez AM, Beltrán LC, Rodríguez-León CH, Roa-Fuentes LL. 2025. Seed Rain Variation Across a Tropical Humid Forest Chronosequence. *Plant Ecology*. **1**:1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11258-025-01551-9>
- Beltrán LC, Aguilar-Dorantes KM, Roa-Fuentes LL, Martínez-Garza C, Howe HF. 2025. Above-ground Competition by *Nephrolepis brownii* Inhibits Tree Seedling Recruitment in a Tropical Restoration Experiment. *Journal of Applied Ecology*. **62**:1968–1979. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.70091>
- Obando Guzmán JK, Beltrán LC, Rodríguez-León CH, Roa-Fuentes LL. 2023. Pattern of Litterfall Production Throughout a Tropical Humid Forest Chronosequence. *Ecosystems*. **26**:1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10021-023-00862-0>
- Nieto Guzmán MN, Beltrán LC, Rodríguez-León CH, Roa-Fuentes LL. 2023. Functional seed traits as predictors of germination and seedling growth for species with potential for restoration in Caquetá, Colombia. *Trees*. **37**:1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00468-023-02396-3>
- Beltrán LC, Martínez-Garza C, Howe HF. 2022. Return of Forest Structure and Diversity in Tropical Restoration Plantings. *Ecosphere*. **13**:e4099. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ecs2.4099>
- Beltrán LC, Aguilar-Dorantes KM, Howe HF. 2020. Effects of a Recalcitrant Understory Fern layer in an Enclosed Tropical Restoration Experiment. *Neobiota* **59**:99-118. <https://doi.org/10.3897/neobiota.59.51906.suppl1>
- Beltrán LC, Howe HF. 2020. The Frailty of Tropical Restoration Plantings. *Restoration Ecology* **28**:16-21. <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec.13066>
- Beltrán LC, Tepos-Ramirez M. 2019. *Microlophus delanonis* (Hood Lava Lizard) cannibalism. *Herpetological Review Natural History Notes* **50**:787-788. [Click here for Research Gate Link](#)

SKILLS SUMMARY

- **Programming:** R, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, LaTeX, React, Python
- **Software:** Microsoft Office 2019, ArcGIS, Keynote, Endnote
- **Fluency:** Spanish, English
- **Soft Skills:** Leadership, Grant Writing, Statistical Analysis, Public Speaking, Fundraising, Time Management

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Xavierian Pontifical University** Remote
• *Course Mentor* August 01 2025 - Present
 - **Forest Extensionists Certification Program:** I develop class materials for the Forest Extensionists Certification Program, including the online platform, student workbook, and in-person activities, and support students throughout the program as their resource and guide.
- University of Antioquia** Antioquia, Colombia
• *Adjunct Professor* May 12 2025 - August 12 2025
 - **Semester Zero Program:** Taught the biology module in eight municipalities of Antioquia as part of the Department of Education's Semester Zero Educational Strengthening Program.
- University of Illinois at Chicago** Chicago IL, USA
• *Teaching Assistant Appointments at the Department of Biological Sciences* August 2016 - May 2021
 - **BIOS 365 - Human Ecological Systems:** Remotely co-taught a course on human ecology, the social and cultural context of human technological societies, the environment, and how merging these areas of study are critical to solving real-world problems.
 - **BIOS 331 - Ecology Laboratory:** Taught the laboratory section of a partially field course focused on ecology and ecological succession in temperate environments.
 - **BIOS 101 - Populations and Communities:** Taught the laboratory section of a general biology course for entry-level undergraduate students.

- Lake Forest College**

Lake Forest IL, USA

Peer Teacher at the Department of Biological Sciences

August - December 2013 & 2014

 - BIOS 220 - Ecology & Evolution:** Provided teaching assistance, feedback, and guidance. Field labs included tree demography, pollination biology, and squirrel foraging behavior.

FREELANCE PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- BioStatsPro**

Remote

Founder & Lead Consultant

January 2024 - Present

 - Biological Data Analysis:** I provide personalized data analysis services; to date, I have worked with more than 90 clients in over 20 countries. Notable clients include organizations such as The Charcoal Project and West Coast Kelp.
 - Academic Writing and Publishing Support:** I offer proofreading and grammar correction services in technical English, as well as guidance on the publication process of scientific articles. Featured clients include researchers from CES University and the University of Antioquia.
 - Scientific Writing Workshop:** I developed and deliver a workshop tailored for students and researchers in the biological sciences, successfully presented at the Humboldt Institute and Pontifical Xavierian University, with an upcoming edition scheduled at CES University.

PROFESSIONAL & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- Xavierian Pontifical University**

Bogotá, Colombia

Postdoctoral Researcher

November 2021 - February 2024

I completed a postdoctoral appointment with Dr. Lilia Roa-Fuentes in the Department of Ecology and Territory, where I contributed to the publication of six scientific articles, designed a virtual module for the Master's in Ecological Restoration, and co-directed two master's theses and one undergraduate thesis.
- Los Tuxtlas Biological Station**

Los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, Mexico

PhD Dissertation Fieldwork & Research

May - August 2017, 2018, & 2019

Fieldwork was conducted in a tropical restoration plantings experiment established in 2006 by Drs. Henry F. Howe and Cristina Martínez-Garza to evaluate how dispersal mode of planted trees influences early-successional dynamics. Experimental design consists of 24 (30 x 30 m) fenced plantings of (i) animal-dispersed species, (ii) wind-dispersed species, and (iii) unplanted plots to simulate natural succession. Plots separated by 35 m of actively grazed pasture.

 - Forest Structure:** Measured and identified 7,209 trees in the restoration plantings experiment and adjacent primary forest to compare return of biodiversity and development of forest structure after 13 years of restoration.
 - Fern Invasion:** Assessed the extent and effects of invasion by an understory fern species in the restoration experiment.
 - Foraging Ecology:** Conducted giving-up density experiments to determine rodent foraging preferences among restoration treatments and evaluate implications on seedling recruitment.
 - Soil Nutrient Analysis:** Collected and processed soil samples from the restoration experiment, intervening pasture, and adjacent forest, to compare physico-chemical properties and stable isotope concentrations.
- Monteverde Institute**

Monteverde, Costa Rica

Bridge Program

January 2016 - July 2016

 - Lichen Monitoring Network:** Established a lichen and bryophyte monitoring network throughout Monteverde (1200m - 1500m) on the trunks of 119 Lauraceae trees.
 - Reforestation Workshops:** Conducted reforestation workshops, activities, and tours, and assisted in the management of tree nurseries.
 - Adopt-A-Stream Program:** Assisted with the Adopt-A-Stream program, which focuses on monitoring the health of local streams in Monteverde.
- Galápagos National Park**

Isla Española, Galápagos, Ecuador

Bridge Program

October 2015 - January 2016

 - Reproductive Biology Monitor:** Daily monitored over 700 Nazca Booby (*Sula granti*) nests to collect individual reproductive data and band chicks for research projects led by Dr. Dave Anderson from Wake Forest University.
- Lake Forest College**

Lake Forest IL, USA

Undergraduate Thesis Research

June 2014 - May 2015

 - Post-Dispersal Seed Fate of *Ocotea floribunda* in Monteverde, Costa Rica:** Designed, performed experiments, and wrote an undergraduate senior thesis on the post-dispersal seed fate of a biotically-dispersed tree species in Monteverde, Costa Rica, which presented preliminary evidence for secondary seed dispersal in this species as well as photographic evidence of agoutis consuming and attempting to bury the seeds.
- Monteverde Institute**

Monteverde, Costa Rica

Tropical Ecology Internship

June 2014 - August 2014

 - Lauraceae Spatial Distribution Project Assistant:** Marked and measured over 400 trees belonging to the Lauraceae family and used GPS to map and analyze how the spatial distribution and density of these species varies between primary and secondary forests.
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute**

Barro Colorado Island, Panama

Field Research Internship

January 2014 - May 2014

- **Mycorrhizae Project Assistant:** Assisted in the maintenance and harvest of a research project investigating the responses of mycorrhizae to nutrient additions.
- **Seed Biology Project Assistant:** Helped design and conducted a preliminary research project on the adaptive value of mucilage produced by *Guazuma ulmifolia* seeds, thus establishing protocol for future experiments.

- **Monteverde Institute** Monteverde, Costa Rica
Tropical Reforestation Internship *June 2013 - August 2013*
 - **Reforestation Research Assistant:** Measured, re-tagged, and mapped over 1,000 trees planted by the Fundación Conservacionista Costarricense as part of the organization's reforestation research project.
 - **Phenology Research Project:** Conducted an independent research project on the obscure species *Myrcianthes* "black fruit" as a contribution to the Bellbird Biological Corridor Project.
- **Lake Forest College** Lake Forest IL, USA
Job Appointments at the Department of Biological Sciences *August 2011 - May 2015*
 - **Guppy Breeder:** Cared for and fed guppies (*Poecilia reticulata*) from Dr. Anne Houde's behavioral research lab.
 - **Stockroom Worker:** Procured and prepared the necessary tools and materials (including compound and dissecting microscopes, agar plates, and sterile glassware) for various different classes and labs in the biology department.

SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- **CCE 2025:** "La competencia aérea de *Nephrolepis brownii* inhibe el reclutamiento de plántulas de árboles en un experimento de restauración tropical" [PPT, September 05, 2025]
- **ATBC 2025:** "Planting for the Future: Enhancing Seedling Recruitment Through the Manipulation of Seed Dispersal Processes" [PPT, July 01 2025]
- **V CCRE & VI CIRE (2023):** "Patrón de producción de hojarasca a lo largo de una cronosecuencia de bosque húmedo tropical" [PPT, June 15, 2023]
- **CCE 2022:** "Recuperación de estructura forestal y diversidad en plantaciones de restauración de bosque tropical" [PPT, August 30, 2022]
- **ATBC 2022:** "Functional Seed Traits as Predictors of Germination and Seedling Growth for Species with Potential for Restoration in Caquetá, Colombia" [PPT, July 14, 2022]
- **Seminarios Institucionales del CIByC de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos:** "La composición de plantaciones afecta el desarrollo de la estructura forestal" [Remote PPT, March 17, 2021]
- **ESA 2019:** "Restoration Suppression by the Invasive Asian Swordtail Fern in Los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, Mexico" [Poster Presentation, August 15 2019]
- **Monteverde Institute Seminars:** "Estableciendo una red de monitoreo de líquenes en Monteverde, Costa Rica" [PPT, July 16 2016]
- **Argonne National Laboratory, Student Seminars:** "Seed Fate of *Ocotea floribunda* in Monteverde, Costa Rica" [PPT, November 14 2014]

HONORS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

- Rufford Small Grant (£5,747), Rufford Foundation [June 2023]
- Graduate Research Award (\$100), Department of Biological Sciences, UIC [May 2021]
- Graduate Research Award (\$100), Department of Biological Sciences, UIC [May 2020]
- Rufford Small Grant (£5,000), Rufford Foundation [June 2019]
- Elmer Hadley Research Grant (\$2,800), Department of Biological Sciences, UIC [April 2019]
- Elmer Hadley Research Grant (\$3,000), Department of Biological Sciences, UIC [April 2019]
- Bodmer International Travel Award (\$1,659), College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, UIC [April 2018]
- Provost/Deiss Award for Graduate Research, (\$2,225), Graduate College, UIC [April 2018]
- Photography Research Contest, UIC (\$1,200), Department of Biological Sciences, UIC [March 2018]
- Dean's List, Lake Forest College [August 2014 - May 2015]
- Bridge Program Grant, Grace E. Groner Foundation [October 2015 - July 2016]
- David W. Towle Award for Excellence in Biological Research, Dept of Biological Sciences, Lake Forest College [May 2015]
- Grace E. Groner Award for International Service, Grace E. Groner Foundation [May 2015]
- Internship Grant, Grace E. Groner Foundation [June - August 2014]
- Internship Grant, Grace E. Groner Foundation [January - May 2014]
- Internship Grant, Grace E. Groner Foundation [June - August 2013]
- Dean's List, Lake Forest College [August 2012 - May 2013]

SERVICE & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- **Member of the Red Colombiana Restauración (Redcre)** Remote
I am an active member of this organization dedicated to ecological restoration in Colombia. *June 2023 - Present*
- **Ally Coordinator of the Alliance for the Monteverde Institute (AMVI)** Remote
I connect Allies with MVI projects that fit their expertise and provide fundraising support. *August 2021 - Present*
- **Vice-President of the Biology Graduate Student Association (BGSA)** Chicago IL, USA
Organized events and workshops for Biology graduate students of UIC. *September 2020 - May 2021*