

# Sungsik Kong | Curriculum Vitæ

Wisconsin Institute for Discovery – University of Wisconsin-Madison  
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## Summary

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- I am a **computational evolutionary biologist** with trainings in biology, statistics, and bioinformatics.
- My research focuses on **phylogenetic methods**, **phylogenetic networks**, and **reticulate evolution**.
- I am **adventurous** and **traveled** in Asia for a year on foot, bicycle, and motorbike.

## Professional Experience

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**Wisconsin Institute for Discovery**

*University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI., USA*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Claudia R. Solís-Lemus

**2023–Present**

*Postdoctoral research associate*

## Education

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**Ph.D. in Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology**

**2018–2022**

*The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH., USA*

*Presidential fellow*

*2022*

Dissertation: Towards the network of life: Phylogenetic networks as a tool to understand complex evolutionary histories

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Laura S. Kubatko

**M.Sc. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**

**2013–2015**

*University of Toronto, Toronto, ON., Canada*

Thesis: On the use of Median-Joining networks: A philosophical and empirical evaluation of its suitability in evolutionary biology

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Robert W. Murphy

**B.Sc. in Zoology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**

**2006–2012**

*University of Toronto, Toronto, ON., Canada*

Undergraduate thesis advisors: Profs. Drs. Robert W. Murphy and Deborah A. McLennan

## Publications

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Total number: 18

h-index: 7 [[Google scholar](#)]

\*Correspondence; ‡Co-correspondence; †Equal contribution

### Selected peer-reviewed journal articles.....

- [18] **Kong S\***, Sánchez-Pacheco SJ, and Murphy RW. (2023) Median-Joining Networks and Bayesian phylogenies often do not tell the same story. *Bulletin of the Society of Systematic Biologists* 2:1 1–13 doi:10.18061/bssb.v2i-1.9625
- [17] **Kong S** (2022) Digest: Frequent hybridization in *Darevskia* rarely leads to the evolution of asexuality. *Evolution* 76:9 2216–2217 doi:10.1111/evo.14587
- [16] **Kong S†**, Pons JC†, Kubatko LS, and Wicke K. (2022) Classes of phylogenetic networks and their mathematical and biological significance. *Journal of Mathematical Biology* 84:47 doi:10.1007/s00285-022-01746-y
- [15] **Kong S** and Kubatko LS. (2021) Comparative performance of popular methods for hybrid detection using genomic data. *Systematic Biology* 70:5 891–907 doi:10.1093/sysbio/syaa092
- [14] Sánchez-Pacheco SJ‡, **Kong S†**, Pulido-Santacruz P, Murphy RW, and Kubatko L. (2020) Median-joining network analysis of SARS-CoV-2 genomes is neither phylogenetic nor evolutionary. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A* 117:23 12518–12519 doi:10.1073/pnas.2007062117
- [13] **Kong S†**, Sánchez-Pacheco S†, and Murphy RW. (2016) On the use of Median-Joining Networks in evolutionary biology. *Cladistics* 32: 691–699 doi:10.1111/cla.12147

### Collaborative peer-reviewed journal articles.....

- [12] Fu M, Eimes JA, **Kong S**, Lamichhaney S, Waldman B (2023) Identification of major histocompatibility complex genotypes associated with resistance to an amphibian emerging infectious disease. *Infection, Genetics and Evolution* 105470 doi:10.1016/j.meegid.2023.105470
- [11] Glon H, Häussermann V, Brewin P, Brickle P, **Kong S**, Smith M, and Daly M. (2023) There and back again: The unexpected journeys of *Metridium* de Blainville, 1824 between the old oceans and throughout the modern world. *Biological Bulletin* 244:1 doi:10.1086/723800
- [10] Nguyen HQ, Ho P-T, **Kong S**, Bae Y, Pham TH, and Jang Y. (2022) A time-calibrated mitogenomic phylogeny suggests that Korean *Hyalessa fuscata* is a bridge between Chinese and Japanese *H. maculaticollis*. *Journal of Genetics* 102:9 doi:10.1007/s12041-022-01405-7
- [9] Nguyen HQ, Kim E, Bae Y, Chae S, Ji S, Heo J, **Kong S**, Nguyen TK, Pham TH, and Jang Y. (2022) An effective method for accurate life-stage delimitation of cicadas. *Journal of Asia-Pacific Entomology* 101952 doi:10.1016/j.aspen.2022.101952
- [8] Glon MG, Broe MB, Crandall KA, Daly M, **Kong S**, Thoma RF, and Freudenstein JV. (2022) Anchored hybrid enrichment resolves the *Lacunicambarus* (Decapoda: Cambaridae) phylogeny. *Journal of Crustacean Biology* 42:1 ruab073 doi:10.1093/jcabi/ruab073
- [7] Kim M, Nguyen HQ, Yi Y, Ahn J, Kim YE, Jang S, Kim S, **Kong S**, and Borzée A. (2020) Policy recommendation on whaling, trade and watching of cetaceans in the Republic of Korea. *Biodiversity Journal* 11: 255–258 doi:10.31396/Biodiv.Jour.2020.11.1.255.258

- [6] Weiringa JG, Boot MR, Dantas-Queiroz MV, Duckett D, Fonseca EM, Glon H, Hamilton N, **Kong S**, Lanna FM, Mattingly KZ, Parsons DJ, Smith ML, Stone BW, Thompson C, Zuo L, and Carstens BC. (2020) Does habitat stability structure intraspecific genetic diversity? It's complicated... *Frontiers in Biogeography* e45377 doi:10.21425/F5FBG45377
- [5] Borzée A, Purevdorj Z, Kim YI, **Kong S**, Choe M, Yi Y, Kim K, Kim A, and Jang Y. (2020) Breeding preferences in the Treefrogs *Dryophytes japonicus* (Hylidae) in Mongolia, the northern limit of their range. *Journal of Natural History* 53: 2685-2698 doi:10.1080/00222933.2019.1704458
- [4] Bae Y, **Kong S**, Yi Y, Jang Y, and Borzée A. (2019) Additional new type of threat to *Hynobius* salamander eggs: predation by loaches (*Misgurnus* sp.) in agricultural wetlands. *Animal Biology* 69:4 451–461 doi:10.1163/15707563-20191070
- [3] Groffen J, **Kong S**, Jang Y, and Borzée A. (2019) The invasive American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) in the Republic of Korea: history and recommendation for population control. *Management of Biological Invasions* 10:3 517–535 doi:10.3391/mbi.2019.10.3.08
- [2] Borzée A, **Kong S**, Didinger C, Nguyen HQ, and Jang Y. (2018) A ring-species or a ring of species? Phylogenetic relationship between two treefrog species around the Yellow Sea: *Dryophytes suweonensis* and *D. immaculatus*. *The Herpetological Journal* 28: 160–170
- [1] Kim K, **Kong S**, Kim YI, Borzée A, Bae Y, and Jang Y. (2018) Japanese hard ticks (*Ixodes nipponensis*) parasitizing on the endangered leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis euptilura*) in the Republic of Korea. *Animal Systematics, Evolution and Diversity* 34:1 23–26 doi:10.5635/ASED.2018.34.1.032

#### Policy recommendation.....

- [1] Borzée A, Nguyen HQ, Ahn J, Kim M, Kim S, Jang S, **Kong S**, Kim YE, and Yi Y. (2017) Policy recommendation on the negative impact of infrastructure development on the population of endangered Long-Tailed Goral in Oseck-Kkeutchong. *Society for Conservation Biology Korean Chapter*

#### Submitted.....

- [2] **Kong S**, Swofford DL, and Kubatko LS. (In Revision) Inference of phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood. Preprint available on *bioRxiv* at 10.1101/2022.11.14.516468v1
- [1] Peng J, **Kong S**, and Kubatko L. (In Review) A likelihood ratio test for hybridization under the multispecies coalescent. Preprint available on *bioRxiv* at 10.1101/2023.06.20.545699

## Talks and Presentations

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\*Virtual presentation

#### Invited talks.....

- [17] **Coming soon** The International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB)\* 2023  
 Society for Molecular Biology and Evolution  
*EvolCompGen webinar series*  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood
- [16] Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics,  
 New York-New Jersey-Pennsylvania Section (SIAM-NNP),  
 New Jersey Institute of Technology, Newark, NJ., USA 2023  
*Mathematics of Evolution Minisymposium*  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood

- [15] **University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI., USA** 2023  
*UW-Madison Fall 2023 Evolution Seminar Series*  
 Title: PhyNEST: Phylogenetic Network Estimation using SiTe patterns
- [14] **University of Wisconsin-Madison, WI., USA** 2023  
*UW-Madison Postdoctoral Research Symposium Blitz Talks Competition*  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood
- [13] **Taming the BEAST, Squamish, BC., Canada** 2023  
*Squamish BEAST Tamers*  
 Title: Species network estimation
- [12] **Botany Meeting, Boise, ID., USA** 2023  
*Seeing the Network for the Trees: Methodological and Empirical Advances in Reticulate Evolution Symposium*  
 Title: Pitfalls of popular computational methods to understand reticulate evolution
- [11] **Algorithms and Complexity in Phylogenetics\*** 2022  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood  
 Video recording available on YouTube [[link](#)]
- [10] **Indiana University, Bloomington, IN., USA** 2022  
 Title: Towards the network of life: Phylogenetic networks as a tool to understand complex evolutionary histories
- [9] **University of California San Diego, CA., USA\*** 2022  
 Title: Towards the network of life: Phylogenetic networks as a tool to understand complex evolutionary histories
- [8] **Evolution Meeting, Cleveland, OH., USA** 2022  
*Society of Systematic Biologists (SSB) Ernst Mayr award competition*  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks using composite likelihood directly from sequence data
- [7] **Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA., USA** 2022  
*Department of Biological Sciences*  
 Title: Inferring phylogenetic networks using composite likelihood directly from sequence data
- [6] **The Korean Association of Biological Sciences, Seoul, South Korea\*** 2021  
*The Ecological Society of Korea Section*  
 Title: Comparative performance of popular methods for hybrid detection using genomic data
- [5] **Workshop in Mathematical and Computational Biology\*** 2021  
*Bioinformatics Section*  
 Title: Comparative performance of popular methods for hybrid detection using genomic data
- [4] **Misericordia University, Dallas, PA., USA\*** 2021  
*Biology Seminar Series*  
 Title: How my gap year changed my perspectives
- [3] **The Stone Laboratory, Gibraltar Island, OH., USA** 2019  
*EEOB 1930 Introduction to Biological Studies–Aquatic Biology*  
 Title: Phylogenetic networks and behavioral evolution of Primates
- [2] **Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea** 2016  
*Eco-science/Eco-creative Graduate Seminar*  
 Title: On the use of Median-Joining network

- [1] **Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea** 2013  
*Laboratory of Behavior and Ecology Weekly Seminar*  
 Title: The evolution of infanticide and male takeover in primates in a macroevolutionary framework

#### Regular talks.....

- [6] **Evolution Meeting\*** 2021  
 Title: Comparative performance of popular methods for hybrid detection using genomic data
- [5] **The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH., USA\*** 2021  
*Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology (EEOB) Annual Darwin Series*  
 Title: Comparative performance of popular methods for hybrid detection using genomic data
- [4] **The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH., USA** 2020  
 Title: Which tool to use to detect hybridization?
- [3] **SSB Standalone Meeting, Gainesville, FL., USA** 2020  
 Title: Comparison and evaluation on the accuracy of popular hybrid detection methods using simulated data
- [2] **The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH., USA** 2019  
 Title: The giving tree: how the branching pattern of a tree is used in evolutionary biology
- [1] **Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea** 2017  
*Animal Communication Symposium*  
 Title: Illustrating hybridization

#### Poster presentations.....

- [5] **Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology (ISMB),  
 ISCB, Madison, WI., USA** 2022  
*Best Poster Award Winner*  
 Title: Inference of phylogenetic networks from sequence data using composite likelihood
- [4] **Evolution Meeting, Providence, RI., USA** 2019  
 Title: Performance and accuracy of Median-Joining Networks and comparisons with Bayesian phylogenies
- [3] **The Korean Association of Biological Sciences, Yong-In, South Korea** 2017  
 Title: Performance and accuracy of Median-Joining Networks and comparisons with Bayesian phylogenies
- [2] **Korean-American Scientists and Engineers Association (KSEA)  
 Young Generation Technical and Leadership Conference (YGTLC), Houston, TX., USA** 2014  
 Title: Matrilineal relationships of green pitvipers with the description of a new species of the genus *Trimeresurus* (Squamata: Viperidae: Crotalinae) from the central highlands of Vietnam
- [1] **University of Toronto, Toronto, ON., Canada** 2012  
*Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology undergraduate research Fair*  
 Title: The evolution of infanticide and male takeover in primates in a macro- evolutionary framework

## Academic Experience

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### Academic visit.....

**University of Wisconsin–Madison, WI., USA**

**2022**

*Wisconsin Institute for Discovery*

*Visiting Ph.D. student*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Claudia Solís-Lemus

**Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA., USA**

**2022**

*Department of Biological Sciences*

*Visiting Ph.D. student*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Jeremy Brown

### Research experience.....

**Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea**

**2016–2017**

*Division of Eco-science*

*Researcher*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Yikweon Jang

**Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea**

**2013**

*Division of Eco-science*

*Student researcher*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Jae Chun Choe

**University of Toronto, ON., Canada**

**2011–2013**

*Faculty of Forestry*

*Work-study student*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Sandy Smith and Eric Davies

*Biodiversity technician*

**Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, ON., Canada**

**2012**

*Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology*

*Student researcher*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Robert Murphy

**University of Toronto, ON., Canada**

**2011–2012**

*Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology*

*Student researcher*

Mentor: Prof. Dr. Deborah McLennan

**University of Toronto, ON., Canada**

**2010**

*Cities Centre, Department of Geography*

*Student data collector*

### Fieldwork experience.....

○ Laos, Indonesia, Mongolia, China, and South Korea

**2016–2017**

○ Greater Toronto Area (GTA)

**2010–2013**

## Teaching and Mentoring Experience

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### The Ohio State University.....

*Teaching assistant*

○ *EEOB 3310* Evolution

(Spring, Fall) **2021**

(Spring, Summer, Fall) **2020**

(Spring, Fall) **2019**

○ *EEOB 2520* Human Physiology

(Summer) **2021**

○ *EEOB 1930* Introduction to Biological Studies–Aquatic Biology

(Summer) **2019**

○ *BIOL 1113* Energy Transformation and Development

(Fall) **2018**

## University of Toronto.....

### Teaching assistant

- BIO 120 Adaptation and Biodiversity (Summer) 2015  
(Summer) 2014  
(Fall) 2013
- BIO 220 From Genomics to Ecosystems in a Changing World (Spring) 2015
- EEB 362 Macroevolution (Fall) 2014
- EEB 386 Avian Biology (Spring) 2014

### Miscellaneous.....

- Daruma Eco-Farm, Bang Phra, Si Racha District, Chon Buri, Thailand 2016
- Cheong-Shim International English Camp, Ga-Pyeong, South Korea 2009

### (Co-)supervision of undergraduate students.....

- Alanna Kong 2021–2022  
*Undergraduate student at University of Toronto*  
*Mentored through University of Toronto Woodsworth Mentorship Program*
- Devansh Pandey 2021–2022  
*Undergraduate student at Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur*  
*Currently a graduate student at University of Texas at Austin*  
*Mentored through Científico Latino*
- McKenna Molnar 2020–2021  
*Graduate student at The Ohio State University*  
*EEOB Graduate Mentoring Program, The Ohio State University, OH., USA*
- Shelby Jansens and Kimberly Wiles 2020  
*Co-supervised with Dr. Laura Kubatko*  
*Mathematical Biosciences Institute Research Experiences for Undergraduates program*  
*Title: Detecting shifts in the evolutionary process in SARS-CoV-2 genomes*
- Tulio Soares and Ellen Southam 2014–2015  
*Co-supervised with Dr. Pedro Bernardo*  
*University of Toronto and Royal Ontario Museum*
- Shreeram Senthivasan 2014  
*Co-supervised with Drs. Pedro Bernardo, Santiago Sánchez-Pacheco, and Robert Murphy*  
*University of Toronto and Royal Ontario Museum*

## Conference and Workshop Participation

\*Virtual event

### Participation with a role.....

- **Instructor** Methodological Advances in Reticulate Evolution, Botany Meeting, Boise, ID., USA 2023
- **SSB Mayr Award Abstract Reviewer & SSE Hamilton Award Judge**  
Evolution Meeting, Albuquerque, NM., USA 2023
- **Teaching Assistant** Workshop on Molecular Evolution, Woods Hole, MA., USA 2023
- **Technical Moderator** ISMB, ISCB, Madison, WI., USA 2022
- **Symposium Organizer (co-organized with Md Rejuan Haque)** 2022  
Evolution Meeting, Cleveland, OH., USA  
*Symposium title: Towards the network of life: Phylogenetic networks as a tool to understand complex evolutionary histories.*
- **Chair/Moderator** in multiple Faux-Live Sessions, Evolution Meeting\* 2021



<b>Participant</b> .....	
○ Midwest Machine Learning Symposium, University of Illinois Chicago, IL., USA	2023
○ Workshop in Mathematical and Computational Biology*	2022
○ Annual Conference of the Korean Association of Biological Sciences, South Korea*	2021
○ Workshop in Mathematical and Computational Biology*	2021
○ SMRT Leiden 2021 – Young Investigator Virtual Conference, hosted by Pacific Biosciences and Leiden University Medical Center*	2021
○ Virtual Asilomar 2021, American Society of Naturalists*	2021
○ Future of Systematics Workshop at SSB Standalone Meeting, funded by NSF, hosted by Dr. Emily Sessa, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL., USA	2020
○ Evolution Meeting, Providence, RI., USA	2019
○ Midwest Phylogenetics Workshop, Itasca Biological Station, funded by NSF, hosted by Dr. Emma Goldberg, University of Minnesota, MN., USA	2019
○ Annual Conference of the Korean Association of Biological Sciences, Yong-In, South Korea	2017
○ Society for Conservation Biology (SCB) Asia Section Workshop on Conservation policy, funded by SCB, Bangkok, Thailand	2017
○ World Congress of Herpetology, Hangzhou and Tonglu, China	2016
○ Phylogenomics Symposium and Software School hosted by Dr. Tandy Warnow at SSB Standalone Meeting, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI., USA	2015

## Diversity and Inclusion Activities

<b>Participation with a role</b> .....	
○ <b>Moderator</b> International Mixer, Evolution Meeting*	2021
○ <b>Moderator</b> Decolonizing Evolution Workshop, Evolution Meeting*	2021
○ <b>Moderator</b> Strategies for Responding to Harassment and Bullying: Improving Workplace Climate, Evolution Community Resources for Early Career Researchers 2020 (ECR <sup>2</sup> )*	2020
○ <b>Moderator</b> Fireside ECR Chat, ECR <sup>2</sup> *	2020

<b>Participant</b> .....	
○ International Mixer, Evolution Meeting, Cleveland, OH., USA	2022
○ Transformative Justice within Academia: A radical institutional reflection, The Centre for Criminology and Sociolegal Studies Graduate Student Conference, University of Toronto*	2021

## Grants and Awards

All in US Dollars unless stated. †Canadian Dollar; ‡Approximately converted from South Korean Won  
Total amount of funding received up to date ≈US\$50,000

<b>Highlights</b> .....	
○ The Presidential Fellowship, The Ohio State University [\$36,500]	2022
○ SSB Ad Hoc Funds [\$3,000]	2021
○ SSE Graduate Research Excellence Grant – R.C. Lewontin Award competition [\$1,800]	2020
○ University of Toronto Graduate Fellowship [Stipend with tuition waived for 18 months]	2013–2015
○ E.M. Walker Graduate Award in Biodiversity, University of Toronto [†\$2,615]	2014



## Other grants.....

- EvolCompGen Best Poster Award, ISMB, ISCB [\$100] 2022
- EEOB Graduate Development Grant, The Ohio State University [Funded] 2022
- EEOB Graduate Evolution & Ecology Student Organization (GEES) Career Development Grant, The Ohio State University [\$200] 2022
- Council of Graduate Students (CGS) Career Development Grant, The Ohio State University [\$350] 2022
- EEOB Darwin Talk Society Membership Grant, The Ohio State University [\$70] 2021
- EEOB Graduate Development Grant, The Ohio State University [Funded] 2021
- Funding for participation in Future of Systematics Workshop, SSB Standalone Meeting (NSF) [\$500] 2020
- Funding for participation in Midwest Phylogenetics Workshop (NSF) [Funded] 2019
- EEOB Graduate Development Grant, The Ohio State University [Funded] 2019
- Major contribution to successful grant application to National Research Foundation of Korea PI: Dr. Yikweon Jang, Ewha Womans University, Seoul, South Korea [‡\$500,000] 2017
- University of Toronto Undergraduate Bursaries [†≈\$3,000] 2010–2012

## Outreach and Service

- **Scientist** Junior science café, Morgridge Institute for Research, WI., USA 2023
- **Awardee** Graduate school awards ceremony, The Ohio State University 2022
- **Invited Panelist** EEOB 8894: EEOB Graduate eeminar, The Ohio State University 2020
- **Invited Guest** Translational Data Analytics Institute kickoff event, College of Arts and Sciences, The Ohio State University 2020
- **Volunteer** Museum of Biological Diversity's open house, The Ohio State University 2019
- **Graduate studies Committee** Department of EEOB, The Ohio State University 2020–2021
- **Admissions Committee** Department of EEOB, The Ohio State University 2019–2020
- **Communication Officer** Society for Conservation Biology (SCB), South Korean Chapter 2016–2017
- **Volunteer Biologist** Kuang Si Butterfly Park, Ban Thapene, Luang Prabang District, Laos 2016, 2022

## Peer-Review Activities

- Systematic Biology; Molecular Biology and Evolution; Genome Biology and Evolution; Scientific Reports; Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution; Infection, Genetics and Evolution; F1000Research

## Professional Memberships

- Society of Systematic Biologists
- Society for Study of Evolution

## Skills

**Programming** UNIX, R, Python, Julia, HTML, JavaScript

**Typesetting** L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, R Markdown, Jupyter Notebook

**Languages** English (Fluent), Korean (Native), Japanese (Intermediate)

## References

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- [1] **Prof. Dr. Laura S. Kubatko (Ph.D. advisor)**  
Department of Statistics and  
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- [2] **Prof. Dr. Claudia Solís-Lemus (Postdoc advisor)**  
Wisconsin Institute for Discovery  
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University of Wisconsin-Madison,  
330 N. Orchard St.  
Madison, WI., 53715, USA  
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- [3] **Prof. Dr. Robert W. Murphy (M.Sc. advisor)**  
Reptilia Sanctuary and Education Centre and  
Department of Natural History-Royal Ontario Museum and  
Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
University of Toronto  
100 Queen's Park  
Toronto, ON., M3S 2C6, Canada  
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- [4] **Prof. Dr. Bryan C. Carstens**  
Department of Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology  
And Tetrapod Division, Museum of Biological Diversity  
The Ohio State University,  
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