

Guest Speaker Quiz
MPED 2021
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What have you learned from the entire speaker series?

The guest speaker lectures were very enlightening. I learned there are a lot of different pieces that make up an ecologist and the paths that ecologists take are meandering. It was very interesting to hear from scientists who were at different stages in their careers and the paths they've taken to get there. Hearing about the speaker's journeys in the field of ecology was fascinating and made me realize that what I want to accomplish is attainable so long as I put in the work. I found Shannon's presentation particularly interesting because I would also be interested in combining my passion for ecology and art; knowing I know one way to go about doing so - through scientific illustrations. I found Emma's talk very informative; I enjoyed hearing about the different jobs she had coming out of her undergrad as well as how the skills she developed as an undergrad (fieldwork and modeling) helped her succeed in furthering her education. Sean's talk was similar to Emma's in that I learned the importance of developing programming skills which are essential for being a successful ecologist. Finally, Karlisa's lecture was very engaging; I learned how interdisciplinary work can be applied to the field of ecology and the importance of building a relationship with the people your research would impact. Ultimately, the guest speaker talks were very educational; I feel as though I have a better understanding of what it takes to succeed in the field of ecology and the opportunities that exist beyond a BSc.

How can you use the information they presented during this course?

Both Emma and Sean talked about the importance of developing complementary skills which include basic programming and statistics. This will be vital as I progress in my studies. The first step was taking applied data analysis here at Bamfield, but I plan to continue to practice what I've learned so I can become more fluent in programming languages such as R. Another point that stuck out to me was developing strong communication skills. This not only includes communicating science with classmates and instructors but also with the general public. I also believe that connecting with people doing the things you want to do also falls under this umbrella, which is what Sean talked about in his lecture. This is something I've often struggled with, however, I know if I want to be a successful ecologist I need to form connections within the field. Thus, I have plans to reach out to a few professors to do some volunteering in their labs so I can make some connections and hopefully find someone willing to take me on as an honours student in my 5th year. I know that doing so will set me up for success in the future. The final piece of information that will help me succeed as an ecologist is a piece of advice that Emma gave about getting curious and embracing uncertainty. With science, you are constantly learning foreign concepts and I find myself often feeling out of my depth. This leads to a lot of self-doubts and wondering if I have what it takes to be a good scientist. But this presentation reminded me that we all start somewhere, and we can't expect to be good at something when we are learning it for the first

time. Thus, no matter how apprehensive I am when it comes to learning something new, I will stay curious.

How can you use the information they presented outside of this course?

There was a lot of information in the guest lectures that was applicable to this course. First and foremost was a point made by Shannon that good science is based on observation. This was useful in our species identification guide as we were given species that looked very similar, and we had to use careful observation to find key features to differentiate them. I also took Shannon's advice on scientific illustration for the assignment. I made my drawings clear, emphasized key identification features, and compiled multiple references for the drawings. Emma's lecture was also a nice introduction to matrix modeling which was useful for our matrix modeling project. It contextualized using matrix modeling; Emma showed its applications in research, which helped me better understand our project. Finally, Karlisa instilled in me the importance of strong science communication. She spoke about the importance of learning to communicate to diverse audiences - as your research should be able to reach anyone regardless of different demographics. This applies to our field sampling presentations where we practice presenting to a variety of audiences.