

Morgan M. Sparks

Curriculum Vitae
December 2025

📍 Rocky Mountain Research Station,
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Research Positions

- 2024-Present **Research Fish Biologist**, Rocky Mountain Research Station, USDA Forest Service
2023-2024 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, National Science Foundation (*host Colorado State University*)
2017-2023 **Research Assistant**, Department of Biology, Purdue University
2014-2016 **Research Assistant**, USGS Alaska Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Alaska Fairbanks

Education

- 2023 Ph.D. Biology Purdue University
2016 M.Sc. Fisheries University of Alaska Fairbanks
2013 B.S. Wildlife Biology (Aquatic) *High Honors* University of Montana
2013 B.A. Journalism (Print) *High Honors* University of Montana

Publications

I have authored 8 papers in peer-reviewed journals. On Google Scholar my h-index is 6 with 137 total citations (as of 11 December 2025).

8. **Sparks, M.M.**, Maitland, B.M., Felts, E.A., Swartz, A.G., & Frater, P.N. (2025). hatchR: A toolset to predict when fish hatch and emerge. *Fisheries* (Cover Article), vuaf078. <https://doi.org/10.1093/fshmag/vuaf078>
7. Yin, X., Schraadt, C.E., **Sparks, M.M.**, Euclide, P.T., Hoyt, T.J., Ruetz III, C.R., Höök, T.O., & Christie, M.R. (2025). Parallel genetic adaptation amid a background of changing effective population sizes in divergent yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*) populations. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 292(2038), 20242339. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2024.2339>
6. **Sparks, M.M.**, Schraadt, C.E., Yin, X., Seeb, L.W., & Christie, M.R. (2024). Rapid genetic adaptation to a novel ecosystem despite a large founder event. *Molecular Ecology*, 33(20). <https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.17121>
5. **Sparks, M.M.**, Kraft, J.C., Blackstone, K.M.S., McNickle, G.G., & Christie, M.R. (2022). Large genetic divergence underpins cryptic local adaptation across ecological and evolutionary gradients. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 289(1984), 20221472. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2022.1472>
4. Yin, X., Martinez, A.S., Perkins, A., **Sparks, M.M.**, Harder, A.M., Willoughby, J.R., Sepúlveda, M.S., & Christie, M.R. (2021). Incipient resistance to an effective pesticide results from genetic adaptation and the canalization of gene expression. *Evolutionary Applications*, 14(3), 847–859. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eva.13166>
3. **Sparks, M.M.**, Falke, J.A., Quinn, T.P., Adkison, M.D., Schindler, D.E., Bartz, K., Young, D., & Westley, P.A.H. (2019). Influences of spawning timing, water temperature, and climatic warming on early life history phenology in western Alaska sockeye salmon. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences*, 76(1), 123–135. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjfas-2017-0468>
2. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Quinn, T.P. (2017). Thermal adaptation and phenotypic plasticity in a warming world: Insights from common garden experiments on Alaskan sockeye salmon. *Global Change Biology* (Cover Article), 23(12), 5203–5217. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.13782>
1. Eby, L.A., Pierce, R., **Sparks, M.M.**, Carim, K., & Podner, C. (2015). Multiscale Prediction of Whirling Disease Risk in the Blackfoot River Basin, Montana: A Useful Consideration for Restoration Prioritization? *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society*, 144(4), 753–766. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00028487.2015.1031914>

R-packages

hatchR has a total of 1648 downloads (as of 11 December 2025).

1. Maitland, B.M., **Sparks, M.M.**, Felts, E., Swartz, A., & Frater, P.N. (2025). *hatchR: Predict Fish Hatch and Emergence Timing*. <https://github.com/bmait101/hatchR>

Theses

2. **Sparks, M.M.**, (2023). *The Biological Consequences of Cryptic Local Adaptation and Contemporary Evolution* [Dissertation]. Purdue University.
1. **Sparks, M.M.**, (2016). *Climate, embryonic development, and potential for adaptation to warming water temperatures by Bristol Bay sockeye salmon* [Thesis]. University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Pre-prints and In Review

2. Hemstrom, W., Gruenthal, K., Shedd, K., Euclide, P., **Sparks, M.M.**, Habicht, C., Wilson, L., & Christie, M. (in review). Variation in run-timing is strongly influenced by a large-effect locus in highly divergent lineages of pink salmon. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.
1. **Sparks, M.M.**, Leavell, B.C., & Maitland, B.M. (in review). A generalizable tool for predicting developmental phenology for wild poikilotherms. *Ecological Applications*.

Manuscripts in Preparation

1. Thurow, R., Maitland, B.M., **Sparks, M.M.**, Isaak, D., & Buffington, J. (in prep). *Habitat heterogeneity and phenotypic diversity: The influence of stream attributes on timing of Chinook Salmon spawning*. https://github.com/morgan-sparks/mfsr_phenology

Grants

I have acquired \$470,970 in research grants (showing grants >\$4999):

| | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| Pending | PI. "Bull Trout movement using PIT tag arrays in the Boise Basin". <i>Funding from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i> . Collaborators: Bryan Maitland, Dan Isaak. | \$56,620 |
| Pending | Co-PI. "Scaling satellite monitoring of fish spawning across space". <i>Funding from National Geographic Society</i> . Collaborators: Dan Dauwalter (PI), Bryan Maitland, Kellie Carim, Russell Thurow. | \$20,000 |
| 2025–2027 | Co-PI. "Monitoring Chinook Salmon spawning from space". <i>Funding from Trout Unlimited</i> . Collaborators: Dan Dauwalter (PI), Bryan Maitland. | \$38,000 |
| 2024–2027 | PI. "Bull trout genetic capture-mark-recapture". <i>Funding from USDA Forest Service RMRS</i> . Collaborators: Bryan Maitland, Dan Isaak. | \$30,000 |
| 2024–2027 | Partner. "From flames to fish: Development of a reproducible model of co-management for wildfire and aquatic species at Zena Creek Ranch, Idaho". <i>Funding from Joint Fire Science Program</i> . Collaborators: Jen Pierce (PI), Anna Bergstrom, Bryan Maitland. | \$150,000 |
| 2023–2026 | PI. "Evaluating the potential for genetic rescue in Colorado's state fish, the Greenback Cutthroat Trout". <i>Funding from Colorado Parks and Wildlife</i> . Collaborators: Kevin Rogers, Chris Funk, Eric Anderson. | \$103,000 |
| 2022–2023 | PI. "The roles of gene flow and local adaptation in driving fitness in a genetically depauperate fish". <i>Funding from NSF PRFB</i> . Collaborators: Kevin Rogers, Chris Funk, Eric Anderson. | \$138,000 |
| 2017–2017 | PI. "Rosenberg Graduate Fellowship". <i>Funding from Purdue University, Biological Sciences</i> . Collaborators: NA. | \$5,000 |

Below are invited full proposals that were invited but withdrawn due to federal funding issues:

| | | |
|-----------|--|-------------|
| 2025–2029 | PI. "A palaeoecological toolset to address shifting baseline syndrome". <i>Funding from DoD SERDP</i> . Collaborators: Bryan Maitland, Kellie Carim, Russell Thurow. | \$1,800,000 |
|-----------|--|-------------|

Below are invited full proposals that were not awarded:

| | | |
|-----------|--|-----------|
| 2022–2026 | PI. "Characterizing genomic risk and adaptive potential to climate change in two BLM Special Status Species fishes". <i>Funding from Bureau of Land Management</i> . Collaborators: Chris Funk, Kevin Rogers, Eric Anderson. | \$196,000 |
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Honors and Awards

Professional Awards

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| 2024 | Outstanding Service Award, U.S. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station |
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Fellowships

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| 2023 | SoGES Sustainability Leadership Fellowship, Colorado State University | |
| 2022 | Bisland Dissertation Fellowship, Purdue University | One semester full support |
| 2021 | Waser Fellowship, Purdue University Department of Biological Sciences | 6 months full support |
| 2020 | Purdue Research Foundation Graduate Fellowship | One year full support |
| 2017 | Andrews Fellowship, Purdue University Department of Biological Sciences | Two years full support |

Student Awards

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|------|--|---|
| 2017 | Best Student Presentation | Indiana Chapter American Fisheries Society |
| 2013 | Mortar Board Outstanding Senior Award | Wildlife Biology, University of Montana |
| 2013 | 3rd place Student Feature Writing | Society of Professional Journalists, Region 10 |
| 2012 | Student Speaker and Representative | University of Montana Wildlife Biology 75th Anniversary |
| 2012 | Wally McClure Scholarship | Montana Chapter American Fisheries Society |
| 2010 | Montana Druids Honors Society | Wildlife Biology, University of Montana |
| 2009 | Western Undergraduate Exchange Scholarship | University of Montana |

Invited Talks

- 2025 "Fisheries ecology and conservation for the 21st century". Wildlife Biology Program, University of Montana.
- 2024 "Using genomics to do genetics for fish and wildlife management". Department of Natural Resources, South Dakota State University.
- 2023 "Phenotypic and genetic diversity of fishes in changing environments". Rocky Mountain Research Station, US Forest Service.
- 2022 "The ecological and evolutionary significance of cryptic local adaptation". Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Purdue University.
- 2017 "Thermal local adaptation and developmental diversity in western Alaskan sockeye salmon". Department of Forestry and Natural Resources, Purdue University.

Teaching

Teaching Assistantships

| | | | |
|------|---|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 2023 | BIOL 69500: Data Science for Biologists | 3 credits | Purdue University |
| 2022 | BIOL 5800: Evolution | 3 credits | Purdue University |
| 2019 | BIOL 19500: CURE Disease Ecology Lab | 5 credits | Purdue University |
| 2018 | BIOL 58210: Ecological Statistics | 3 credits | Purdue University |
| 2015 | FISH 427: Ichthyology | 5 credits | University of Alaska Fairbanks |

Guest Lectures

- 2025 "Fisheries case studies in evolution". WLF 531, South Dakota State University.
- 2024 "Using genomics to do genetics for fisheries applications". BIOL 640, University of Idaho.
- 2023 "Fisheries case studies in evolution". WLF 531, South Dakota State University.
- 2022 "Evolution in few generations: Rapid Evolution". BIOL 58000, Purdue University.
- 2019 "Introductory R: Programming and visualization". BIOL 59100, Purdue University.
- 2017 "Climate change and adaptation: How do organisms persist?". BIOL 58000, Purdue University.
- 2017 "Introduction to visualization of linear models with ggplot". BIOL 58210, Purdue University.

Mentoring

I have mentored 2 post-baccalaureates and 4 undergraduates in lab and field settings:

Post-baccalaureate

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|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2025-Present | Amy Wang | Cornell University (EEB Mentor Match) |
| 2019-2020 | Julia Markovitz | Purdue University |

Undergraduates

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2021-2023 | Connor Johnson | Purdue University |
| 2017-2018 | Lindsey Dice | Purdue University |
| 2016-2017 | Monroe Morris | University of Alaska Fairbanks |
| 2015-2017 | Genevieve Johnson | University of Alaska Fairbanks |

Professional Service and Leadership

Service

- 2023-Present Ad hoc Advisor, Greenback Cutthroat Trout Recovery Team
 2020-2021 Student Representative at Town Hall, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Purdue University
 2017-2018 Advisor, Purdue University Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
 2016-2017 Science Advisor, Indiana Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
 2015-2016 Student Representative, Alaska Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Executive Committee
 2014-2016 Outreach Coordinator, University of Alaska Fairbanks Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
 2013-2014 Department Head Search Committee, Wildlife Biology, University of Montana
 2012-2013 Secretary, Westslope Chapter of Trout Unlimited
 2010-2013 President, University of Montana Student Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

Society Memberships

- 2010-Present American Fisheries Society
 2016-2018 American Society of Naturalists
 2018-2019 Society for the Study of Evolution

Session Organization

- 2026 Chair, Fire and Fish: 25 years of progress and challenges, American Fisheries Society National
 2026 Co-chair, Perspectives on the Cutthroat Trout species complex in the genomics era, Western Division American Fisheries Society
 2024 Co-chair, Science to Restore and Manage Wildland Aquatic Habitats and Watersheds, American Geophysical Union

Reviewer

Grant Review:

Great Lakes Fisheries Commission

Scientific Journal Review:

North American Journal of Fisheries Management, Conservation Science and Practice, Molecular Ecology Resources, Journal of Applied Ichthyology, Conservation Physiology, Heredity, Evolutionary Applications, PLoS ONE, Canadian Journal of Aquatic and Fisheries Science, Transactions of the American Fisheries Society

Outreach and Broader Impacts

Media and Public Talks

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|------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| 2015 | Backcountry Journal | Article |
| 2013 | Montana Native News Project | Editor |
| 2012 | Montana Native News Project | Writer |
| 2012 | Missoulian | Article |
| 2012 | Montana Trout Unlimited, Trout Line | Writer |

Public Service and Outreach

- | | | |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 2025 | Mentor | EEB Mentor Match |
| 2024 | Professional Development Seminar | Purdue University |
| 2023 | Professional Development Seminar | Fort Lewis College |

Conference Presentations

Underlined names indicate undergraduate research mentees.

Presentations

18. **Sparks, M.M.**, Felts, E., Swartz, A., & Maitland, B.M. (2025a). *hatchR: A toolset to predict when fish hatch and emerge* [Paper]. Idaho American Fisheries Society.
17. **Sparks, M.M.**, Leavell, B., & Maitland, B.M. (2025b). *hatchR: A toolset to predict developmental phenology for wild poikilotherms* [Paper]. Society for Freshwater Science, PNW Chapter.
16. **Sparks, M.M.**, (2024a). *How can the genomic history of introduced salmonids inform their native range conservation and management?* [Paper]. Washington-British Columbia-Idaho Joint American Fisheries Society.

15. **Sparks, M.M.**, (2024b). Leveraging the power of parentage analyses to investigate bull trout [Paper]. Idaho Statewide Bull Trout Meeting.
14. **Sparks, M.M.**, Harder, A., Schraadt, C., Seeb, L., & Christie, M.R. (2023). A large, recently evolved supergene facilitates rapid adaptation of an introduced fish [Paper]. Coastwide Salmonid Genetics Meeting.
13. **Sparks, M.M.**, Seeb, L.W., Seeb, J.E., & Christie, M.R. (2022a). The genomic consequences of novel age-at-maturity phenotypes in pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) introduced to the great lakes [Paper]. Evolution.
12. **Sparks, M.M.**, Seeb, L.W., Seeb, J.E., & Christie, M.R. (2022b). The genomic consequences of novel age-at-maturity phenotypes in pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) introduced to the great lakes [Paper]. American Fisheries Society.
11. **Sparks, M.M.**, Seeb, L.W., Seeb, J.E., & Christie, M.R. (2021). Genomic insights from the introduction of pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) to the great lakes [Paper]. American Fisheries Society.
10. **Sparks, M.M.**, Blackstone, K.M.S., Kraft, J.C., McKinnick, G.G., Oakley, C.G., & Christie, M.R. (2019). Uncovering cryptic local adaptation across environmental gradients: Quantifying the covariance of genetic and environmental influences on phenotypes [Paper]. Ecological Society of America.
9. **Sparks, M.M.**, Falke, J.A., Westley, P.A.H., Adkison, M.D., Bartz, K., Quinn, T.P., Schindler, D.E., & Young, D. (2017). Predicting developmental phenology in wild populations: A case study with western Alaska sockeye salmon [Paper]. Indiana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.
8. **Sparks, M.M.**, (2017). The patterns and processes of adaptive and non-adaptive phenotypic plasticity: A meta-analysis [Paper]. Purdue EEB Seminar.
7. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Adkison, M.A. (2016a). Patterns in diversity: Bristol Bay sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) hatch timing [Paper]. University of Alaska American Fisheries Society Student Symposium.
6. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Adkison, M.A. (2016b). Population-specific spawn timing and water temperature drive early life history phenology in western Alaska sockeye salmon [Paper]. USGS Alaska Cooperative Unit Meeting.
5. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., Adkison, M.A., & Quinn, T.P. (2016c). Hatch timing and embryo survival in a changing climate: Thermal adaptation and adaptive plasticity in sockeye salmon [Paper]. Western Alaska LCC Webinar.
4. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Adkison, M.A. (2016d). Predicting sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) hatch timing by incorporating natural variability into an existing model [Paper]. Southwest Interagency Fish Meeting.
3. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Quinn, T.P. (2016e). Experimental test for thermal local adaptation and heritable phenotypic plasticity in the hatching timing by sockeye salmon using a common garden approach [Paper]. Evolution.
2. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Adkison, M.A. (2015). Does incorporating compensatory development better predict developmental phenology in sockeye salmon? [Paper]. University of Alaska American Fisheries Society Student Symposium.
1. **Sparks, M.M.**, Eby, L.A., Pierce, R., Carim, K., & Podner, C. (2014). Is whirling disease driving salmonid community shifts in the Blackfoot River Basin, Montana? [Paper]. Alaska Chapter American Fisheries Society.

Posters

5. **Sparks, M.M.**, Felts, E., Swartz, A., & Maitland, B.M. (2025a). *hatchR*: A toolset to predict when fish hatch and emerge [Poster]. Idaho Water Quality Meeting.
4. **Sparks, M.M.**, Felts, E., Swartz, A., & Maitland, B.M. (2025b). *hatchR*: A toolset to predict when fish hatch and emerge [Poster]. Western Division American Fisheries Society.
3. Maitland, B.M., Felts, E., Swartz, A., & **Sparks, M.M.**, (2025). *hatchR*: A toolset to predict when fish hatch and emerge [Poster]. American Fisheries Society.
2. Dice, L.M., **Sparks, M.M.**, & Christie, M.R. (2018). Does acclimatization time affect response to lampricide exposure in sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*)? [Poster]. American Fisheries Society.
1. **Sparks, M.M.**, Westley, P.A.H., Falke, J.A., & Adkison, M.A. (2015). Predicting sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) hatch timing by incorporating natural variability into an existing model [Poster]. Alaska Chapter American Fisheries Society.

References

Dr. Chris Cheek, Assistant Professor

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