Scientific Spotlight: Maydianne Andrade

1. Dr. Maydianne Andrade is a truly accomplished and inspiring member of the scientific community, achieving much with her research. What I enjoyed most when reading about her work and what I found most interesting in all her research was the study of how exactly the mating process between Australian redback spider works. Specifically, how the male seems to be aware he is being eaten during the activity and still repeats the process of going back to mate again and be fully killed (Seftel, 2009). 2. Her work of studying the reproductive behaviors of spiders, specifically how the male is cannibalized and eaten by the female during the process of mating, is directly related to topics covered when discussing animal reproductive strategies. Topics include second male advantage as a result of indirect male competition, in this case, the elaborate penis morphology and copulatory plugs of the male Australian redback spider. Additionally, her research is related to the topic of parental investment, as the redback spider sacrifices himself for the successful creation of his progeny (*Andrade Lab,* n.d.). 3. The tools used in her lab include raising entire generations of spiders, and closely monitoring each spider at each stage of its life, including during the process of mating. To do this, they have thousands of cages to separate the spiders from each other, as they may eat each other through most of their life stages. Additionally, there is also occasional fieldwork done by members of the lab (Seftel, 2009).

4. The most interesting thing about Maydianne’s process and journey into the field of biology she currently studies, is the surety she had in what she wanted to pursue and how she knew which specific area of study she wanted to go into when she began her journey. I also enjoyed reading about how she was encouraged to begin her work because of an article that she wished to disprove (Fanfair*,* 2018). This act truly displays the passion she had for simply understanding what she found interesting, in this case, the mating process of spiders. 5. I see myself in how she was not yet set on the career she wished to pursue as she first began her academic journey. She discovered something she found interesting and could see herself making a career out of and used that to propel herself into the beginnings of her career, which turned out to be very impressive and accomplished. This just goes to show how even the most inspiring and capable people start from somewhere, which is where all the students taking this class are currently at in their academic and professional careers.

References

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