

Justin John Millar

PHD CANDIDATE · UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
125 Sw 5th Terrace, Gainesville FL 36201

☎ 248-229-8782 | ✉ jjmillar@ufl.edu | 🏠 www.justinmillar.com | 🗣 [justinmillar](#) | 📺 [justinjmillar](#) | 🐦 [@justinjmillar](#)

Education

University of Florida

Gainesville, FL

PH.D. IN FOREST RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

Aug. 2014 - exp. Dec. 2018

- Dissertation: "Development of Bayesian statistical frameworks and decision support tools for the management of early childhood malaria"
- Affiliate with the UF Emerging Pathogens Institute and the UF Informatics Institute
- Certification in Geospatial Analysis
- Grinter Graduate Fellow

University of Mississippi

Oxford, MS

M.Sc. IN BIOLOGY

Jan. 2012 - Dec. 2013

- Thesis: "Bacterial community biogeography of the major tributaries of the Lower Mississippi River"
- GPA: 4.0

Michigan State University

East Lansing, MI

B.Sc. IN ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

Aug. 2007 - May 2011

- Attended Lyman Briggs College for Natural Sciences
- Graduated on Dean's List

Additional Training

Ecological Forecasting Summer Course

Boston, MA

NEAR-TERM ECOLOGICAL FORECASTING INITIATIVE

Aug. 2018

- Inaugural NSF-funded workshop focused on making predictions and forecasting ecological phenomena (e.g., infectious diseases, phenology, microbiomes, carbon fluxes)
- Topics included Bayesian statistics, fusing multiple data sources, forecast uncertainty, data assimilation, machine learning, decision science
- One of fifteen graduate students, post-docs, and early career academic scientists selected from appx. 150 applicants

Software/Data Carpentry Instructor Training

Gainesville, FL

SOFTWARE/DATA CARPENTRY

May 2017

- Learned instructional pedagogy as well as the practicalities of teaching Software and Data Carpentry workshops
- Certified to teach, organize, and host all official Carpentries workshops

Mothur Bioinformatics Workshop

Detroit, MI

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

June 2013

- Learned to use the mothur programming platform for microbial bioinformatic data analysis
- Topics included DNA sequencing technologies (Sanger, 454, Illumina, IonTorrent, PacBio), introduction to mothur, command line interface, and GUI, improving sequence quality, alignment, chimera detection, distance calculations, OTU identification, sequence/OTU classification, measuring alpha and beta diversity, population-level analyses

Work Experience

University of Florida

Gainesville, FL

GRADUATE RESEARCH/TEACHING ASSISTANT

Aug. 2014 - Present

- Adapted a [novel approach for detecting malaria risk factors using Bayesian model averaging](#), providing a semi-parametric framework which produces fully interpretable models that account for uncertainty in model selection and outperformed logistic and LASSO regression in out-of-sample prediction
- Developed a conceptual framework for comparing the cost-effectiveness of presumptive treatment versus test-then-treat for mass malaria interventions, and then used publicly available data to create a [web-based decision support tool](#)
- Analyzed the impact of local health facilities on early childhood malaria in northern Ghana, created additive model to optimize location of new health facility, and developed [web-based application to provide real-time projections on cases and disease prevalence](#)
- Organized research trip to Ghana to [present research findings to collaborators](#) and participate in field collection and lab identification
- Served as a teaching assist for two statistics-focused courses and founded open session for learning R programming ([UFR Meetup](#))

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, MI

LAB MANAGER/FIELD TECHNICIAN

Feb. 2014 - Jul. 2014

- Implemented field work on microbial sampling and eDNA in inland lakes throughout Michigan, which involved maintain, transporting, and operating small watercraft, water sample filtration, and supervising graduate and undergraduate technicians
- Microbial lab analyses including DNA extraction and amplification, eDNA quantification, and enzyme assays

University of Mississippi

Oxford, MS

GRADUATE RESEARCH/TEACHING ASSISTANT

Jan. 2012 - Dec. 2013

- Organized and implemented NSF-funded project on microbial biogeography and nutrient processing throughout the Mississippi River network, which consisted of planning two extended fieldwork periods (> eight weeks), transporting and piloting motor- and man-powered small watercraft, and daily setup of lab equipment at remote locations
- Performed microbial ecological lab procedures including enzyme assays, DNA extraction, PCR, DGGE, and bioinformatics analyses
- Ran a teaching lab and supervised undergraduate honors researchers

Cape Eleuthera Institute

Eleuthera, Bahamas

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Jul. - Dec. 2011

- Collected data on the biographic distribution of bonefish (*Albula vulpes*) using seine netting, hook-and-line, external tagging, and regular data entry and quality control
- Conducted lab experiments on the effects of climate change on bonefish physiology using wet-lab manipulation experiments on fish respirometry

Mote Marine Laboratory

Sarasota, FL

REU INTERNSHIP

Jun. - Aug. 2010

- Implemented population study of common snook *Centropomus undecimalis* which consisted of daily sampling and external tagging using hand-pulled seine netting
- Prepared statistical analysis of large 10-year data set of biological and hydrological data

Michigan State University

East Lansing, MI

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH & TEACHING ASSISTANT

Sep. 2008 - May 2011

- Conducted field and lab research on soil ecology in the *Grandy Lab*, which included agricultural field sampling, soil entomology and biogeochemistry assays (microscopy, live culture, C:N pyrolysis)
- Collected meta-analysis of early-life demography across animal phyla under Dr. Richard Hill

Skills

Statistics	Bayesian methods, Generalized (mixed) linear & additive models (GLM(M)/GAM(M)), machine learning (Random Forest, SVM)
Programming	R, JAGS, (r)Stan, SQL (MySQL, PostgreSQL, Access), GIS (ArcGIS, QGIS), Git, bash, Python, LaTeX
Web	GitHub, (R)Markdown, (Hu)Go, Jekyll, Overleaf, basic HTML/CSS
Field-related	Open Water SCUBA certification, experience with operating and maintaining small watercraft

Publications

- In prog.** **J.J. Millar**, P. Psychas, B. Abuaku, P. Amratia, K. Koram, K.B. Toh, D. Valle. Assessing and projecting the role of distance from local health facilities on early childhood malaria: a case example from northern Ghana. *In progress*.
- J.J. Millar**, K.B. Toh, D. Valle. To screen or not to screen: an interactive framework for comparing cost-effectiveness of mass screening and treatment of malaria. *In progress*
- J.T. Payne, C.R. Jackson, **J.J. Millar**, C.A. Ochs. Timescales of variation in diversity and productivity of bacterioplankton assemblages in the Lower Mississippi River. *Microbial Ecology*. In review.
- P. Amratia, P. Psychas, B. Abuaku, C. Ahorlu, **J.J. Millar**, S. Oppong, K. Koram, and D.R. Valle. 2018. Using a Bayesian geostatistical model to characterize local-scale heterogeneity of malaria risk in Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo district in northern Ghana. *Am. J. Trop. M. Hyg.* In review.
- 2019** D. Valle, K.B. Toh, and **J.J. Millar**. Rapid prototyping of decision support tools for conservation. *Conservation Biology*. In press.
- 2018** **Millar, J.J.**, P. Psychas, P. Amratia, B. Abuaku, C. Ahorlu, K. Koram, S. Oppong, and D. Valle. 2018. "Detecting local risk factors for residual malaria in northern Ghana using Bayesian model averaging". *Malaria Journal* 17:343.
- 2017** Payne, J.T., **J.J. Millar**, C. Jackson, and C. Ochs. 2017. "Patterns of variation in diversity of the Mississippi river microbiome over 1,300 kilometers". *PLoS ONE* 12(3): e0174890.
- 2016** Valle, D.R., **J.J. Millar**, and P. Amratia. 2016. "Spatial heterogeneity can undermine the effectiveness of country-wide test and treat policy for malaria: a case study from Burkina Faso". *Malaria Journal* 15: 513.
- 2015** Valle, D.R., J.M. Tucker-Lima, **J.J. Millar**, P. Amratia, and U. Haque. 2015. "Bias in logistic regression due to imperfect diagnostic test results and practical correction approaches". *Malaria Journal* 14: 434.
- Millar, J.J.**, J.T. Payne, C.A. Ochs, and C.R. Jackson. 2015. "Particle-associated and cell-free extracellular enzyme activity in relation to nutrient status of large tributaries of the Lower Mississippi River". *Biogeochemistry* 124(1-3): 255-271.
- 2014** Jackson, C.R., **J.J. Millar**, J.T. Payne, and C.A. Ochs. 2014. "Free-living and particle-associated bacterioplankton in large rivers of the Mississippi River Basin demonstrate biogeographic patterns". *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 80(23): 7186-7195.
- 2013** Jackson, C.R., H.L. Tyler, and **J.J. Millar**. 2013. "Determination of Microbial Extracellular Enzyme Activity in Waters, Soils, and Sediments using High Throughput Microplate Assays". *Journal of Visualized Experiments* 80: 50399.

Reviewer: Ecological Applications, Malaria Journal

Presentations

American Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene (ASTMH)

POSTER PRESENTATION

New Orleans, LA, USA · 2018

"Assessing and projecting the role of distance from local health facilities on early childhood malaria prevalence: a case example from northern Ghana"

POSTER PRESENTATION

Baltimore, MD, USA · 2017

"To screen or not to screen: An interactive tool that integrates costs and spatial heterogeneity to determine when mass-screen-and-treat is an effective malaria control strategy"

POSTER PRESENTATION

Atlanta, GA, USA · 2016

"Identifying malaria risk factors in a hyper-endemic setting using Bayesian model selection"

CarpentryCon

ORAL & POSTER PRESENTATION

Dublin, Ireland · 2018

"A Carpentries culture at the University of Florida"

Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography Meeting (ASLO)

POSTER PRESENTATION

New Orleans, LA, USA · 2013

"Microbial nutrient processing via extracellular enzyme activity in major tributaries of the Lower Mississippi River"

American Society of Microbiology (ASM)

ORAL PRESENTATION

New Orleans, LA, USA · 2013

"Bacterial community structure in major tributaries of the Lower Mississippi River is driven by habitat differences at regional and micro-scales"

POSTER PRESENTATION

Starkville, MS, USA · 2012

Microbial extracellular enzyme activity in large rivers of the Mississippi River Basin"

Teaching and Workshops

UNIVERSITY COURSES (TEACHING ASSISTANT)

Introduction to Applied Statistics

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Spring/Fall 2018

- Online Course (120 to 150 students)
- Description: Conceptual and practical understanding of the application of statistics in the agricultural and life sciences using a combination of lectures, programming demonstrations, data exercises using the programming language R, group activities, and primary literature to teach introductory statistics at the graduate level
- Duties: Grading assignments, monitoring and responding to weekly discussion boards, serving as first contact for questions on content and issues with quizzes/exams, proofing assignments and final exam, holding weekly office hours
- Created [additional notes and content](#) and [a comprehensive bonus assignment](#)

Introduction to Bayesian Statistics

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Spring 2016

- Description: Introduce life scientists to Bayesian statistics. We will explore basic ideas regarding integration through simulation (Monte Carlo integration), the philosophy and strengths of Bayesian statistics, and the Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) algorithms needed to fit such models. We will focus on several real world examples and how to transform these problems into statistical models. This course will rely on substantial extra-class work, in order to provide students with extensive hands on experience on conceptualizing, implementing, and interpreting the results of these models. Ideally, this experience will be enough to enable students to develop their own Bayesian models after this course is over. We will try to cover simple (e.g., Normal and Poisson), mixed effect and multi-level regression models but this will fundamentally depend on the speed with which the class is able to follow the course. Implementation of these models will be done both with JAGS as well as customized R code
- Duties: Grade weekly assignments (focused on R and JAGS code), grade group presentations, organize weekly "queries" from students, hold weekly office hours
- Motivated groups to develop webpages outlining their projects and contribute to [new course website](#)

Advanced General Microbiology

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Spring 2012

- Description: A survey of the principles and concepts of microbiology including the biochemistry, cell biology, metabolism, genetics, ecology, evolution, and biodiversity of microorganisms, as well as the impacts of microorganisms on human affairs
- Duties: Prepare and maintain material for lab (mix and pour agar plates, culture strains), write and grade quizzes, hold open lab hours

Mangrove Flats Field Ecology

CAPE ELEUTHERA INSTITUTE

Summer 2011

- Small group (6) of high school juniors/seniors
- Description: Provide hands-on field research in near-shore mangrove ecology.
- Duties: Supervise weekly field sampling (free dive fish identification, seine netting, fish tagging), write and grade quizzes and assignments, prepare students for presentation for Bahamian Minister of the Environment

Applied Research Techniques (a.k.a. the Popcorn Course)

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Spring 2011

- Description: Introduce students to how food companies do research to improve their products, and to have students carry out a research project of their own. With generous financial support from ConAgra Foods (makers of Peter Pan Peanut Butter, Reddi-Wip, and Parkay Margarine, among others), students will conduct experiments on a genuine research question associated with either ConAgra's Orville Redenbacher or Act II microwave popcorn
- Duties: Supervise student-developed research projects, create and grade quizzes and group project assignment, travel with class to ConAgra head-quarters and support student presentations to Research and Development team

Cell and Molecular Biology Lab

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Fall 2010

- Description: Study of the building blocks of cells, the gross anatomy of the cell, and the structures and organelles that perform the work necessary for cell function. We will also examine several cellular processes at the molecular level, including the central dogma of molecular biology: RNA transcription and protein translation. We will examine the bioenergetic processes necessary to sustain life; first photosynthesis, the mechanism by which plant chloroplasts capture light energy to make the carbohydrates that bring life to earth. We then discuss the mitochondria and how they break down carbohydrates to release energy. All topics will be framed within the context of the human physiology. Mastery of these topics will provide you with an understanding of modern molecular and cellular biology
- Duties: Prepare lab materials, supervise student labs, grade lab reports, hold open lab hours

WORKSHOPS & TUTORIALS

SOFTWARE & DATA CARPENTRY

University of Florida

- Served as an instructor and/or a helper in multiple (at least ten) Software (SC) and Data (DC) Carpentry workshops (SW: The Unix Shell, Version Control with Git, Programming with Python, Programming with R, R for Reproducible Scientific Analysis; DC: Data Organization in Spreadsheets for Ecologists, Data Cleaning with OpenRefine for Ecologists, Data Management with SQL for Ecologists, Data Analysis and Visualization in R for Ecologist)
- Piloted an [experimental extended workshop series](#)
- Organized one of the first Data Carpentry Geospatial workshops

R-LADIES

Gainesville, FL

- [Introduction to blogdown](#)

UF R MEETUP

University of Florida

- [Introduction to Leaflet in R](#)
- [Introduction to Shiny](#)
- [Introduction to Dataframes in R](#)
- [Introduction to R and RStudio](#)

UNDERGRADUATE STATISTICS CLUB - R TUTORIALS

University of Florida

- [Introduction to ggplot](#)
- [Introduction to R and RStudio](#)

STATISTICS FOR ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The Island School

- Three-part series covering introductory topics on common statistics (descriptive and inferential) for 30 high school juniors & seniors

Grants & Awards

- 2018 **Travel Grant**, School of Forest Resources and Conservation, Univ. of Florida
- Travel Grant**, UF Carpentry Club, Univ. of Florida
- Travel Grant**, UF Informatics Institute, Univ. of Florida
- Selected Travel Award**, UF Carpentry Club, Univ. of Florida
- 2017 **Travel Grant**, Graduate School, Univ. of Florida
- Travel Grant**, UF Informatics Institute, Univ. of Florida
- 2014 **Fellowship**, Grinter fellow, School of Forest Resources and Conservation, Univ. of Florida
- 2013 **Early Career Travel Award**, Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography
- Travel Grant**, Department of Biology, Univ. of Mississippi
- 2011 **Teaching Award**, Most Outstanding Teaching Assistant, Michigan State Univ.

Extracurricular Activities

UF R Meetup

FOUNDING ORGANIZER

- Founded an weekly open two-hour session for learning R programming through practical tutorials, topical presentations, and peer-to-peer code debugging
- Organized speakers for weekly presentations, plan and implement tutorials, debug code
- Created [website](#) and [GitHub Organization](#) for organizing meetup and disseminating information, and managed list-serv

Gainesville, FL

Nov. 2017 - Present

UF Carpentry Club

INAUGURAL BOARD MEMBER

- Served as part of a group of independent members of the UF community dedicated to providing structured pathways for our colleagues to learn informatics skills outside of the traditional university curriculum
- Planned, organized, and implemented Software and Data Carpentry workshops (over 400 participants), attend biweekly meetings, helped create [website](#) and [GitHub Organization](#)

Gainesville, FL

Jan. 2018 - Present

Software, Tools, and Lessons

Probit regression using Bayesian model averaging (with reversible-jump MCMC) for estimating disease risk factors (example with malaria)

Data & R Code · Lead Developer

Projecting the impact of new facilities on childhood malaria in Bunkpurungu-Yunyoo, Ghana

Shiny App · Lead Developer

To screen or not to screen?: An interactive tool that integrates costs and spatial heterogeneity to determine when mass-screen-and-treat is an effective malaria control strategy

Shiny App · Lead Developer

Comparison of presumptive treatment and test-than-treat scenarios across possible prevalence rates

Shiny App · Lead Developer

Probability of malaria infection in Burkina Faso

Shiny App · Aid Developer

Regions for presumptive treatment in Burkina Faso

Shiny App · Aid Developer

Finding statistics courses across the University of Florida

Shiny App · Aid Developer

Introduction to Geospatial Raster and Vector Data with R

Open-Source Lesson · Contributor

Data Analysis and Visualization in R for Ecologists

Open-Source Lesson · Contributor