

# Ellen Whittle

Visit [ellenwhittle.com](http://ellenwhittle.com) for contact information.

## Education

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University of Wyoming  
*M.S. Candidate in Zoology*

Laramie, WY  
Anticipated Spring 2021

University of Montana  
*B.S in Wildlife Biology*

Missoula, MT  
May 2015

Shepherd High School  
*Salutatorian*

Shepherd, MT  
May 2011

## Professional Experience

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### **Northern Long-Eared Bat Maternity Roost Project—Black Hills, WY** **Jan 2019-Present**

- Planned and implemented a season of bat capture and tracking
- Oversaw a field crew in remote locations
- Wrote grants to supplement research costs
- Worked through permitting process to work with an ESA species
- Coordinated with USFWS, WYGFD, USFS, and BLM to prioritize research goals

### **Fall Bat Tracking Technician—Lander, WY** **Sep 2018-Present**

WY Game and Fish Dept.

- Captured little brown bats and silver-haired bats at high elevation
- Assisted with attaching radio transmitters to 2 bats
- Led a mist-netting capture crew in cold, inclement conditions
- Tracked individuals to roost locations in the Wind River Mountains
- Organized equipment and new gear purchases for the project

### **Bat Technician—Laramie, WY** **Summer 2016-2018**

Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNND)

- Captured bats with mist nets up to 5 nights in a row
- Attached VHF transmitters to female Northern Long-Eared Bats
- Tracked individual bats via radio telemetry to 17 unique maternity or day roost trees
- Counted up to 50 bats at a time during evening emergence surveys
- Worked as a 2-person team independent of supervisor for capture, tagging, and tracking
- Conducted vegetation plot surveys at roost trees and random locations
- Set up and retrieved acoustic monitoring equipment at locations across Wyoming

### **Lesser Prairie Chicken Technician—Meade, KS** **Feb-May 2018**

Kansas State University (KSU)

- Captured and handled dozens of Lesser Prairie Chickens from leks in rural Kansas
- Spent long hours observing birds at the lek and resighting bands
- Fitted Chickens with satellite transmitter backpacks
- Conducted raptor surveys and vegetation plots
- Used hand tools to build and set up traps and equipment daily
- Worked in close quarters with a small crew in a relatively isolated community

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## **Nongame Caving Technician—Lander, WY**

**Jan-Feb 2018**

Wyoming Game and Fish Dept. (WYGFD)

- Led crews through caves while surveying for bat sign and presence
- Collected WNS swabs at remote cave hibernacula according to protocol
- Taught safe caving practices to coworkers, including vertical technique
- Managed field gear and advised on the purchase of specialized caving equipment
- Used snowmobiles, skis, and snowshoes to travel to high elevation winter field sites

## **Acoustic Data and Field Technician—Helena, MT**

**2015-2017**

Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP)

- Managed data from bat acoustic detectors across Montana
- Hand scrubbed acoustic files, distinguishing bat calls from unnecessary noise
- Conducted winter hibernacula surveys in caves throughout MT
- Used Hobo data loggers and iButton Hygrochron loggers to monitor cave temperatures
- Located hibernating bats in cave passages and recorded locations and temperatures
- Navigated caves with safe conduct, including rappelling and ascension techniques (SRT)
- Wrote reports for the program director

## **Nesting Raptor Field Technician—Nome, AK**

**May-August 2015**

The Peregrine Fund

- Set up game cameras at challenging vertical cliff faces (80 feet tall or more)
- Collected and examined thousands of Gyrfalcon nest photos taken from game cameras
- Banded nestling Gyrfalcons, Rough-Legged Hawks, and Golden Eagles
- Collected and identified prey remains from Gyrfalcon nests
- Worked safely in freezing temperatures, 60mph winds and blizzards
- Operated and camped in remote field sites with only satellite phone communication
- Hiked 12+ kilometers across wet, coastal tundra with a heavy pack
- Used 4WD trucks, 6-wheeled ATVs, and kayaks to access field sites

## **Senior Thesis Project—Missoula, MT**

**May 2014–Apr 2015**

Montana Natural Heritage Program

- Designed and implemented a research project as independent senior thesis
- Surveyed 423 bridges for bat use:
  - Identified night roosts from droppings, urine stains
  - Evaluated bridge structures for bat roost potential
  - Identified bats to genus or species with binoculars and a fiber-optic camera
  - Placed iButton data loggers
  - Collected guano samples
- Mapped bridge locations with Esri ArcMap online
- Created and maintained Microsoft Access database for organization of survey data
- Trained and coordinated interns and volunteers to assist with field surveys
- Conducted statistical analysis with Excel and Program R

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## **Research Assistant— Utqiagvik (Barrow), Alaska**

**June-Aug 2013**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Conducted waterfowl breeding pair and nest surveys with line transects and rope dragging
- Camera-trapped and captured (netted) female sea ducks
- Identified over 50 species of birds during 2 month field season
- Initiated a personal side project monitoring tundra plant growth at vegetation plots
- Withstood inclement weather and arctic temperatures (averaged 35 F daily)
- Shared a confined space with crew members in a remote Alaskan town
- Maintained good relations with the Inupiaq people and absorbed local culture

## **Grizzly Bear DNA Project Intern—Thompson Falls, MT**

**May–Aug 2012**

USGS Cabinet-Yaak Ecosystem Project

- Learned appropriate data collection techniques and precise data recording
- Identified bear sign such as tracks, claw marks, hair, and scat
- Worked safely in grizzly bear country while working closely with bear attractants (blood lure)
- Lived and worked out of a camp site in close proximity with other crew members for 3 months
- Hiked up to 16 miles a day through the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem to collect hair for bear DNA

## **Additional Experience/Volunteer Positions**

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### **Field Seminar Instructor (Yellowstone Forever)**

**August 27-29, 2019**

- Coordinated with YF staff to travel safely with a group throughout the Yellowstone ecosystem
- Planned and led 2.5 days of educational activities for the general public
- Taught bat research techniques and identification of bat sign in the field
- Used a local maternity roost evening emergence as an educational tool
- Encouraged citizen science with a “Build a Bat Box” workshop

### **Vice Chairperson of the Northern Rocky Mountain Grotto (NRMG)**

**April 2016-Present**

- Represented the Grotto at meetings with public agencies
- Helped form an MOU with the Custer-Gallatin National Forest
- Organized an annual 3 day cave training/workshop event with >100 attendees
- Managed the social media promotions and helped host a 900-person national caving convention in 2018 (see [nss2018.caves.org](http://nss2018.caves.org)).
- Received the MT Wildlife Society Conservation Award (2019) and the USFS-BLM Joint Conservation Project Award (2019).

### **Bigfork HS Cave Club Assistant Leader**

**2013 - 2017**

- Lead groups of high school students in surveying vertical and horizontal caves around the state of Montana
- Monitored biological sign and record data
  - Identified bats roosting or flying in cave passage
  - Examined roosting bats with a UV fluorescent flashlight to check for WNS fungus
  - Assisted lead biologists in swabbing bats for samples
  - Instructed students in safe rappelling and ascending of static 10-11mm PMI pit rope rigged for Single Rope Technique (SRT).

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## **Presentations & Publications**

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Whittle, Ellen. “Bat Research in the Black Hills”. (June 2019). Jewel Cave 200<sup>th</sup> Mile Celebration, Custer SD. Oral Presentation.

Whittle, Ellen; Chalfoun, Anna; Abernethy, Ian. (April 2019). “Tree House Hunters: Northern Long-Eared Bat Maternity Roost Selection”. Annual Fish & Wildlife Research Unit Cooperator’s Meeting. Laramie, WY. Poster.

Whittle, Ellen; Maxell, Bryce; Bachen, Daniel. (Feb 2017). “In-hand Measurements of Adult Bats of the Northern Great Plains and Rocky Mountains.” Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting, Helena, MT. Poster.

Whittle, Ellen; Maxell, Bryce; Breuner, Creagh; Hanauska-Brown, Lauri; Hendricks, Paul. March 2015. “Bat Use of Bridges in Western Montana.” Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society Annual Meeting. Undergraduate thesis, poster & oral presentation.

## **Awards and Recognition**

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- USFS-BLM Joint Conservation Project Award and Montana Wildlife Society Conservation Award (2019)—awarded to the Northern Rocky Mountain Grotto
- University of Montana President’s Recognition Award—May 2015
- Best Student Presentation at MT Wildlife Society State Meeting—March 2015
- Best Student Poster at MT Wildlife Society State Meeting—March 2015

## **References Upon Request**