



Dr Bethany R. Smith

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Current role

Postdoctoral Research Assistant, Zoological Society of London (ZSL): I specialise in applying decision science support tools to inform conservation planning, particularly for endangered species recovery. Previous and current work in this role includes projects on: red squirrel recovery in England, chough reinforcements in Scotland, human-lion coexistence in Botswana, sturgeon reintroductions in the UK, tamaraw recovery in the Philippines, landscape rewilding in Kent (UK), and species prioritisation for *ex-situ* breeding at Whipsnade Zoo (UK). In addition, I work on developing non-invasive wildlife surveillance techniques, with a focus on their application for detecting population changes, for post-release monitoring of animals after translocations, and for helping to facilitate human-wildlife coexistence.

Education

2020 – 2024 PhD – "Interactions between livestock guarding dogs and wildlife in the Carpathian Mountains, Romania", Nottingham Trent University (NTU), UK – *Minor corrections*

2017 – 2018 MRes Ecology, Evolution & Conservation, Imperial College London, UK – *Distinction*

2013 – 2016 BA Natural Sciences (Zoology), University of Cambridge, UK – *First*

Professional History

2023 – now Postdoctoral Research Assistant, Institute of Zoology, ZSL, UK

2015 – now Independent Researcher, Bioacoustics Research Group ([website](#)), UK/USA

2024 – 2024 Visiting Researcher, University of Bern, Switzerland

2019 – 2023 Student Officer, Mammal Society, UK

2018 – 2019 Data & Information Officer, Mammal Society, UK

2017 – 2018 Research Assistant, Ives Lab, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

2015 – 2016 Field Assistant, Ecosystems and Global Change Group, University of Cambridge, UK

Professional Memberships & Institutional Roles

2024 – now Personal tutor at University College London (UCL)

2023 – now Co-organiser of monthly Science for Conservation Seminars, Institute of Zoology, ZSL

2021 – now Member of the Mammal Society's Scientific Advisory Committee

Awards & Funding

2026 33,800 GBP: Natural England – "Decision science tools for conservation translocations" (development of online training materials for the England Species Reintroduction Taskforce)

2025 32,500 CHF: Leopard Ecology & Conservation – "Decision analysis for addressing human-wildlife conflict and coexistence in the Central Kalahari, Botswana"

2024 36,845 GBP: Argyll & the Isles Coast & Countryside Trust – "Feasibility study of reinforcing the Islay & Colonsay populations of red-billed choughs"

2023 88,500 USD: Great Plains Foundation, Big Cat Initiative – "Facilitating human-wildlife coexistence in Nepal: automated mapping of tiger presence using prey alarm calls"

2023 10,000 USD: Yellowstone Forever – "Acoustic localisation of grey wolves in Yellowstone Park"

2019 15,000 USD: Christine Stevens Wildlife Award – "Monitoring of wild wolves using acoustic detectors"

2021 Best Student Poster: Mammal Society Spring Conference – "How might Livestock Guarding Dogs (LGDs) affect Wildlife?" ([view here](#))

Teaching

- 2023 – now Lecturer - RVC MSc Wild Animal Biology / Wild Animal Health
2023 – now Lecturer - UCL MSC Biodiversity and Global Change
2020 – 2022 Lecturer – NTU MSc Human-Wildlife Conflict
2022 Field staff for NTU BSc 'Wildlife Field Techniques & GIS' field trip to Somiedo, Spain

Supervision

- 2026 Primary supervisor of UCL MSC Biodiversity and Global Change project
2025 1 x Primary supervisor & 2 x co-supervisor of UCL MSC Biodiversity and Global Change projects
2024 Primary supervisor of UCL MSci Biodiversity and Conservation student project
2024 Co-supervisor of NTU MRes Endangered Species Recovery and Conservation student project
2022 Co-supervisor of NTU MRes Endangered Species Recovery and Conservation student project
2021 Co-supervisor of NTU MRes Endangered Species Recovery and Conservation student project

Journal Affiliations

Associate Editor

- 2024 – now Journal of Vertebrate Biology

Peer Reviewer

37 peer reviews of 24 manuscripts

Publications

Research Articles

- Ainslie... & **Smith** (xxxx). A Structured Decision Making approach to prioritising species for conservation action. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*. [Under review].
- Smith** et al. (2026). So close yet so far: Movement patterns of livestock guarding dogs in a shared landscape in Romania. *Ecological Solutions and Evidence*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2688-8319.70245>.
- Kershenbaum... **Smith**... et al. (2026). An autonomous network of acoustic detectors to map tiger risk by eavesdropping on prey alarm calls. *Remote Sensing in Ecology and Conservation*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rse2.70061>.
- Smith** et al. (2025). Direct interactions between livestock guarding dogs and wildlife in a transhumance grazing system. *Conservation Science & Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.70120>.
- Smith** et al. (2025). Acoustic localisation as a tool to aid monitoring of golden jackals (*Canis aureus*). *Ecology & Evolution*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.71041>.
- Kershenbaum... **Smith**... et al. (2024). Automatic detection for bioacoustic research: a practical guide to the state of the art and future directions. *Biological Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/brv.13155>.
- Dassow... **Smith**... et al. (2024). Eavesdropping on prey alarm calls to detect the presence of predators. Preprint, EasyChair, No. 14349.
- Root-Gutteridge, **Smith**... et al. (2024). Not afraid of the big bad wolf: calls from large predators do not silence mesopredators. *Wildlife Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wlb3.01226>.
- Rigoudy... **Smith**... et al. (2023). The DeepFaune initiative: a collaborative effort towards the automatic identification of European fauna in camera trap images. *European Journal of Wildlife Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10344-023-01742-7>.
- Bru, **Smith**... et al. (2023). Combining acoustic multilateration and high-resolution land cover maps to study predator vocalisation behaviour. *Wildlife Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1071/WR22007>.
- Smith** et al. (2021). Acoustic localisation of wildlife with low-cost equipment: lower sensitivity, but no loss of precision. *Wildlife Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1071/WR21089>.

- Coomber, **Smith**... et al. (2021). Using biological records to infer long-term occupancy trends of mammals in the UK. *Biological Conservation*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2021.109362>.
- Smith** et al. (2020). The ecological effects of livestock guarding dogs (LGDs) on target and non-target wildlife. *Journal of Vertebrate Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.25225/jvb.20103>.
- Finch, **Smith**... et al. (2020). Effects of Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) on European Hedgehog Activity at Supplementary Feeding Stations. *Animals*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10050768>.
- Tanentzap and **Smith** (2018). Unintentional rewilding: lessons for trophic rewilding from other forms of species introductions. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B*. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2017.0445>.
- Smith** et al. (2018). Mussels can both outweigh and interact with the effects of terrestrial to freshwater resource subsidies on littoral benthic communities. *Science of The Total Environment*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2017.11.318>.

Books & Reports

- Smith** et al. (2026). National Recovery Strategy for Red Squirrels in England. Natural England, UK.
- Smith** et al. (2025). [Scottish Cough Reinforcement Feasibility Study](#). Zoological Society of London, UK.
- Smith** et al. (2024). [Wilder Blean Species Prioritisation Workshop Report](#). Zoological Society of London, UK.
- Mathews, **Smith** et al. (2020). [The State of Mammals in Wales](#). A report by the Mammal Society for Natural Resources Wales, produced in association with Wales Mammal Biodiversity Action Forum. The Mammal Society, London. ISBN: 978-0-9935673-6-0.
- Crawley... **Smith**... et al. (2020). [Atlas of the Mammals of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#). Pelagic Publishing Ltd.

Workshops, Training, Conferences

Workshop facilitation

- 2026 Co-facilitator of 5-day workshop to assess reintroduction pathways for Vietnam pheasant in Vietnam
- 2026 Co-facilitator of 2-day workshop to assess feasibility of *ex situ* management of 12 endangered birds in the UK
- 2025 Lead facilitator of 2-day stakeholder workshop on human-lion conflict in Kaudwane, Botswana
- 2025 Co-facilitator of disease risk analysis workshop for reintroducing the black-veined white butterfly to the UK
- 2025 Co-facilitator of species prioritisation workshop for Whipsnade Zoo's British Species Recovery Facility
- 2025 Joint lead facilitator of one 1-day Red Squirrel Recovery in England workshop
- 2024 Lead facilitator of expert elicitation workshop to assess welfare impacts of grey squirrel management
- 2024 Lead facilitator of 4-day Wilder Blean Species Prioritisation Workshop for Kent Wildlife Trust, UK
- 2024 Co-facilitator of 2 x Sturgeon Reintroduction to the UK workshops for ZSL, UK
- 2023 Joint lead facilitator of two 2-day Red Squirrel Recovery in England workshops

Training delivered

- 2024 1-day workshop: ECCB Conference Workshop – Structured Decision Making for Conservation, Italy
- 2023 1-day workshop: Decision Science for EDGE Fellows at ZSL, UK
- 2023 5-day workshop: IUCN CTSG Training for Effective Conservation Translocations, Brazil

Training received

- 2024 5-day Facilitation and Elicitation course for structured decision making via US Fish & Wildlife Service
- 2022 Postgraduate Teacher Training Course through NTU
- 2021 CERES International 'Field Course Leadership Skills' Training in Portugal

Invited talks, lectures, and seminars

- 2025 "Using decision science to inform conservation planning" – University of Reading (BSc guest lecture)
- 2024 "Conservation conundrums: use of decision science in species recovery" – University of York
- 2024 "Structured decision making for red squirrel recovery in England" – University of Bern
- 2024 "Structured decision making for informing mitigation translocations" – IUCN CIEEM 'Symposium on Conservation Translocations in Development Mitigations'

Conference presentations

[2026](#) Pathways Europe, UK (talk); [2025](#) European Vertebrate Management Conference, Slovenia (talk); [2025](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference, UK (talk); [2024](#) SCB European Congress on Conservation Biology, Italy (talk); [2024](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference, UK (talk); [2023](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference, UK (poster); [2023](#) Wolves Across Borders, Sweden (2 x talks); [2022](#) Pathways Europe: Human Dimensions of Wildlife, Netherlands (talk); [2022](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference, UK (talk); [2021](#) SCB International Conference for Conservation Biology, online (talk); [2021](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference, UK (poster); [2020](#) BES Festival of Ecology, online (talk); [2019](#) European Hedgehog Research Group Meeting, UK (talk); [2018](#) IENE Bats & Infrastructure Conference, Sweden (poster)

Conference organisation

[2025](#), [2024](#), [2023](#) Zoological Society of London's Annual Science for Conservation Conference; [2018 – 2024](#) Mammal Society Annual Conference (x 5); [2023](#) Automatic detection of wildlife sounds in acoustic recordings

Science Communication / Outreach

- [Dogs used to guard livestock may have unintended costs to wildlife](#), The Conversation (author)
- [How the massive dogs bred to protect livestock could save wolves too](#), New Scientist (interviewee)
- [The Dog who Cried Wolf: Promoting Co-existence with Carnivores through Livestock Guarding Dogs](#), Ecology for the Masses (interviewee)
- [Camera trapping in Romania](#), Turnul Sfatului (interviewee)
- [Q&A with Beth Smith: The Ecological Impacts of Livestock-Guarding Dogs](#), The Jaguar & Its Allies (interviewee)
- The Guardian's Week in Wildlife: [October 2021](#), [February 2022](#), [April 2022](#)