

Nicholai M. HENSLEY

Visiting Scholar – Department of Zoology – University of Cambridge



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PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

- starts 2024 - 2027 **Herchel-Smith Postdoctoral Fellow** | Department of Zoology | University of Cambridge
Supervisor: Dr. James Herbert-Read
- 2023 - 2026 **College Research Associate** | Emmanuel College | University of Cambridge
- 2021 - 2023 **Visiting Scholar** | Department of Zoology | University of Cambridge
Supervisor: Dr. Berthold Hedwig
- 2020 - ends 2024 **NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Biology** | Neurobiology & Behavior | Cornell University
Supervisor: Dr. Kerry L. Shaw

EDUCATION

- 2020 **Doctorate of Philosophy** | Ecology, Evolution, & Marine Biology | UC Santa Barbara
“Looking Under the Light Pulse: an integrative case study on the mating behaviors of Caribbean sea fireflies (Crustacea, Ostracoda, Cypridinidae)”
Committee: Drs. Todd H. Oakley (*chair*), Thomas L. Turner, Trevor J. Rivers
- 2018 **Masters of Arts** | Ecology, Evolution, & Marine Biology | UC Santa Barbara
- 2012 **Bachelors of Science** | Ecology, Behavior, & Evolution | UC Los Angeles
Minor | Conservation Biology
Grade Point Average: 3.824 of 4.0
Magna Cum Laude, UCLA College Honors, Departmental Highest Honors

RESEARCH GRANTS (\$USD)

- \$2,721.69 **Compound Eyes Foundation** (July 2023)
- \$54,900 **Herchel-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship** (July 2024 - 2027)
- \$1,000 **American Microscopical Society Student Research Fellowship** (June 2020)
- \$60,000 **NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology** (October 2020 - 2024)
- \$5,000 **NSF Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide** (July 2019)
- \$1,500 **Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute** (May 2018)
- \$2,081 **American Museum of Natural History Lerner Gray Memorial Fund** (May 2018)
- \$1,600 **UC Santa Barbara Department of Ecology, Evolution, & Marine Biology Block Grant** (April 2018)
- \$700 **Sigma Xi Grant-In-Aid-of-Research** (January 2015)
- \$2,337 **Society for the Study of Evolution Rosemary Grant Award for Graduate Student Research** (May 2014)

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

- \$154,287.30 **Herchel-Smith Postdoctoral Fellowship** (July 2024 - 2027)
- \$270,000 **NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology** (Oct 2020 - 2024)
- \$6,459.72 **NSF Graduate Research Opportunities Worldwide** (Jan - Apr 2020)
- \$1,350 **UC Santa Barbara Academic Senate Doctoral Student Travel Award** (June 2019)
- \$500 - declined **Animal Behavior Society Graduate Student Travel Grant** (June 2019)
- declined **Animal Behavior Society Diversity Travel Award** (June 2019)
- \$2,500 **Worster Award for the development of graduate and undergraduate research** (May 2019)
- \$350 **Society of Molecular Biology and Evolution Young Investigator Award** (April 2019)
- \$3,000 **Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute Short Term Fellowship** (May 2018)
- \$5,400 **NSF East Asia & Pacific Summer Institute Fellowship** (Jun - Aug 2017)

\$200 ea.	UC Santa Barbara Graduate Student Association Travel Award (2015, '17, '18, 19)
\$102,00	NSF Graduate Student Research Fellowship (2015 - 2018)
	NSF Graduate Student Research Fellowship Honorable Mention (2014)
\$53,000	UC Santa Barbara Regents Special Fellowship (2013-2015)
	UC Los Angeles 15th Annual Biology Research Symposium Undergraduate Poster Award (Jun 2012)
	UC Los Angeles Ecology & Evolutionary Biology Special Faculty Award (Jun 2012)
\$4,000	NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (July - Aug 2011)

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

1. **Hensley, N. M.**, Rivers, T. J., Gerrish, G. A., Saha, R. & Oakley, T. H. Collective synchrony of mating signals modulated by ecological cues and social signals in bioluminescent sea fireflies. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2023.2311> (Nov. 2023).
2. Ellis, E. A. *, Goodheart, J. A. *, **Hensley, N. M.**, Gonzalez, V. L., Reda, N. J., Rivers, T. J., Morin, J. G., Torres, E., Gerrish, G. A. & Oakley, T. H. Sexual signals persist over deep time: ancient co-option of bioluminescence for courtship displays in cypridinid ostracods. *Systematic Biology*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/sysbio/syac057> (Mar. 2023).
3. Hoke, K. L., **Hensley, N. M.**, Kanwal, J. K., Wasserman, S. & Morehouse, N. I. Spatio-temporal Dynamics in Animal Communication: A Special Issue Arising from a Unique Workshop-Symposium Model. *Integrative & Comparative Biology*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/icb/icab151> (July 2021).
4. Sung, J. Y., Harris, O. K., **Hensley, N. M.**, Chemero, A. P. & Morehouse, N. I. Beyond cognitive templates: re-examining template metaphors for animal cognition and navigation. *Integrative & Comparative Biology*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/icb/icab040> (July 2021).
5. Picciani de Souza, N., Kerlin, J. R., Jindrich, K., **Hensley, N. M.**, Gold, D. A. & Oakley, T. H. Light modulated cnidocyte discharge predates the origins of eyes in Cnidaria. *Ecology and Evolution*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.22541/au.159626523.36299944> (Mar. 2021).
6. **Hensley, N. M.**, Ellis, E. A., Leung, N. Y., Coupart, J., Mikhailovsky, A., Taketa, D. A., Tessler, M., Gruber, D. F., Mitani, Y., DeTomaso, A. W., Rivers, T. J., Gerrish, G. A., Torres, E. & Oakley, T. H. Selection, drift, and constraint in cypridinid luciferases and the diversification of bioluminescent signals in sea fireflies. *Molecular Ecology*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.15673> (Oct. 2020).
7. **Hensley, N. M.**, Ellis, E. A., Gerrish, G. A., Torres, E., Frawley, J. P., Oakley, T. H. & Rivers, T. J. Phenotypic evolution shaped by current enzyme function in the bioluminescent courtship signals of sea fireflies. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2018.2621> (Jan. 2019).
8. Gold, D. A., Nakanishi, N., **Hensley, N. M.**, Hartenstein, V. & Jacobs, D. K. Cell tracking supports secondary gastrulation in the moon jellyfish Aurelia. *Development Genes and Evolution*. ISSN: 1432-041X. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00427-016-0559-y> (Nov. 2016).
9. **Hensley, N. M.**, Drury, J. P., Garland Jr., T. & Blumstein, D. T. Vivid birds do not initiate flight sooner despite their potential conspicuousness. *Current Zoology*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/czoolo/61.4.773> (May 2015).
10. Gold, D. A., Nakanishi, N., **Hensley, N. M.**, Cozzolino, K., Tabatabaee, M., Martin, M., Hartenstein, V. & Jacobs, D. K. Structural and Developmental Disparity in the Tentacles of the Moon Jellyfish Aurelia sp.1. *PLOS ONE*. doi:[10.1371/journal.pone.0134741](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0134741) (2015).
11. **Hensley, N. M.**, Elmasri, O. L., Slaughter, E. I., Kappus, S. & Fong, P. Two species of Halimeda, a calcifying genus of tropical macroalgae, are robust to epiphytism by cyanobacteria. *Aquatic Ecology*. ISSN: 1573-5125. doi:[10.1007/s10452-013-9456-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10452-013-9456-x) (Dec. 2013).
12. **Hensley, N. M.**, Cook, T. C., Lang, M., Petelle, M. B. & Blumstein, D. T. Personality and habitat segregation in giant sea anemones (*Condylactis gigantea*). *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology*. ISSN: 0022-0981. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jembe.2012.05.011> (May 2012).

Projects in Progress

1. **Hensley, N. M.**, Gerrish, G. A., Saha, R., Oakley, T. H. & Rivers, T. J. *Ecological overlap and the evolution of mating display discrimination in sea fireflies* (in progress).

2. Hensley, N. M., Peterson, K. A., Lucey, N. M., Gerrish, G. A., Rivers, T. J. & Oakley, T. H. *Hybrid offspring and differences in life-history between two new species of bioluminescent ostracod (genus Photeros) from Bocas el Toro, Panama* (in progress).
3. Oakley, T. H., Hensley, N. M., Motta, C., Peery, W., Kribakaran, K. & Isukapalli, Y. *Waterborne Autonomous Low-Light Electroretinography (WALLE) to quantify luminous courtship signaling* (in prep).
4. Hensley, N. M. *, Lau, E. S. *, Goodheart, J. A., Mami, K., Mitani, Y., Murkurjee, A. & Oakley, T. H. *Paralog switching rejects the Ortholog Conjecture during the diversification of ostracod bioluminescence* (Expected submission by mid 2024).

Writings for Science Communication

1. Hensley, N. M. *Developing Frankenfrogs hold clues to the secrets of body plan formation* Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2023).
2. Hensley, N. M. *Mutant Chernobyl wolves evolve anti-cancer abilities 35 years after nuclear disaster* Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2023).
3. Hensley, N. M. *The Importance of Being Earnest: Engaging with student-teacher identities improves classroom experience* Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2022).
4. Hensley, N. M. *Chuckie D's recipe for the classic BLT: a group of bisexual, labile, tomatos*. Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2021).
5. Hensley, N. M. *The Fast and the Furious: dueling shrimp see fast!* Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2021).
6. Hensley, N. M. *Larger than life experiments expose the machinery inside elephant trunks*. Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2020).
7. Hensley, N. M. *The Devil Wears Prada: Birds Have Designer Cheats to Make The Bland Look Beautiful*. Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology. (2019).

PRESENTATIONS

September 2023	Invited Talk - SUNY ESF (Syracuse (NY - USA))
April 2023	Poster @ Invertebrate Sound And Vibration (Lincoln (United Kingdom))
January 2023	Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (Austin (TX - USA))
August 2022	European Society for Evolutionary Biology (Prague (CZ))
August 2022	Poster @ Gordon Research Conference: Neurobiology of Acoustic Communication (Mt. Holyoke (MA - USA))
January 2022	Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (Tuscon (AZ - USA))
September 2021	Early Career Researcher Living Light (Virtual)
August 2021	Animal Behavior Society (Virtual)
June 2021	Evolution (Virtual)
July 2019	Society for Molecular Biology and Evolution (Manchester (UK))
January 2019	Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (Tampa (FL - USA))
February 2018	UC Santa Barbara EEMB Graduate Student Symposium (Santa Barbara (CA - USA))
August 2017	International Symposium on Ostracoda (Santa Barbara (CA - USA))
June 2017	Japan Advanced Institute for Science and Technology (Sapporo (Hokkaido - Japan))
Februray 2017	California State University, Los Angeles (Los Angeles (CA - USA))
January 2017	Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (New Orleans (CA - USA))
April 2016	HHMI Janelia Junior Scientist Workshop (Ashburn (Virginia - USA))
August 2015	Cypridinid Ostracod Workshop (Marin (CA - USA))
January 2015	Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (West Palm Beach (FL - USA))

TEACHING & MENTORSHIP

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING ASSISTANT

UC Santa Barbara EEMB 102: Macroevolution

APRIL - JUNE 2019, 2020

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING ASSISTANT

UC Santa Barbara EEMB 138: Ethology/Behavioral Ecology

JANUARY - MARCH 2015, 2019

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING ASSISTANT

UC Santa Barbara EEMB 116: Invertebrate Zoology II Arthropods Annelids

MAY - JUNE 2015

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING ASSISTANT

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2014, 2019

UC Santa Barbara EEMB 112: Invertebrate Zoology I Non-Arthropods Marine Diversity**TEACHING ASSISTANT**

MARCH - JUNE 2013

UC Los Angeles EEB 100L: Introduction to Ecology and Behavior Laboratory Led student-designed projects**TEACHING ASSISTANT**

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2012

UC Los Angeles EEB 153: Ecological Responses to Environmental Variables

MENTOR FOR UNDERGRADUATES

Marisa Christopher (UC Santa Barbara), Harper Wood (UC Santa Barbara), Katherine Peterson (UC Santa Barbara), Brooke Webster (UC Santa Barbara), Mira Brynjegard-Bialik (UC Santa Barbara), Maria Pilar-Gonzales (California Alliance for Minority Participation), John Coupart (UC Santa Barbara), Joseph Russo (UC Santa Barbara), Michelle Martin (UC Los Angeles), Holly Fuong (UC Los Angeles), Miriam Tabatabaee (UC Los Angeles)

MENTOR FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTSErin Youn, Camilla Martinez, Madison Pfau, Tobie Jessup, Jason Goodman, Chau Pham Research Mentorship Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

REVIEWER

Journal of Crustacean Biology, PNAS (co-reviewed), Behavioral Ecology & Sociobiology, Behavioral Ecology, Insect Molecular Biology, Biology Letters

CONSULTANT

DECEMBER 2022, FEBRUARY 2023

Monterrey Bay Aquarium

PARTICIPANT

JULY 2021

Neurobiology: Mechanisms & Advanced Approaches, Marine Biological Lab in Woods Hole

PARTICIPANT

SPRING 2021

Cornell Professional Development: Building Mentorship Skills for Academic Careers

WRITER

JANUARY 2020, 2021

Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Public Affairs Committee Press Releases

WRITER

JANUARY 2019

Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Public Affairs Committee Student Journalist

PARTICIPANT

JULY 2018

Workshop on Molecular Evolution, Marine Biological Lab in Woods Hole

PARTICIPANT

JUNE 2018

Evolutionary Quantitative Genetics Workshop, Friday Harbor Lab

PARTICIPANT

JULY 2015

Cypridinid Ostracod Workshop

PARTICIPANT

OCTOBER 2014

2nd Annual International Frozen Zoo Cell Culture Seminar at the San Diego Zoo Institute for Conservation Research

LABORATORY TECHNICIAN

MARCH - AUGUST 2013

UC Los Angeles Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology


SERVICE & OUTREACH

INVITED SPEAKER

2023

Buceo Conciencia

MENTOR

2023

SICB Mentorship Program

CONTENT EDITOR

2021 - ONGOING

The Animal Behavior Podcast

JUNIOR ORGANIZER

JANUARY 2021 - 2022

SICB Workshop Series: Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Animal Communication

JUNIOR ORGANIZER SICB 2021 Symposium: Spatiotemporal Dynamics of Animal Communication	JANUARY 2020 - 2021
PARTICIPANT Skype a Scientist	JUNE 2020, JANUARY 2021
FOUNDER AND ORGANIZER UC Santa Barbara EEMB Professional Development Workshop Preparing job materials through peer review	APRIL - JUNE 2019
PANELIST UC Santa Barbara Queer and Trans Graduate Student Union For LGBTQIA* undergraduates on graduate school	APRIL 2019
PANELIST Western University panel on popular science writing (via skype)	JANUARY 2019
GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE UC Santa Barbara EEMB Faculty Search Committee	JANUARY 2019
PARTICIPANT McKinley Elementary School Career Day	MAY 2018, AUGUST 2016
VICE PRESIDENT & CO-FOUNDER OUTReach Seminar Series Highlighting LGBTQIA* life scientists	APRIL 2018 - JANUARY 2019
PANELIST oSTEM Graduate Student Panel For LGBTQIA* undergraduates on graduate school	FEBRUARY 2018
PARTICIPANT UC Santa Barbara SciTrek Teaching observational science modules to 3rd graders	NOVEMBER 2017
PANELIST La Colina Middle School science fair project consultant	OCTOBER 2017
LEAD ORGANIZER UC Santa Barbara EEMB Graduate Student Symposium Co-organized with 3 others	2015 - 2017
PANELIST UC Santa Barbara EEMB Graduate Student Panel Focused on NSF GRFP materials	SEPTEMBER 2017, OCTOBER 2016, MAY 2016
VOLUNTEER DOCENT Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History Sea Center	MARCH 2014 - SEPTEMBER 2016