



Stephanie Lessard-Pilon, PhD

Associate Professor, Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation
Associate Professor, Biology Department

Education

PhD, Intercollege Graduate Degree Program in Ecology, The Pennsylvania State University

Key Interests

Conservation Education | Community Ecology | Pollinators | Marine Conservation | Human Dimensions of Conservation

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SELECT PUBLICATIONS

- › Lessard-Pilon, S & J. McNeil. (2020). Acting Out Extinction: Sneebles Under Threat. *The American Biology Teacher* 82:7.
- › Lessard-Pilon S. A. *et al.*, (2010). Community composition and temporal change at deep Gulf of Mexico cold seeps Deep-Sea Research Part II: Topical Studies. *Oceanography* 57: 1891-1903.
- › Lessard-Pilon, S. A., *et al.* (2010). Megafauna community composition associated with *Lophelia pertusa* colonies in the Gulf of Mexico. *Deep Sea Research Part II: Topical Studies in Oceanography*, 57(21-23), 1882-1890.

Research Focus

I teach undergraduate courses in Conservation Studies for the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC). My area of interest and study is community ecology, and I have worked in a wide range of ecological systems, from East Coast forests and streams to deep sea environments. I am particularly interested in the role of species interactions, including biologically-mediated disturbance and facilitation, on the structure and function of ecosystems. Past projects have included work on the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill on fauna in sediments near corals, as well as exploratory research on deepwater coral and seep communities in the Gulf of Mexico. I am an avid beekeeper, and manage the SMSC apiary, which teaches students about honey bees and the ecology and conservation of pollinators. I am passionate about improving conservation education, engaging with diverse audiences about conservation-related issues, and empowering the public to take conservation action.

Current Projects

- Develop, teach and assess experiential education programs in multiple disciplines.
- Connecting undergraduates and the public to science.
- Building capacity for incorporating conservation science into decision-making.
- Highlighting the impacts of grassland management on arthropod diversity and nutrition.