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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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**ACA Grants in Biodiversity announces 2016 award recipients**

Edmonton – March 16, 2016 – The birds are having their day as the ACA Grants in Biodiversity program announced the 23 graduate student projects that will share \$222,090 of funding this year. Projects ranged from the genetics of caribou, to the effects of industrialization on songbirds and hawks. The use of genetics in studying biodiversity appears to be increasing. This year's grants ranged from \$4,660 to \$17,200 and were distributed to 7 PhD and 16 Masters candidates. Although the field of study must be in Alberta, four of the projects will be conducted by universities out of the province, including two Manitoba universities, with most of the balance being done by the University of Alberta. The University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge also received grants.

The ACA Grants in Biodiversity program is funded by the Alberta Conservation Association and Syncrude. With this year's awards, the 22 year old ACA Grants in Biodiversity has now awarded over \$4.7 million dollars to 467 researchers. The research supported by the ACA Grants in Biodiversity ultimately aims to conserve, protect and enhance Alberta's fish, wildlife and natural habitats as well as develop biodiversity professionals for the future.

**2016 ACA Grants in Biodiversity Recipients**

Recipient (Program)	Institution	Supervisor	Project Title
Susan Anderson (MSc)	University of Calgary	Leland Jackson	Implications of nitrogen limitation in cyanobacteria in shallow lakes
Charlotte Brown (MSc)	University of Alberta	JC Cahill	Causes and consequences of size-asymmetric competition in a native grassland
Erin Campbell (MSc)	University of Alberta	Felix Sperling	Characterizing Alberta species of silverspot butterflies to support ecological assessments
Emma Carroll (MSc)	University of Calgary	Steven Vamosi	Population genetics of Bull trout ( <i>Salvelinus confluentus</i> )
Maria Cavedon (PhD)	University of Calgary	Marco Musiani	Determining genomic characteristics of caribou in Alberta for management and conservation practices
Craig DeMaere (MSc)	University of Alberta	Cameron Carlyle and Edward Bork	Does heterogeneity in rangeland health predict biodiversity in Alberta's southern grasslands?
Jacqueline Dennett (PhD)	University of Alberta	Scott Nielsen	Search and rescue: Detection and translocation of rare plant species in the Lower Athabasca

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Luiz Drummond Salvador (MSc)	University of Alberta	Mike Flannigan	Prescribed fire and whitebark pine recovery strategies: Natural regeneration in relation to fire severity
David Ensing (PhD)	Queen's University	Christopher Eckert	Phenological and genomic determinants of elevational range limits in <i>Rhinanthus minor</i> L.
Caroline Franklin (PhD)	University of Alberta	Ellen Macdonald	Responses of furbearers to variable green-tree retention harvesting in conifer-dominated boreal forest
Haley Glass (MSc)	University of Calgary	Steven Vamosi	Monitoring of amphibian populations in Jasper National Park using environmental DNA
Jocelyn Gregoire (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Habitat utilization of boreal songbirds in response to linear feature width and vegetative recovery
Jori Harrison (MSc)	University of Calgary	Sean Rogers	Using environmental DNA to detect and assess species abundance of At Risk Alberta fishes
Alexandra Heathcote (MSc)	University of Manitoba	Nicola Koper	Investigating the effects of oil and gas infrastructure on the stress physiology and body condition of nestlings of two species of grassland songbirds
Ashley Jensen (MSc)	University of Lethbridge	Theresa Burg and Andrew Iwaniuk	Plumage polymorphism in Ruffed Grouse ( <i>Bonasa umbellus</i> ): Genetics and behaviour
Elly Knight (PhD)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Linking hierarchical habitat relationships of common nighthawks in a dynamic landscape
Natalia Lifshitz (PhD)	University of Alberta	Colleen Cassady St. Clair	Evaluating the potential of using ornamental coloration of tree swallows as a non-invasive indicator of aquatic pollution
Nicholas Parayko (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Response of ferruginous hawks ( <i>Buteo regalis</i> ) to transmission line construction and decommissioning
Angela Phung (MSc)	University of Alberta	Jessamyn Manson and Cameron Carlyle	Density dependent effects of an invasive legume on pollinator visitation rates to a rare native congener
Danielle Rivet (PhD)	University of Saskatchewan	Jeffrey Lane	Overwinter torpor profiles of Columbian ground squirrels subject to natural and manipulated environmental conditions
Kelsey Saboraki (MSc)	University of Winnipeg	Susan Lingle	Behavioural transmission of Chronic Wasting Disease in mule deer and white-tailed deer
Julie Steinke (MSc)	University of Alberta	Ellen Macdonald	Effects of mountain pine beetle on understory vegetation in lodgepole pine forests in Western Alberta
Emily Upham-Mills (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	The use of migratory bird spring arrival timing and song phenology to inform habitat preference and quality