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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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ACA Grants in Biodiversity announces 2017 award recipients

Edmonton – March 6, 2017 – From the small to the tall, biodiversity needs us all. The recipients of this year’s ACA Grants in Biodiversity reflect the vast array of research that is needed to fully understand and protect Alberta’s rich biodiversity. The student academic research projects funded this year include studies on mites and tiny duckweed to elk and towering pines, with birds, cougars, frogs and ants in between. The Alberta Conservation Association is proud to announce that 19 student projects will share \$214,210 of funding this year. This year’s grants ranged from \$3,820 to \$17,830 and were distributed to 5 PhD and 14 Masters candidates. Although the field of study must be in Alberta, three of the projects will be conducted by universities out of the province, with the balance being done by the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge.

The ACA Grants in Biodiversity program is funded by the Alberta Conservation Association and Syncrude. With this year’s awards, the 23 year old ACA Grants in Biodiversity has now awarded \$5.0 million dollars to 486 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.

2017 ACA Grants in Biodiversity Recipients

Recipient (Program)	Institution	Supervisor	Project Title
Rob Belanger (MSc)	University of Alberta	Scott Nielsen	Where do the wood bison roam? Habitat selection of the Ronald Lake herd
Jillian Cameron (MSc)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Influence of natural and anthropogenic light levels on anuran calling behavior in Alberta
Joseph Cooper (MSc)	University of Alberta	Justine Karst	Forest demography in the southern boreal forest: time, climate, and neighbors
Frédéric Dulude-de Broin (MSc)	Université Laval	Steeve Côté	Impact of predator-induced stress on the reproduction of mountain goats (<i>Oreamnos americanus</i>)
Matthew Dyson (PhD)	University of Waterloo	Bradley Fedy	Waterfowl nest success in the western boreal forest: Does industrial development affect predation?
Mitchell Flowers (MSc)	University of Alberta	Evie Merrill	Trading-off vigilance and space use by migrant and resident elk to avoid multiple predators
Jerrad Hayden (MSc)	University of Lethbridge	Robert Laird	Does senescence occur in <i>Lemna minor</i> in the wild?

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Mitchell Johnsen (MSc)	University of Alberta	Rolf Vinebrooke	Resiliency of freshwater communities under a rapidly changing climate: An alpine-montane reciprocal transplant ecosystem experiment
Kara MacAulay (MSc)	University of Alberta	Evie Merrill	Can contents of predator scat predict the spatial risk of predation for elk herd segments at the Ya Ha Tinda?
Matthew Meehan (MSc)	University of Alberta	Heather Proctor	Assessing the relative utility of mesostigmatid vs. oribatid mites as bioindicators of disturbance in forested areas of Alberta, Canada
Paul Metzler (MSc)	University of Alberta	Justine Karst	Revealing the belowground diversity of boreal forests with molecular tools
Samridhi Rijal (PhD)	University of Calgary	Kathreen Ruckstuhl	Diversity and prevalence of different parasites: Effects of host sex, body condition and hormones of Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep
Federico Riva (PhD)	University of Alberta	Scott Nielsen and John Acorn	Individual and simultaneous effects of disturbance from wildfire and oil sands on butterflies
Jean Rodriguez-Ramos (MSc)	University of Alberta	Nadir Erbilgin	Can ectomycorrhizal fungi prevent lodgepole pine starvation during droughts by becoming its carbon source?
Natalie Sánchez Ulate (PhD)	University of Alberta	Erin Bayne	Song variation and singing behavior of songbirds in response to chronic industrial noise
Raiany Silva (MSc)	University of Alberta	Ellen Macdonald	Restoration and enhancement of riparian vegetation in wetlands degraded by all-terrain-vehicles in Blue Rapids Recreation Area, Alberta
Michael Terry (MSc)	University of Alberta	Mark Poesch	Ranges of fisheries productivity and habitat-productivity relationships in natural and compensation lakes in northern Alberta
Mari West (PhD)	University of California, Riverside	Jessica Purcell	Worker caste organization in the ant genus, <i>Formica</i>
Samantha Widmeyer (MSc)	University of Alberta	Mark Boyce	Inferring prey specialization in cougars using stable isotope analysis: A method for testing the boot season