Leslie J. Rissler

National Science Foundation

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Senior academic and national science executive with extensive experience helping to shape federal research priorities and stewarding ~$80-100M annual portfolios at the National Science Foundation. Brings a sophisticated understanding of how federal budgets, agency strategies, and interdisciplinary funding mechanisms evolve and how universities can position themselves with clarity and confidence within that landscape. Elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in recognition of contributions to evolutionary biology and science leadership.

Recognized for designing, leading, and stewarding career-supporting and capacity-building initiatives that strengthen research trajectories, broaden participation, and enhance long-term competitiveness. Dedicated to building research environments in which faculty at every stage have the tools, mentorship, and institutional support necessary to contribute in substantive and innovative ways. Experienced in balancing diverse disciplinary portfolios, guiding interdisciplinary growth, and aligning research strategy with mission and public impact. Combines the perspective of a funded principal investigator with that of a senior federal research executive.

Leads with steadiness, fairness, and respect for shared governance. Skilled in translating complex funding dynamics into institutional strategy while fostering cultures of trust, collaboration, and sustainable research excellence at public research universities.

ACADEMIC & EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS

- ### University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

  Full Professor and Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles. Department of Biological Sciences. (2014-2015; moved to the NSF in 2015)
  Associate Professor and Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles. Department of Biological Sciences. (2009-2014)
  Assistant Professor and Curator of Amphibians and Reptiles. Department of Biological Sciences. (2003-2009)

Research, teaching, and service in ecology, evolution, systematics, and conservation biology at a comprehensive public university with strong environmental and marine science interests. Developed interdisciplinary programs, mentored undergraduate, graduate students, and postdocs, and contributed to curriculum design and academic governance.

- ### National Science Foundation (NSF), Directorate for Biological Sciences

  Section Head – Living Systems. (2025-present)
  Acting Deputy Division Director. Division of Environmental Biology. (2019, 2024, 2025)
  Acting Division Director. Division of Environmental Biology. (2022)
  Program Director. Evolutionary Processes Cluster. Division of Environmental Biology. (2015-2019; rotator 2011-2013)

Provided senior executive leadership for the Division of Environmental Biology, overseeing an ~$100M+ annual research portfolio supporting discovery-driven research across ecology, evolution, organismal biology, and interdisciplinary environmental science. Supervised and mentored 20+ Ph.D.-level program officers; led strategic planning and portfolio alignment; and guided implementation of division- and directorate-level initiatives. Advised senior NSF leadership on scientific priorities, workforce development, research integrity, and organizational operations.

EXECUTIVE RESEARCH LEADERSHIP & PORTFOLIO STEWARDSHIP

Acting Division Director, Division of Environmental Biology (2022), NSF

Provided executive leadership for the division which supports discovery-driven research across ecology, evolution, organismal biology, systematics, and interdisciplinary environmental science.

- Supervised the Acting Deputy Division Director.
- Led strategic portfolio alignment across programs to ensure balance, fairness, and responsiveness to evolving federal priorities.
- Supported National Science Board and Advisory Committee–level briefings, translating portfolio trends and funding dynamics into concise, actionable presentations.
- Advised other NSF senior leadership on scientific strategy, workforce development, research integrity, and budget implications.
- Oversaw competitive funding mechanisms, ensuring transparency and rigor in internal and external processes.
- Guided division operations during periods of organizational transition and restructuring, maintaining continuity and morale.
- Represented the division in cross-directorate initiatives and interagency coordination.

Acting Deputy Division Director (2019, 2024–2025), NSF

Served multiple terms providing operational and strategic oversight for the Division of Environmental Biology.

- Supervised and mentored ~24 Ph.D.-level Program Directors and professional staff.
- Managed day-to-day oversight of a large, complex research portfolio spanning foundational and interdisciplinary programs.
- Coordinated cross-program review practices, workload distribution, and funding strategies.
- Contributed to long-term strategic planning and alignment with directorate-wide priorities.
- Provided leadership in workforce planning, hiring, mentoring, and performance evaluation of program staff.
- Partnered with government relations and policy colleagues to assess implications of federal budget shifts and legislative priorities.

Section Head – Living Systems (2025–present), NSF

Provide strategic coordination of research programs focused on integrative and organismal biology within NSF's Directorate for Biological Sciences.

- Oversee program integration, proposal pressure trends, and cross-cutting initiatives.
- Facilitate interdisciplinary coordination across clusters and directorates.
- Provide guidance on emerging research directions and funding opportunities.
- Supervise and mentor about 10 Ph.D.-level Program Directors.

Program Director, Evolutionary Processes Cluster (2011–2013; 2015–2019), NSF

Managed a competitive federal research portfolio supporting foundational and interdisciplinary work in evolutionary biology and systematics.

- Led merit review panels and funding decisions for individual investigator, collaborative, and center-scale proposals.
- Worked closely with institutions nationwide to provide guidance on proposal development and strategic positioning.
- Analyzed funding trends and submission patterns to inform program evolution and policy adjustments.
- Contributed to cross-directorate and cross-agency working groups focused on interdisciplinary and capacity-building initiatives.
- Conducted outreach to faculty and Sponsored Research Offices on new funding opportunities.

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT & INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY EXPERIENCE

Experienced as both a funded principal investigator and a senior federal research executive. Worked extensively at the intersection of proposal development, institutional positioning, proposal submission processes and compliance, federal budget strategy & analysis, and cross-sector partnership coordination. Experience that spans advising institutions nationally while stewarding complex portfolios and designing programs that strengthen long-term research capacity.

Large Interdisciplinary & Center-Scale Proposal Development

- Provided strategic guidance to institutions nationwide on positioning competitive interdisciplinary and center-scale proposals within NSF and cross-agency programs.
- Advised on alignment of institutional strengths with evolving federal priorities, including cross-directorate and cross-agency opportunities.
- Evaluated multi-investigator proposals with attention to leadership structure, integration plans, workforce development, and sustainability.
- Contributed to internal NSF discussions shaping large-scale funding initiatives and interdisciplinary program design.

Submissions, Merit Review, & Portfolio Balance

- Oversaw and participated in management of competitive submission programs at NSF, ensuring fairness, transparency, and alignment with programmatic priorities.
- Developed and implemented review frameworks emphasizing merit, broader impacts, feasibility, institutional readiness, and strategic coherence.
- Managed a broad national portfolio to ensure the health of science across the United States. Worked to balance funding across many axes including PI demographics, PI career stage, disciplinary topic, geographic representation, institution size, etc.

Seed Funding & Strategic Investment Alignment

- Contributed to the design of institutional capacity-building programs (e.g., Mid-Career Advancement, BRC-BIO, OPUS, etc.) that functioned as targeted investments to strengthen faculty research trajectories and institutional competitiveness.
- Evaluated portfolio-level impacts of funding investments using qualitative and quantitative metrics, including submission trends, award rates, and program growth.
- Emphasized disciplined prioritization and measurable outcomes in aligning funding mechanisms with long-term strategic goals.

Federal Research Landscape & Budget Analysis

- Analyzed annual federal budget proposals, appropriations trends, and agency-level priority shifts to inform strategic positioning of research programs.
- Translated evolving national research priorities into actionable guidance for program officers, institutions, and stakeholders.

EPSCoR & Institutional Capacity Building

- Engaged with EPSCoR-related mechanisms and institutional capacity-building initiatives designed to enhance competitiveness in historically underfunded jurisdictions.
- Contributed to programmatic strategies that supported faculty at minority-serving institutions, predominantly undergraduate institutions, and institutions outside the most research-intensive tier.
- Emphasized collaboration across public institutions and partnerships that broaden participation and strengthen regional research ecosystems.

Research Ethics, Compliance & Inclusive Excellence

- Co-Chair, Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (SAIF) Pilot, integrating safety, inclusivity, and accountability into field-based research policy and practice.
- Member, NSF Sexual Harassment Task Force; contributed to development of NSF Important Notice 144 and strengthened accountability mechanisms in federally funded research.
- Contributor to the rewrite of *On Being a Scientist* (4th edition), reinforcing national standards for responsible conduct of research.
- Advocated for research cultures built on trust, transparency, and inclusive team dynamics.

Government Relations & External Partnerships

- Worked in coordination with NSF policy and government relations colleagues to assess legislative priorities and emerging funding opportunities.
- Engaged with academic institutions, foundations, industry partners, and community stakeholders in the context of funding strategy and research impact.
- Contributed to cross-directorate discussions, including engagement with the Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP), connecting foundational research with translation and regional innovation ecosystems.

Organizational Leadership & Resilience

- Led and mentored teams of ~24 program officers during periods of structural transition and evolving federal priorities.
- Fostered service-oriented leadership culture emphasizing shared responsibility, values, fairness, and accountability.
- Guided strategic realignment efforts to maintain continuity, morale, and clarity during organizational restructuring.

STRATEGIC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING

- **Founder and Chair**, **Evolution Working Group, University of Alabama**. Established and led a cross-departmental faculty body advancing interdisciplinary collaboration and academic programming across multiple colleges.
- **Co-Director**, **Evolutionary Studies Minor, University of Alabama**. Co-founded and co-directed an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor; coordinated curriculum development, faculty participation, and long-term sustainability.
- **Science Advisor and Executive Co-Producer, *Speaking Evolution***. Public scholarship initiative broadcast on Alabama Public Television (PBS); nominated for an Emmy Award.
- **Chair, Core Curriculum Revision (Ecology & Evolution)**, University of Alabama. Led redesign of undergraduate core curriculum to align learning objectives, pedagogy, and program coherence.
- **Lead Organizer and Chair, Mid-Career Advancement Program, NSF**
  Conceived and led a multi-directorate initiative supporting associate professors at a critical career transition point. Coordinated five NSF science and engineering directorates; integrated mentoring, proposal development, and leadership support; and partnered with institutions to strengthen faculty research trajectories and retention. *Nominated by the Assistant Director of the Directorate for Biological Sciences for the NSF Director's Award.*
- **Contributor, Building Research Capacity of New Faculty in Biology (BRC-BIO), NSF**
  Served on the working group to design a national capacity-building solicitation to support faculty research at minority-serving institutions, predominately undergraduate institutions, and other colleges and universities outside the most research-intensive tier. *Received the NSF Director's Award for Superior Accomplishment*.

- **Co-Chair, Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (SAIF) Pilot, NSF**
  Led a cross-directorate initiative spanning Biological Sciences and Geosciences to improve safety, equity, and accountability in field-based research. Contributed to national policy development and implementation related to research ethics, compliance, and institutional responsibility.
- **Leveraging Innovations From Evolution (LIFE), NSF**
  Initiated, developed, and led a new program in the Directorate for Biological Sciences to catalyze research that crosses Molecular, Cell, and Biochemistry with Systematics and Evolutionary Biology. Organized national workshop in Indianapolis with researchers (in consultation with KnowInnovation). The work led to a Dear Colleague Letter inviting applications with potential for translational impacts in biotech, etc.
- **Bridging Ecology and Evolution (BEE), NSF**
  Organized and led a track in the Division of Environmental Biology's core solicitation to spur the submission of proposals that integrated ecological and evolutionary processes.
- **Opportunities for Promoting Understanding through Synthesis (OPUS), NSF**
  Chair of working group in the Division of Environmental Biology that ran the OPUS program for mid and later career stage Principal Investigators to synthesize their work for future generations.

AWARDS & HONORS

- **AAAS Fellow (Class of 2022)** – *"for distinguished contributions to the field of evolutionary biology, particularly for public understanding of evolution and advancement of underrepresented groups in science"*
- **National Science Foundation Director's Award: Superior Accomplishment** (2023) – *"for outstanding insight and achievement in designing a new institutional capacity-building program within the biological sciences, yielding a portfolio inclusive of a broad and diverse range of institutions"*
- **Stephen Jay Gould Prize from Society for the Study of Evolution** (2020) – *"to recognize, promote, and reward individuals who have increased public understanding of evolutionary biology and its place in modern science*" $5K award
- **National Science Foundation Director's Award: Achievement in Equal Opportunity/Diversity and Inclusion Award.** (2019)
- **Emmy Nomination for Speaking Evolution PBS show** (Rissler was Science Advisor and Executive Co-Producer)
- **Plenary Speaker on Education and Research at BEACON Congress, Michigan State University**
- **Outstanding Service-Learning course - Conservation Biology** BSC 482/582, University of Alabama (2009)
- **ARCS Fellowship** (Achievement Rewards for College Scientists) (1997-2000)
- **National Science Foundation REU student at the University of Michigan Biological Station** (1992)

SELECTED EXTERNAL FUNDING

Experience securing, administering, and overseeing federal and state-funded research awards across biological sciences, natural history collections, education, and applied conservation. Brings a dual perspective as both a funded principal investigator and a senior leader within a federal research agency, with deep familiarity of proposal development, peer review, award management, compliance, and reporting requirements. Extensive experience mentoring faculty and students in grant development and supporting institutions in aligning research investments with strategic priorities.

Selected Major Grants (Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator)

- **National Science Foundation** — Comparative phylogeography and ecological divergence in amphibians across the southern Appalachians and Gulf Coastal Plain. $100,000.
- **National Science Foundation** — Collaborative research on climate, demography, and population dynamics across elevational gradients. $375,000.
- **National Science Foundation** — Biological Research Collections: Consolidation and enhancement of university natural history collections. $498,779.
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture / U.S. Forest Service (Joint Fire Science Program)** — Biodiversity responses to prescribed fire in longleaf pine ecosystems. $316,853.
- **State of Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources** — Conservation genetics and population assessment of imperiled freshwater turtle species. $139,532.
- **University of Alabama / Alabama Public Television** — Speaking Evolution science education initiative. $85,000.

Additional funding history available upon request.

PUBLICATIONS – major ones listed

Le Sage, E. H., M. K. Unkefer, S. I. Duncan, J. A. Cundiff, **L. J. Rissler**, E. J. Crespi. 2022. Neuroendocrine correlates of juvenile amphibian behaviors across a latitudinal cline. *Hormones and Behavior* 146:online. Doi:10.1016/j.yhbeh.2022.105263.

Le Sage, E. H., S. I. Duncan, T. Seaborn, J. Cundiff, **L. J. Rissler**, and E. J. Crespi. 2021. Ecological adaptation drives wood frog population divergence in life history traits. *Heredity* 126:790-804.

Sillero, N., R. B. Huey, G. Gilchrist, **L. J. Rissler**, and M. Pascual. 2020. Distribution modelling of an introduced species: Do adaptive genetic markers affect potential range? *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 287:20201791. Doi:10.1098/rspb/2020.1791.

Rissler, L. J., K. L. Hale, N. R. Joffe, and N. M. Caruso. Gender differences in grant submissions across science and engineering fields at the NSF (2001-2016). 2020. *Bioscience* 70:814-820. Doi:10.1093/biosci/biaa02.

Caruso, N. M., Staudhammer, C. L., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2020. A demographic approach to understanding the effects of climate on population growth. *Oecologia* 193:889-901.

Caruso, N. M., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2019. Museum specimens reveal life history characteristics in *Plethodon montanus*. *Copeia* 107:622-631. Doi:10.1643/CH-18-145.

Scott, P. A., T. C. Glenn, and **L. J. Rissl**er. 2019. Formation of a recent hybrid zone offers insight to the geographic puzzle and maintenance of species boundaries in the musk turtles. *Molecular Ecology* 28:761-771. Doi:10.1111/mec.14983.

Caruso, N. M., J. J. Jacobs, and L. J. Rissler. 2019. An experimental approach to understanding elevation limits in the Northern Gray-Cheeked salamander, *Plethodon montanus*. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 14:297-307.

Sheridan, J. A., N. Caruso, J. J. Apodaca, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2018. Shifts in frog size and phenology: Testing predictions of climate change on a widespread anuran using data from prior to rapid climate warming. *Ecology and Evolution* 8:1316-1327. Doi:10.1002/ece3.3636.

Caruso, N. M., and **L. J. Rissler.** 2018. Demographic consequences of climate variation along an elevational gradient for a montane terrestrial salamander. *Population Ecology*. 61:171-182. bioRxiv https://doi.org/10.1101/130922.

Scott, P., T. Glenn, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2017. Resolving taxonomic turbulence and uncovering cryptic diversity in the musk turtles (*Sternotherus*) using robust demographic modeling. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 120:1-15. Doi:10.1016/j.ympev.2017.11.008.

Caruso, N. M., J. F. Jacobs, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2017. An experimental approach to understanding elevation limits in a montane terrestrial salamander, *Plethodon montanus*. bioRxiv https://doi.org/10.1101/131573.

Rissler, L. J. 2016. Union of phylogeography and landscape genetics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113:8079-8086. Doi:10.1073/pnas.1601073113.

Cunningham, H. R., **L. J. Rissler**, L. B. Buckley, and M. C. Urban. 2015. Abiotic and biotic constraints across reptile and amphibian ranges. *Ecography* 39:1-8. Doi: 10.1111/ecog.01369.

Scott, P. A., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2015. Integrating dynamic occupancy modeling and genetics to infer the status of the imperiled flattened musk turtle. *Biological Conservation* 192:294-303. Doi: 10.1016/j.biocon.2015.10.004.

Crespi, E. J., **L. J. Rissler**, N. M. Mattheus, K. Engbrecht, S. I. Duncan, T. Seaborn, E. M. Hall, J. D. Peterson, and J. L. Brunner. 2015. Geophysiology of wood frogs: Landscape patterns of prevalence of disease and circulating hormone concentrations across the eastern range. *Integrative and Comparative Biology* 55:602-617. Doi: 10.1093/icb/icv096.

Duncan, S. I., E. J. Crespi, N. M. Mattheus, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2015. History matters more when explaining genetic diversity within the context of the core-periphery hypothesis. *Molecular Ecology* 24:4323-4336. Doi: 10.111/mec.13315.

Rissler, L. J., S. Duncan, and N. Caruso. 2014. The relative importance of religion and education on university students' views of evolution in the Deep South and state science standards across the United States. *Evolution: Education and Outreach* 7:24. Doi: 10.1186/s12052-014-0024-1

Rissler, L. J., and J. Adamec. 2014. Gauging satisfaction with the new proposal process in DEB and IOS at the NSF. *Bioscience* 64:837-843.

Cunningham, H. R., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2013. Investigating behavioral shifts in aggression between a naturalized and native salamander species of the genus *Plethodon*. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 8:276-287.

Apodaca, J. J., **L. J. Rissler**, and J. C. Godwin. 2012. Population structure and gene flow in a heavily disturbed habitat: Implications for the management of the imperiled Red Hills salamander (*Phaeognathus hubrichti*). *Conservation Genetics* 13:913-923.

Glennon, K. L., **L. J. Rissler**, and S. A. Church. 2012. Ecogeographic isolation: a reproductive barrier between species and between cytotypes in Houstonia (Rubiaceae). *Evolutionary Ecology* 26:909-926.

Apodaca, J. J., Homyack, J. and **L. J. Rissler**. 2012. Using a species-specific habitat model helps identify unprotected populations of the federally threatened Red Hills salamander (*Phaeognathus hubrichti*). *Herpetological Review* 43:230-233.

*Newman, C. E., J. A. Feinberg, **L. J. Rissler**, J. Burger, and H. B. Shaffer. 2012. A new species of leopard frog (Anura: Ranidae) from the urban northeastern U.S. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 63:445-455. *Press in New York Times, Wall Street Journal, CNN, and 200+ outlets.

Newman, C. E., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2011. Phylogeographic analyses of the southern leopard frog: The impact of geography and climate on the distribution of genetic lineages vs. subspecies. *Molecular Ecology* 20:5295-5312.

Wooten, J. A., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2011. Ecological associations and genetic divergence in the black-bellied salamanders (*Desmognathus quadramaculatus*) in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. *Acta Herpetologica* 6:175-208.

Angert, A. L. L. G. Crozier, **L. J. Rissler**, S. E. Gilman, J. J. Tewksbury, and A. J. Chunco. 2011. Do species traits predict recent shifts at expanding range edges? *Ecology Letters* 14:677-689.

Rissler, L. J., and W. H. Smith. 2010. Amphibian contact zone and phylogeographical break hotspots across the continental United States. *Molecular Ecology* 19:5404-5416.

Buckley, L. B., M. C. Urban, M. J. Angilletta, L. G. Crozier, **L. J. Rissler**, and M. W. Sears. 2010. Can mechanism inform species' distribution models? *Ecology Letters* 13:1041-1054.

Crespi, E. J., R. Browne, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2010. Taxonomic revision of *Desmognathus wrighti* (Caudata: Plethodontidae). *Herpetologica* 66:283-295.

Makowsky, R. A., J. C. Marshall, J. McVay, P. T. Chippendale, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2010. Phylogeographic analysis and environmental niche modeling of the plain-bellied watersnake (*Nerodia erythrogaster*) reveals low levels of genetic and ecological differentiation. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 55:985-995.

Hickerson, M. J., B. C. Carstens, J. Cavender-Bares, K. A. Crandall, C. H. Graham, J. Johnson, **L. J. Rissler**, P. F. Victoriano, and A. D. Yoder. 2010. Phylogeography's past, present, and future: 10 years after Avise, 2000. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 54:291-301.

Smith, W. H., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2010. Quantifying disturbance in terrestrial communities: Abundance-biomass comparisons of herpetofauna closely track forest succession. *Restoration Ecology* 18:195-204.

Wooten, J. A., C. D. Camp, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2010. Genetic diversity in a narrowly endemic, recently described dusky salamander, *Desmognathus folkertsi*, from the southern Appalachian Mountains. *Conservation Genetics* 11:835-854.

Lance, S. L., C. Hagen, T. C. Glenn, J. J. Apodaca, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2009. Development and characterization of twelve polymorphic microsatellite loci in the threatened Red Hills salamander, *Phaeognathus hubrichti*. *Conservation Genetics* 10:1919-1921.

Cunningham, H. R., **L. J. Rissler**, and J. J. Apodaca. 2009. Competition at the range boundary in the slimy salamander: Using reciprocal transplants for studies on the role of biotic interactions in spatial distributions. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 78:52-62.

Makowsky, R. A., J. Chesser, and **L. J. Rissler**. 2009. A striking lack of genetic diversity in the wide-ranging amphibian *Gastrophryne carolinensis* (Anura: Microhylidae). *Genetica* 135:169-183.

Rissler, L. J., and J. J. Apodaca. 2007. Adding more ecology into species delimitation: Ecological niche models and phylogeography help define cryptic species in the black salamander (*Aneides flavipunctatus*). *Systematic Biology* 56:924-942.

Rissler, L. J., R. Hijmans, C. Graham, C. Moritz, and D. Wake. 2006. Phylogeographic lineages and species comparisons in conservation analyses: A case study of California herpetofauna. *American Naturalist* 167:655-666.

Wooten, J., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2005. Range extension of *Desmognathus folkertsi*. *Herpetological Review* 36:461.

Lapointe, F. J., and **L. J. Rissler**. 2005. Congruence, concensus, and the comparative phylogeography of codistributed species in California. *American Naturalist* 166:290-299.

Rissler, L. J., and H. M. Wilbur, and D. R. Taylor. 2004. The influence of ecology and genetics on behavioral variation in salamander populations across the Eastern Continental Divide. *American Naturalist*. 164:201-213.

Rissler, L. J. and D. R. Taylor. 2003. The phylogenetics of Desmognathine salamander populations across the southern Appalachians. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 27:197-211.

Crespi, E. J., **L. J. Rissler**, and R. A. Browne. 2003. Testing Pleistocene refugia theory: Phylogeographical analysis of *Desmognathus wrighti*, a high-elevation salamander in the southern Appalachians. *Molecular Ecology* 12:969-984.

Harding, E. K. , E. Crone, B. Elderd, J. Hoekstra, A. McKerrow, J. Perrine, J. Regetz, **L. J. Rissler**, A.G. Stanley, E. Walters, and NCEAS HCP Working Group. 2001. The scientific foundations of habitat conservation plans: A quantitative assessment. *Conservation Biology* 15 :488-500.

Rissler, L. J., A. M. Barber, and H. M. Wilbur. 2000. Spatial and behavioral interactions between a native and introduced salamander species. *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology* 48:61-68.

Wolfe, L. M. and **L. J. Rissler**. 1999. Reproductive consequences of a gall-inducing fungal pathogen (*Exobasidium vaccinii*) on *Rhododendron calendulaceum* (Ericaceae). *Canadian Journal of Botany* 77:1-6.

Rissler, L. J., D. Karowe, F. Cuthbert and B. Scholtens. 1995. The influence of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker presence on local insect community structure. *Wilson Bulletin 107:746-752*.

Whitaker, J. O., Jr. and **L. J. Rissler**. 1993. Do bats feed in winter? *American Midland Naturalist* 129:200-203.

Whitaker, J. O., Jr. and **L. J. Rissler**. 1992. Seasonal activity of bats at Copperhead Cave. *Proc. of Indiana Academy of Science* 101:127-134.

Whitaker, J. O., Jr. and **L. J. Rissler**. 1992. Winter behavior of bats at a mine entrance in Vermillion County, Indiana. *American Midland Naturalist* 127:52-59.

NATIONAL & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- **Member of NSF's Building Research Capacity of New Faculty in Biology solicitation's working group**. Goal to increase opportunities for research of new faculty of biology at minority-serving institutions, predominately undergraduate institutions, and other colleges and universities that are not among the nation's most research-intensive institutions.
- **Sexual Harassment Task Force at the National Science Foundation**. Worked with cross-directorate leaders to develop standards and policy within and outside of NSF. Wrote part of NSF Important Notice 144 and focused on ways to prevent harassment at remote field locations (see https://www.nsf.gov/od/odi/promising_practices/index.jsp). – **Received Director's Achievement in Equal Opportunity/Diversity and Inclusion Award for this work**.
- **Safe and Inclusive Fieldwork (also known as Safe and Harassment-Free Fieldwork)**. Co-chair of this new NSF policy (in the Directorates of Biological Sciences and Geosciences) to require institutions to submit their SAIF/SAHF plans for merit review. Provided input on this to the National Science Board and other venues.
- **Federal Steering Committee Member, National Nature Assessment**.
- **Member of NSF's team for the rewrite of *On Being a Scientist (4th edition)* by the National Academies.**

TEACHING & MENTORING

Extensive experience in undergraduate and graduate teaching and mentoring in ecology, evolution, conservation biology, biogeography, field zoology, and interdisciplinary biological sciences at a comprehensive public university. Longstanding record of mentoring Ph.D. and M.Sc. students, postdoctoral scholars, and early-career faculty, with particular emphasis on research development, grant writing, career advancement, and professional transitions. Deep commitment to experiential and field-based learning, integrating research and teaching, and supporting faculty and students as scholars whose work contributes to institutional mission, student success, and public engagement.

Courses:

- *Grant-Writing Workshop* (6 days) – taught on vacation time at Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory (RMBL) and Mountain Lake Biological Station; for early-career faculty
- *Biogeography* – senior undergraduate and graduate level course at University of Alabama
- *Evolution* – senior undergraduate and graduate level course at University of Alabama
- *Trends in Ecology and Evolution* – seminar for advanced graduate students
- *Biology of Invasive Species* – field course at Mountain Lake Biological Station
- *Conservation Biology* – senior undergraduate and graduate level course at University of Alabama
- *Field Zoology* – heavy service-learning course for undergraduates at the University of Alabama
- *Conservation Ecology* – field course at Mountain Lake Biological Station

Graduate Students: Nicholas Caruso (PhD 2017); Peter Scott (PhD 2016) Sarah Duncan (PhD 2016); Nichole Mattheus (MSc 2012); Christopher Thawley (MSc 2011); Catherine Newman (MSc 2009); Jessica Wooten (PhD 2008); Joseph J. Apodaca (PhD 2010); Heather Cunningham (PhD 2010)

Postdoctoral Fellows: Dr. Christopher Edge (2012-2013); Dr. Jennifer Sheridan (2011-2013)

Postdoctoral AAAS Policy Fellows Mentor: Dr. Lisa Walsh (2024-present); Dr. Nicole Barger (2022-2025)

EDUCATION & EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Ph.D., Biology
University of Virginia, 2000.

MSc., Biology
Utah State University, 1995

BSc., Double Major: Life Sciences and Anthropology, Magna Cum Laude
Indiana State University, 1992

National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Biological Informatics, 2001-2003
University of California at Berkeley. Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

Federal Leadership Development

- **Certificate of Mastery. Federal Executive Institute**, Charlottesville (2019). Participated in month long, immersive on-site course: *Leadership for a Democratic Society*.
  This program offered senior-level executives an opportunity for intense leadership training focused on constitutional governance, federal leadership, institutional stewardship, moral and transformational leadership, and public-sector strategy.

- **Congressional Operations Seminar**, The Government Affairs Institute, Georgetown University.
  This week-long program on Capitol Hill is led by former and current congressional staff, political scientists, election experts, news media, and Members of Congress. The focus is on key stages in the authorization and budget & appropriations processes, floor procedure, congressional oversight, role of special interests, policy formulation, representing constituent interests, and relationship between media and Congress.

- **Advanced Budget and Appropriations Process**, The Government Affairs Institute, Georgetown University.