

Jessica Williams

Private Client Manager, Charities Aid Foundation

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Employment history

2023 – Present Private Client Manager, Charities Aid Foundation

I am a philanthropy advisor for (ultra) high net worth individuals, managing and developing their high value and often complex Charitable Trusts.

2021 – 2023 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre for Biodiversity and Environment Research, UCL

Sustainable & Healthy Food Systems (SHEFS) project, funded by the Wellcome Trust: I investigated the impacts of land-use and climate change on biodiversity within South African smallholder farming areas, and the resilience of nature's benefits to people under such changes.

- Postdoc Representative on the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team within The Department of Genetics, Evolution and Environment (GEE; 2021 – 2023)
- Member of UCL's Green Champion Network, helping to make UCL a sustainable and healthy workplace (2021 – 2023)
- CBER Media Team, producing the 'CBER Lunchbox Podcast' (2019 – 2023)
- Contributed to CBER's response to DEFRA consultation on Environment Act targets (2022)

Education

2017 – 2021 PhD Student, Global Biodiversity Change Group, Centre for Biodiversity and Environment Research, UCL (Passed, no corrections)

Understanding how local climatic changes modify the response of biodiversity to land-use changes. Supervised by Dr Tim Newbold and Prof. Richard Pearson, funded by a Royal Society Research Grant

- PhD Student Representative for GEE at the Div. of Biosciences Staff-Student Consultative Committee (2017 – 2020)
- PhD Student Representative for GEE at the Academic Staff Meetings (2017 – 2020)
- PhD Student Representative on the Div. of Biosciences Wellbeing Initiative (2019)
- Ran the CBER Seminar Series (2017 – 2019)

2015 – 2016 MSc Conservation Science, Imperial College London (Distinction, 82)

2011 – 2014 BSc (Hons) Biology and Animal Behaviour, University of Exeter (First Class, with a Dean's Commendation in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year)

Selected publications

Williams, J.J., Freeman, R., Spooner, F. & Newbold, T. (2021). Vertebrate population trends are influenced by interactions between land use, climatic position, habitat loss and climate change. *Global Change Biology* 28(3), 797–815.

Williams, J.J. & Newbold, T. (2021). Vertebrate responses to human land use are influenced by their proximity to climatic tolerance limits. *Diversity and Distributions* 27(7), 1308–1323.

Williams, J.J., Bates, A.E. & Newbold, T. (2020). Human-dominated land uses favour species affiliated with more extreme climates, especially in the tropics. *Ecography* 43, 391–405.

Williams, J.J. & Newbold, T. (2020). Local climatic changes affect biodiversity responses to land use: A review. *Diversity and Distributions* 26(1), 76–92.

This paper was among the top 10% downloaded papers from Diversity and Distributions over the years 2018-2019, it first appeared online on 22/10/2019.

Williams, J.J., Papastamatiou, Y.P., Caselle, J.E., Bradley, D. & Jacoby, D.M.P. (2018). Mobile marine predators: an understudied source of nutrients to coral reefs in an unfished atoll. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 285(1875).

Newbold, T., Oppenheimer, P., Etard, A. & **Williams, J.J.** (2020). Tropical and Mediterranean biodiversity is disproportionately sensitive to land-use and climate change. *Nature Ecology & Evolution* 4, 1630–1638.

Newbold, T., Adams, G.L., ... **Williams, J.J.** (2019). Climate and land-use change homogenise terrestrial biodiversity, with consequences for ecosystem functioning and human well-being. *Emerging Topics in Life Sciences* 3(2), 207–219.

Groner, V.P., **Williams, J.J.** & Pearson, R.G. (2023). Limited evidence for quantitative contribution of rare and endangered species to agricultural production. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment* 345, 108326.

Total citations = 468 (Google Scholar)

h-index = 8 (Google Scholar)

Peer Reviewer for journals including *Global Change Biology*, and *Nature Ecology and Evolution*.

Selected reports and articles

WWF (2020), Living Planet Report 2020 - Bending the curve of biodiversity loss.

The Conversation (2021), Biodiversity: why foods grown in warm climates could be doing the most damage to wildlife. Tim Newbold, Adrienne Etard, Gonzalo Albaladejo Robles, **Jessica Williams**

Biosphere Magazine (2018), Predator Poo, Issue 32, 58-65. **Jessica Williams**

Further research experience

Grants: I was co-lead on a NERC Cross Disciplinary Research for Environmental Solutions – UCL Internal Call (£47,159, paper in prep.). I have also been a co-investigator or named PDRA on two NERC Pushing the Frontiers grants (2020, 2022) and a NERC Standard Grant (2021) – these all passed internal UCL selection, and the 2020 grant reached the final interview stage of the NERC assessment process.

Committee member: 2024 – Present: BES Conservation Ecology SIG, Early-career representative

Workshop – invited attendee, 2024: I have been invited to attend a workshop in Sweden ('Combined effects of climate change and habitat destruction on biodiversity') run by Dr Andrew Suggitt (University of Northumbria) and Dr Alistair Auffret (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences) at the start of 2024.

Working group – co-leader on a multi-institutional paper, 2022 – Present: I have been invited to co-lead a paper alongside Professor Eugene Murphey (British Antarctic Survey) and Dr Emma Cavan (Imperial College London) to look ecological feedbacks in the Earth System. The paper is in preparation, with collaborators joining from four countries and over 10 institutions.

Working group – UCL & University of Ottawa, 2018 – 2021: I worked alongside Dr Tim Newbold (UCL), Professor Jeremy Kerr, and Dr Peter Soroye (University of Ottawa), developing ideas and contributing to research investigating how bumblebees are responding to land-use and climate change (paper in prep).

Field Research, GVI Field Staff, 2015: This staff position on Global Vision International's (GVI) remote base in Tortuguero National Park, Costa Rica, provided experience in teaching and leading groups of volunteers and collecting biodiversity data in the field.

Teaching and supervision

2022- 2023 **Guest lecturer and teaching assistant, UCL**
Co-supervisor, MSci student (11-month project) and BSc student (final year project)
PhD student mentor

2021 – 2022 **Primary supervisor**, MRes student (3-month project)
Co-supervisor, MSc student (4-month project) and an Undergraduate student placement

2017 – 2021 **Postgraduate teaching assistant, UCL**

2017, 2018 **Guest lecturer**, Imperial College London's MSc Conservation Science course.

Conferences and guest lectures

I was an invited speaker for Imperial College London's Ecology & Evolution Seminar Series (2023). I also gave an invited talk and was on a panel discussion at the 2023 Commonwealth Science Conference, organised by The Royal Society and the University of the West Indies. I have presented my work at many other international conferences, including the European Congress of Conservation Biology (2022), British Ecological Society Annual Meeting (2019-2021), International Biogeography Society Biennial conference (2019), and the Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting (2020).

Selected outreach

STEM Ambassador (2019 – Present): I have been invited to give talks on land-use and climate change at secondary schools around London and have participated in career Q&A sessions for years 10-12.

Mentor for Brightside (2021 – 2023): I volunteer for Brightside Online Mentoring, which supports students in Year 10 - 13 across the UK in making confident and informed decisions about their next steps.

Interviewer and blogger for Conservation Conversation (ConCon) (2018 – 2022): ConCon aims to inform and engage people outside of science in the biggest conservation issues we are currently facing. Within our team, I carried out interviews with researchers and wrote articles on the latest conservation topics.

Volunteer, British Ecological Society (2020): I helped to develop the plot of the SMASHfest UK 2020 event.

Pint of Science Invited Speaker (2018): 'Shark Poop and Coral Reefs - An unlikely link!'

Co-organiser, Year 8 Sutton Scholars Biology Discover Day, UCL (2018): helped to develop and run this event.

References available on request