



Western
Centre for Animals
on the Move

**Movement
Mondays**



Bird migration in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula

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ABSTRACT

Millions of birds cross the Gulf of Mexico every spring and fall, making the Yucatan Peninsula a critically important region for bird diversity in the western hemisphere. As a professor in the Yucatan, I had the great fortune to study migration up close, including how migratory birds use coastal and urban ecosystems during migration and winter. Together with my students, we questioned how bird behaviour and bird communities vary across spatial and seasonal energy gradients. We found that migratory bird diversity across the Peninsula only weakly tracked productivity gradients. Likewise, we found that bird foraging behaviour during stopover did not correspond to local fruit availability. On the other hand, across urban green spaces, migratory bird diversity increased with primary productivity. While migratory bird communities may be structured via fine scale resource partitioning, our findings highlight that the scale over which migrants forage, the resources they consume, and the relationship between resources and broad productivity indices are a challenge to determine in the field.

Monday, October 30, 3:30 – 4:30

Location: TBD