

Caitlin Elizabeth Conn
Curriculum Vitae

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Education:

- PhD in Genetics; The University of Georgia, Athens, GA
Dissertation title: The molecular evolution of strigolactone perception in plants 2017
- BS in Biology; The Pennsylvania State University,
University Park, PA 2011

Professional appointments and fellowships:

- Assistant Professor of Biology, Berry College 2019 – present
- National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research
Fellowship in Biology, Emory University
Advisor: Dr. Nicole Gerardo 2018 – 2019
- Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences
postdoctoral fellow, Spelman College
Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Kovacs 2017 – 2018
- Doctoral student, The University of Georgia
Advisor: Dr. David Nelson 2012 – 2017
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research
Fellowship in Biology, The University of Georgia 2015 – 2017
- Kirby and Jan Alton Graduate Fellowship, The University
of Georgia 2016
- Linton and June Bishop Graduate Fellowship, The
University of Georgia 2015
- Graduate School Assistantship, The University
of Georgia 2013 – 2014
- Laboratory technician, The University of Georgia 2011 – 2012

Publications:

Research

- Yoshida, S., Kim, S., Wafula, E.K., Tanskanen, J., Kim, Y.-M., Honaas, L., Yang, Z., Spallek, T., **Conn, C.E.**, Ichihashi, Y., Cheong, K., Cui, S., Der, J.P., Gundlach, H., Jiao, Y., Hori, C., Ishida, J.K., Kasahara, H., Kiba, T., Kim, M.-S., Koo, N., Laohavisit, A., Lee, Y.-H., Lumba, S., McCourt, P., Mortimer, J.C., Mutuku, J. M., Nomura, T., Sasaki-Sekimoto, Y., Seto, Y., Wang, Y., Wakatake, T., Sakakibara, H., Demura, T., Yamaguchi, S., Yoneyama, K., Manabe, R., Nelson, D.C., Schulman, A., Timko, M.P., DePamphilis, C.W., Choi, D., Shirasu, K. (2019) Genome sequence of *Striga asiatica* provides insight into the evolution of plant parasitism. *Current Biology* 29(18): 3041 – 3052. e4.
- Lopez-Obando, M., **Conn, C.E.**, Hoffmann, B., Bythell-Douglas, R., Nelson, D.C., Rameau, C., Bonhomme, S. (2016) Structural modeling and transcriptional responses highlight a clade of PpKAI2-LIKE genes as candidate receptors for strigolactones in *Physcomitrella patens*. *Planta* DOI 10.1007/s00425-016-2481-y.
- **Conn, C.E.**, Nelson, D.C. (2016) Evidence that KARRIKIN-INSENSITIVE2 (KAI2) receptors may perceive an unknown signal that is not karrikin or strigolactone. *Frontiers in Plant Science* 6:1219. DOI 10.3389/fpls.2015. 01219.
- **Conn, C.E.**, Bythell-Douglas, R., Neumann, D., Yoshida, S., Whittington, B., Westwood, J.H., Shirasu, K., Bond, C.S., Dyer, K.A., Nelson, D.C. (2015) Convergent evolution of strigolactone perception enabled host detection in parasitic plants. *Science* 349(6247): 540 – 543.
- Hedges, S.B., **Conn, C.E.** (2012) A new skink fauna from Caribbean islands (Squamata, Mabuyidae, Mabuyinae). *Zootaxa* 3288: 1 – 244.

Teaching: peer-reviewed

- **Conn, C.E.**, Nelson, D.C. (2017) It's not easy being not green: the making of a parasitic plant. *The Plant Cell* 29(4): tpc.117.tt0417; DOI 10.1105/tpc.117.tt0417.

Non-peer-reviewed products

- Conn, C. (2015) The Making of a Parasitic Plant: Parasitism as a Life Strategy. B. Anderton, producer, and E. Kornblum, videographer/editor, published by iBiology.
- Conn, C., Crooks, P. (2015) Experiment 1, Calorimetry. *PSU Chemtrek*. J. T. Keiser, editor, published by Hayden McNeil, Plymouth, MI.

Course instruction:

- Instructor, Berry College
Courses: Biological Diversity (BIO 106), Principles of Cell Biology (BIO 111/BIO 111L), Genetics (BIO 304), Evolutionary Biology (BIO 498)

Fall 2019 – present

- Co-instructor, Sera Mey Monastic University, Emory-Tibet Science Initiative
Course: Immunology and Disease Summer 2019
- Instructor, Emory University
Course: Evolutionary Biology (BIOL 241) Spring 2019
- Course designer and instructor, Spelman College
Course: Biology Methods and Research (SBIO 114) Fall 2017
- Instructor, The University of Georgia Costa Rica, Tropical Biology Fall Semester
Course: Genetics (GENE 3200) Fall 2016
- Teaching assistant, The University of Georgia
Course: Genetics (GENE 3200) Spring 2014

Invited guest teaching:

- Biology seminar, Earlham College, 2016
- Advanced Genetics (GENE 4200), The University of Georgia, 2016
- The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), The University of Georgia, 2014 and 2015
- Experimental Chemistry I (CHEM 111), The Pennsylvania State University, Spring 2009 (with Patrick Crooks)

Professional development:

- Mentoring Undergraduate Research Faculty Learning Community, Berry College, Spring 2021 – present
- Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences Grant, Berry College, Summer 2020
- Early-career Faculty Learning Community, Berry College, Spring 2020 – Fall 2020
- Diversity Infusion Mini-grant, Berry College, Spring 2020
- Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom course, CornellIX, Spring 2020
- Programming for Evolutionary Biology workshop, Freie Universität Berlin, Spring 2019
- Fellowships in Research and Science Teaching (FIRST) “How to Teach” course, Emory University, Spring 2018

Mentoring experience and relevant service:

- Member, Berry College Planning Council, Fall 2020 – present
- Member, Berry College Committee on Student Research, Fall 2020 – present
- Member, Berry College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Fall 2020 – present

- Undergraduate research mentor, Berry College Department of Biology, 2019 – present
- Member, Berry College Liberal Arts Curriculum Exploratory Committee, Spring 2020
- Representative for Department of Biology/School of Mathematics and Natural Science, Berry College Dean's Scholars Dinner and Decision Berry events, Spring 2020
- Undergraduate and high school research mentor, Emory University Department of Biology, 2018 – 2019
- Undergraduate research mentor, Spelman College Biology Department, 2017 – 2018
- Volunteer, Science Art Wonder, Atlanta Science Festival, Spring 2018
- Annual meeting mentor, The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, Winter 2018
- Co-representative, Genetics Graduate Student Association, The University of Georgia, Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
- Student representative, The University of Georgia Plant Center, Fall 2014 – Spring 2015
- Recruitment co-chair, Genetics Graduate Student Association, The University of Georgia Fall 2014 – Spring 2015
- Judge, Georgia Junior Science & Humanities Symposium, 2013 – 2017
- Outreach volunteer, The University of Georgia Bioenergy Science Center, 2013 – 2015
- Undergraduate research mentor, The Plant Center, The University of Georgia, Fall 2014 and Fall 2015
- Summer research mentor, Georgia Intern Fellowship for Teachers Program, The University of Georgia, 2015
- Volunteer, American Society of Plant Biologists, Summer and Fall 2013
- Research mentor, Young Dawgs Program, The University of Georgia, Summer 2012
- Volunteer, Spend a Summer Day, The Pennsylvania State University, Summer 2011

Presentations:

- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Hassan S. Salem, Abraham J. Moller, Aileen Berasategui, Nicole M. Gerardo. Host range and its genetic basis in the mycoparasite *Escovopsis*. SouthEastern Population Ecology, Evolution, and Genetics (SEPEEG), Mountain Lake Biological Station, The University of Virginia, Pembroke, VA, 6 October 2018.
- Mark E. Lee, Monica S. Stephens Cooley, Emily Weigel, **Caitlin Conn**. Enhancing the Postdoctoral Experience through Liberal Arts Colleges. Council on Undergraduate Research Biennial Conference 2018, Arlington, VA, 1 – 3 July 2018. (Panel)

- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Ellen O. Martinson, Jack H. Werren, Jennifer L. Kovacs. Investigating the role of horizontal gene transfer in adaptation to blood-feeding. The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Meeting 2018, San Francisco, CA, 3 – 7 January 2018. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, David C. Nelson. Molecular Evolution of Strigolactone Perception in Parasitic Weeds of the Orobanchaceae. The University of Georgia Plant Center Fall Retreat, Unicoi State Park, GA, 27 – 28 October 2016. (Poster)
- **Caitlin Conn**. Molecular evolution of a host detection mechanism in parasitic weeds. SouthEastern Population Ecology, Evolution, and Genetics (SEPEEG), Madison, FL, 21 – 23 October 2016. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, David C. Nelson. Molecular Evolution of Strigolactone Perception in Parasitic Weeds of the Orobanchaceae. Evolution 2016, Austin, TX, 17 – 21 June 2016. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**. Evolutionary and molecular mechanisms of host perception in parasitic plants of the Orobanchaceae. The University of Georgia Plant Center Joe Key Symposium, Athens, GA, 11 – 12 May 2016. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**. Evolutionary and molecular mechanisms of host perception in parasitic plants. Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science Research Day. The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 28 March 2016. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**. Evolutionary and molecular mechanisms of host perception in parasitic Orobanchaceae. Plant Functional Genomics (PFG). The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 16 March 2016. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Rohan Bythell-Douglas, Drexel Neumann, Satoko Yoshida, Bryan Whittington, James H. Westwood, Ken Shirasu, Charles S. Bond, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Duplicate gene evolution contributes to host detection in parasitic weeds of the Orobanchaceae. The University of Georgia Plant Center Retreat, Helen, GA, 29–30 October 2015. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. The evolution and molecular mechanism of host-induced germination in parasitic Orobanchaceae. Enthusiasts of Diversity, Genetics, and Evolution (EDGE). The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 20 February 2015. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. The evolution and molecular mechanism of host-induced germination in parasitic Orobanchaceae. The University of Georgia Plant Center Retreat, Helen, GA, 23–24 October 2014. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. Evolution 2014, Raleigh, NC, 20–24 June 2014. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. The University of Georgia Plant Center Retreat, Helen, GA, 24–25 October 2013. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. The evolution of host perception in parasitic plants of the Orobanchaceae. SouthEast Population, Ecology, and Evolutionary Genetics, Mountain Lake Biological Station, The University of Virginia, Pembroke, VA, 28 September 2013. (Oral)

- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. The University of Georgia Department of Genetics Annual Retreat, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 14 September 2013. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science Annual Research Day, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 14 August 2013. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. Plant Biology 2013, American Society of Plant Biologists, Providence, RI, 20–24 July 2013. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. Enthusiasts of Diversity, Genetics, and Evolution (EDGE), The University of Georgia, Athens, GA, 01 March 2013. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Drexel A. Neumann, Kelly A. Dyer, and David C. Nelson. Evolution of Host Recognition in Parasitic Plants. The University of Georgia Plant Center Retreat, Helen, GA, 25–26 October 2012. (Poster)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**. Caribbean island lizards demonstrate universal evolutionary concepts. Astrobiology Summer Program Symposium, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, 11 August 2010. (Oral)
- S. Blair Hedges, **Caitlin E. Conn**. Discovery of a remarkable lizard fauna on Caribbean islands hidden from science and conservation. Evolution 2010, Portland, OR, 25–29 June 2010. (Oral)
- **Caitlin E. Conn**, Patrick D. Crooks. Calorimetry of fuels and the use of energy to do work: Exploring calorimetry in the general chemistry laboratories. Chemistry Poster Symposium, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA, December 2008. (Poster)

Honors and awards:

- Best Graduate Student Talk, The University of Georgia Graduate Students and Postdocs in Science Research Day (2016)
- Graduate Student Poster Competition Co-winner, The University of Georgia Plant Center Fall Retreat (2015)
- Graduate Student Travel Award, The University of Georgia Department of Genetics (2014)
- Best Graduate Student Talk, SouthEast Population, Ecology, and Evolutionary Genetics meeting (2013)
- Tutor of the Year 2010–2011, Central Intermediate Unit #10 Development Center for Adults (2011)
- Academic Excellence Scholarship, The Pennsylvania State University (2007–2011)
- Schreyer Scholar, The Schreyer Honors College, The Pennsylvania State University (2007–2011)

- Dean's List (3.5 or greater GPA on a 4.0 scale) eight out of eight semesters at The Pennsylvania State University (2007–2011)
- Chemistry 113 A+ Award (given to students with the highest grades in the Penn State general chemistry lab; 2008)

References:

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