

# Adam Ross Searles

*Curriculum Vitae*



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## Education

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<b>University of Florida</b>	Gainesville, FL
PhD Interdisciplinary Ecology	August 2025
Statistics Concentration	GPA: 3.95
<b>University of Central Florida</b>	Orlando, FL
Bachelor of Science in Biology	May 2019
Marine & Aquatic Sciences Track	GPA: 4.0

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## Career Goals & Interests

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- Obtain a tenure-track faculty position at a public research university
- Active research interests in the ecology of estuarine and marine environments, including:
  - Ecological effects of anthropogenic stressors, such as eutrophication, habitat alteration, and rising sea surface temperatures, on coastal ecosystems
  - Impacts of climate change-driven range expansions, such as novel competitive interactions and altered consumer-prey dynamics, on ecosystem structure
  - Habitat associations of ecological communities and how they vary over time, space, and disturbance regimes

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## Professional Experience

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<b>FSU Coastal &amp; Marine Laboratory</b>	August 2025 – Present
College of Arts and Sciences, Dean’s Postdoctoral Fellow	
<b>UF Benthic &amp; Estuarine Ecology Research/Coastal &amp; Marine Ecology Labs</b>	
PhD Student	September 2020 – August 2025
<b>Florida Fish &amp; Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)</b>	
Fisheries and Wildlife Research Technician	September 2019 – June 2020
Fisheries Independent Monitoring Research Intern & Volunteer	May 2016 – August 2019
<b>UCF Marine Ecology &amp; Conservation Lab</b>	
Undergraduate Researcher	October 2015 – June 2020
<b>UCF Molecular Ecology and Evolution Lab</b>	
Field Research Technician	January 2019 – June 2020
<b>NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service</b>	
Southeast Fisheries Science Center - Hollings Scholar	May 2018 – August 2018

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## Research Grants, Contracts, & Scholarships (23 total | \$369,112)

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Florida Sea Grant Clam-Seagrass Coordinated Network Experiment.	2026 – 2027
Funded Contract. Co-PI. (\$9,112 in salary and fringe of \$197,045 total)	
FSU Dean’s Postdoctoral Fellowship (\$56,000)	2025 – 2027

NSF Graduate Research Fellowship (\$102,000 + 3 years tuition)	2020 – 2025
UF Graduate School Preeminence Fellowship (\$155,000 + 5 years tuition)	2020 – 2025
UF Doris and Earl Lowe and Verna Lowe Scholarship (\$2,000)	2024
UF Office of Research Travel Award (\$400)	2024
UF Graduate Student Council Travel Grant (\$350)	2024
UF SNRE Travel Award (\$250)	2024
Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation Travel Award (\$200)	2023
Gulf Estuarine Research Society CERF Travel Award (\$500)	2023
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation Scholarship (\$5,000)	2022
UF Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Organization Travel Award (\$250)	2022
Benthic Ecology Meeting Student Travel Award (\$400)	2022
UF IFAS Travel Award (\$250)	2022
UF Graduate Student Council Travel Grant (\$350)	2022
UCF Research and Mentoring Program Scholarship (\$5,600)	2017 – 2019
UCF College of Sciences Scholarship (\$500)	2018
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Hollings Scholarship (\$29,000)	2017 – 2019
Distinguished Undergraduate Researcher Scholarship (\$200)	2017
UCF Undergraduate Group Research Grant (\$500)	2017
UCF Undergraduate Research Grant (\$500)	2017
UCF Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (\$1,000)	2016

### **Awards & Honors (16 total)**

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UF Graduate Student Mentoring Award	2025
Best Student Presentation – Gulf Estuarine Research Society Meeting	2024
Best Presentation Award - Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium	2024
Outstanding Presentation Award 2 <sup>nd</sup> Place - North Florida Marine Science Symposium	2023
Outstanding Student Presentation Award - Indian River Lagoon Symposium	2023
Best Poster Award - Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium	2023
Best Poster Award - Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences Research Forum	2023
UCF Alumni 30 Under 30 Award	2023
Outstanding Student Presentation Award - Indian River Lagoon Symposium	2022
Honorable Mention - National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2019
UCF Order of Pegasus	2019
Founder's Award - UCF College of Sciences	2019
Judge's Choice Award - UCF Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence	2019
UCF Distinguished Undergraduate Researcher April	2018
Outstanding Student Poster Award - Indian River Lagoon Symposium	2017
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place Winner - SHORE Conference Poster Competition	2016

### **Publications (5 total, 4 first author | 6 in prep | \*student mentee)**

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#### Published

1. **Searles AR**, Martin CW, Reynolds, LK. 2026. Incorporating Hydrogen in Stable Isotope Analyses Improves the Ability to Track Decomposition in Marine Macrophytes. *Hydrobiologia*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10750-026-06205-z>

2. **Searles AR**, Adams DH, Morris LJ, Hall L, Martin CW, Reynolds LK. 2025. Tropicalization Interacts with Other Human Stressors to Mediate the Diets of Expanding and Resident Herbivores. *Estuaries and Coasts*. 48(4):115. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12237-025-01555-8>
3. Adams DH, Edwards DD, Schneider J, **Searles AR**. 2024. Expansion and Reduction of Estuarine Fish Species in a Changing Subtropical Estuary. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 728, 221-238. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3354/meps14314>
4. **Searles AR**, Gipson EE, Walters LJ, Cook GS. 2022. Oyster Reef Restoration Facilitates the Recovery of Species Abundance, Diversity, and Composition in Estuarine Communities. *Scientific Reports* 12(1):8163. DOI: 10.1038/s41598-022-11688-6
5. **Searles AR**, Gipson EE, Cook GS. 2019. Notes on the discovery of an invasive marine decapod, *Charybdis hellerii*, in Mosquito Lagoon, Florida. *Florida Scientist* 82(1):40-46. Submitted & In Prep
6. **Searles AR**, Reynolds LK, Martin CW. Co-Occurring Seagrass and Macroalgae Foundation Species Differentially Support Fauna Through Multiple Pathways. *In Revision*.
7. **Searles AR**, Reynolds LK, Martin CW. Species-Specific Effects and Physical Characteristics of Co-Occurring Foundation Species Drive Differences in Ecological Communities. *In Prep*.
8. \*Siegel AL, **Searles AR**, Martin CW. Climate-Related Phenological Changes in Fish Population Dynamics in Eastern Gulf of Mexico Seagrass Beds. *In Prep*.
9. Martin CW, McDonald AM, Looby A, **Searles AR**, Hendrickson Z, Alford SB. Species Abundance and Composition Drive Community Differences Between Inshore and Offshore Seagrass Habitats. *In Prep*.
10. **Searles AR**, Trexler JC, Gipson EE, Walters LJ, Cook GS. A review of the role of density invariant similarity indices in the interpretation of species composition differences. *In Prep*.
11. Vincent B, Hoffman E, Cook GS, **Searles AR**, Adams DH, and Paperno R. Determining the Relationship of Morphologically Distinct *Micropogonias undulatus* Individuals to Other Conspecific Populations. *In Prep*.

## Published Pedagogy Materials

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Skrob-Martin S, **Searles AR**. 2025. Tropicalization and Herbivorous Fish Diets. *BioGraphI FMN Fall 2025*. QUBES Educational Resources. doi:10.25334/QXR9-WC29

## Presentations (43 total | \*student mentee | †national and international conferences)

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**Searles AR**, Martin CW, Reynolds LK. Incorporating Hydrogen in Stable Isotope Analyses Improves the Ability to Track Decomposition in Marine Macrophytes.

- Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium 2025. Oral.
- North Florida Marine Science Symposium 2025. Oral.

**Searles AR**, Martin CW, Reynolds LK. Shifting Macrophytes: *Thalassia* and *Caulerpa* Support Unique Ecological Communities.

- Gulf Estuarine Research Society Meeting 2024. Oral.
- Dauphin Island Sea Lab Graduate Student Symposium 2024. Oral.
- UF Water Institute Symposium 2024. Oral.

- †Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation Biennial Meeting 2023. Oral.
  - North Florida Marine Science Symposium 2023. Poster.
  - Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium 2023. Poster.
  - Soil, Water, and Ecosystem Sciences 2023 Research Forum. Poster.
  - Gulf Estuarine Research Society Meeting 2022. Oral.
- \*Siegel A, **Searles AR**, Martin CW. Phenological changes in seagrass-associated fishes: evidence that rising temperatures alters seasonality of fish migration patterns.
- Dauphin Island Sea Lab Graduate Student Symposium 2024. Poster.
- \*Bibas S, \*Downey SR, \*Martin C, \*Meeker M, \*Scharer CM, \*Soriano RJ, Martin CW, Reynolds LK, **Searles AR**. Seagrass and Macroalgae Relative Dominance Influences Faunal Biodiversity and Biomass.
- UF Undergraduate Research Symposium 2024. Poster.
- Searles AR**, Adams DH, Morris LJ, Hall L, Martin CW, Reynolds LK. Tropicalization interacts with other human stressors to moderate the diets of expanding and resident herbivores.
- Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2025. Oral.
  - †American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting 2024. Oral.
  - UF Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium 2024. Oral.
  - FWC Fisheries Independent Monitoring Annual Meeting 2024. Oral.
  - North Florida Marine Science Symposium 2023. Oral.
  - Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2023. Oral
  - †Benthic Ecology Meeting 2022. Oral.
  - UF Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium 2022. Oral.
  - UF Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium 2021. Oral.
  - Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2021. Oral.
- Searles AR**, Zink IC, Browder J, Serafy J. Testing Behavioral Preference of the Brackish Grass Shrimp, *Palaemonetes intermedius*, For Different Seagrass Species
- †ASLO Annual Meeting Puerto Rico 2019. Poster
  - NOAA Hollings Scholar's Symposia 2018. Oral
- Searles AR**, Gipson EE, Walters LJ, Cook GS. Oyster Reef Restoration Facilitates the Recovery of Species Abundance, Diversity, and Composition in Estuarine Communities.
- Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2022. Oral
  - Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2020. Oral.
  - FWC Fisheries Annual Meeting 2020. Oral.
  - North Florida Marine Science Symposium 2020. Oral.
  - Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence 2019. Poster.
  - Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2019. Poster.
  - Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2018. Poster.
  - Eureka! 3 Minute, 3 Slide Research Competition 2018. Oral.
  - Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence 2018. Poster.
- Searles AR**, Paperno R, Cook GS. Determining Physical and Ecological Factors Affecting Abundances of Juvenile Indicator Species in the Indian River Lagoon, Florida.
- FWC Fisheries Annual Meeting 2020. Oral.
  - Plants Beyond Limits Conference 2017. Poster.
  - †American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting 2017. Poster.

- UCF Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence 2017. Poster.
- Eureka! 3 Minute, 3 Slide Research Competition 2017. Oral.
- Florida Undergraduate Research Conference 2017. Poster.
- Indian River Lagoon Symposium 2017. Poster.
- UCF Stem Day. Poster.
- SHORE Conference 2016. Poster.
- Summer Undergraduate Research Showcase 2016. Poster.

## Invited Seminars and Guest Lectures (10 total)

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**Searles, AR.** Biotic Complexities of Global Change in Coastal Ecosystems. Louisiana State University Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Research Seminar. February 2026.

**Searles, AR.** Global Change In Our Backyard: Florida’s Estuaries. Florida State University Coastal and Marine Laboratory, Public Seminar Series. January 2026.

**Searles, AR.** The Direct and Indirect Effects of Climate Change in the Marine Environment. University of South Alabama - Climate Change (ENV339), Guest Lecture. November 2025.

**Searles, AR.** Human Stressors Influence Fauna Communities Through Changing Foundation Species. North Carolina State University Center for Marine Sciences and Technology, Seminar Series. February 2025.

**Searles, AR.** The Indirect, Biotic Impacts of Human Stressors: The Effects of Shifting Macrophytes. University of Florida - Marine Ecological Processes (FAS 6272), Guest Lecture. November 2024.

**Searles, AR.** Seagrass vs Macroalgae: How Do Animal Communities Differ Across Habitats? Nature Coast Current Seminar Series. April 2023.

**Searles AR.** The Path to Graduate School in Marine Science. UF Marine Biology Club. November 2022.

**Searles AR.** Expansion of a Tropical Herbivore and Its Effects on Seagrasses and Associated Fisheries. UF Conservation Biology Club Meeting. September 2022.

**Searles AR.** Oyster Reef Restoration Facilitates Recovery of Habitat Provision Function. University of Florida - Ecosystem Restoration (EVR3323), Guest Lecture. April 2022.

**Searles AR.** Biodiversity-Ecosystem Function: Lessons from Oyster Reef-Affiliated *Spartina*. University of Florida - Ecosystem Restoration (EVR3323), Guest Lecture. February 2022.

## Teaching Experience (9 classes, 4 instructor of record)

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### University of Florida

Research Methods in Marine & Estuarine Ecology - Instructor	Spring 2022, Spring 2024
Environmental Sciences Lab - Instructor	Fall 2023, Fall 2024
Ecosystem Restoration - Teaching Assistant	Spring 2022

### University of Central Florida

Principles of Ecology - Teaching Assistant	Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2019
Oceanography - Teaching Assistant	Spring 2018

## Mentorship

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### NOAA Hollings Scholarship Mentoring Program

- Assisted 45 students with CVs and personal statements
- 5 awarded Hollings Scholarships

### Research Intern Mentorship

- Bianca Ruiz - Florida Sea Grant Summer Intern
- Kaitlyn Tucker - UF Nature Coast Biological Station Summer Intern
- Ari Siegel - UF Emerging Scholars Fellow

### Classroom Mentorship

- Guided 11 students through hands-on research experiences in Research Methods in Marine & Estuarine Ecology (EVS3942)
- 1 student received a UF University Research Scholarship for proposal written in class

## Outreach

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FSUCML-UF NCBS Open House	October 2025
FSUCML Whatever Floats Your Boat Regatta	September 2025
Scientists in Every Florida Classroom	August 2020 – August 2025
UF Natural Resources Diversity Initiative Elementary Outreach Program	January 2024
UF Nature Coast Biological Station Open House	October 2021, October 2022, October 2023
The Fisheries Podcast	November 2021
Brevard County Classroom Outreach	October 2020
Seedlings Mentorship Program	January 2017 – May 2018
UCF STEM Day	2016
UCF Ocean Day	2016

## Skills

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### Data Analysis & Management

- SigmaPlot
- Primer-e Statistical Software
- GIS: ArcMap, ArcCatalog, ArcGIS Pro
- R Statistical Software

### Field and Sampling Methods

- Seine, otter trawl, gill net, lift net, fyke net, ponar grab, dip net, throw trap, benthic sled, spat bag, beam trawl, seagrass core, gastric lavage, suction sampler
- Active tracking via acoustic telemetry
- FWC & UF Certified - boat trailering, launching, captaining, and safety
- NAUI advanced open water certified

### Lab Specialties

- Behavioral trials: laminar flow flume, Staaland chambers, grazing preference
- Taxonomic ID of marine fish & invertebrates
- Otolith extraction
- Mercury, stable isotope & genetic tissue sampling
- Gut content analysis

## Professional Leadership, Service, & Memberships

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### Professional Development Activities

FSU College Science Teaching Course (ISC5295)	Spring 2025
UF Preparing Future Faculty Program	Fall 2024

### Professional Organization Positions

UF Nature Coast Biological Station Committee-For-All Co-Chair	2023 – 2024
UF Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences GSO Social Chair	2023 – 2024
UF Soil, Water, & Ecosystem Sciences GSA Vice President	2021 – 2022

### Grant Proposal Review Committee Service

FSU Coastal and Marine Lab Graduate Student Research Fund	2026
Florida Sea Grant Coastal and Ocean Graduate Fellowship	2024
Florida Sea Grant Guy Harvey Fellowship	2024

### Peer-Review Service

*Limnology and Oceanography*

*Landscape Ecology* x2

*PLOS ONE* x3

*Aquatic Invasions* x3

*Fish and Fisheries*

*BioInvasions Records*

### Conference Organizing Committees

UF Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences Graduate Student Symposium	2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025
North Florida Marine Science Symposium	2023

### Professional Organization Memberships

Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation	2021 – Present
Gulf Estuarine Research Society	2021 – Present
Ecological Society of America	2019 – Present
Florida Academy of Sciences	2018 – Present
American Fisheries Society, Student Subdivision	2017 – Present

## Media Links

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### UF

- Sea Grant Scholar Research Highlight [LINK](#)
- UF Nature Coast Biological Station Research Highlight [LINK](#)
- Nature Coast Current Seminar 2023 [LINK](#)
- The Fisheries Podcast Guest Appearance [LINK](#)
- UF NOAA Hollings Scholarship Mentoring Program [LINK](#)
- UF SNRE NSF GRFP [LINK](#)
- Guy Harvey Scholarship Recipient, Brevard Hometown News [LINK](#)
- Guy Harvey Scholarship Bio [LINK](#)

### FWC

- UCF Alumni Report, FWC Biologist [LINK](#)

### UCF

- UCF 2022 30 Under 30 Announcement [LINK](#)
- UCF Publication Announcement [LINK](#)
- UCF Honors College Spotlight/NSF GRFP [LINK](#)
- UCF Order of Pegasus Research Involvement [LINK](#)
- UCF Order of Pegasus Class of 2019 [LINK](#)
- UCF Research and Mentoring Program Scholar [LINK](#)
- UCF College of Sciences Distinguished Undergraduate Researcher Award [LINK](#)
- UCF Undergraduate Researcher Spotlight [LINK](#)
- UCF Hollings Scholar Recipient [LINK](#)

## **Campus & Volunteer Activities**

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Covenant Christian School	2010 – 2022
Navigators at UCF	2018 – 2019
Cru at UCF	2015 – 2019
UCF Eureka! Research Society Vice President	2017 – 2018
UCF Campus Movie Festival	2017
Knights for Marine and Wildlife Conservation	2016 – 2017
UCF Reel Knights	2015 – 2016
First United Methodist Church of Melbourne	2007 – 2015
Melbourne Community Church	2011 – 2015