

# **Anna Blight Parker**

## **Ph.D. Student**

North Carolina State University

Department of Entomology

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Gardner Hall 3204

## **Education**

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### **Ph.D Entomology**

August 2024-Present

Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, North Carolina State University

Advisor: Gareth Powell

Thesis: *Evolution and ecology of bioluminescence in Pyrophorini (Coleoptera: Elateridae)*

### **B.S. Biodiversity and Conservation**

August 2019-April 2024

Brigham Young University

3.99/4 GPA, *magna cum laude*

With Advanced Certification in Spanish

## **Career Experience**

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### **Graduate Research Assistantship**

August 2024-Present

Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, North Carolina State University

Laboratory of Gareth Powell

### **Undergraduate Research Assistant**

August 2023-July 2024

Department of Biology, Brigham Young University

Laboratory of Seth Bybee

- Phylogenetic Systematics of Pyrophorini (Coleoptera: Elateridae)
- Geology and Ecology of Odonata (GEODE) wing scans
- DNA extraction, PCR, sequencing
- Museum curation

## **Presentations**

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**Trees on FIRE: Phylogeny and Biogeography of the “Fire Beetles”** July 29, 2025  
**(Coleoptera: Elateridae: Pyrophorini)**

2025 International Firefly Symposium, Tlaxcala, Mexico

Authors: Anna Blight Parker

**This Tree is on FIRE: Molecular Phylogeny of Pyrophorini** March 21, 2024

Harold B Lee Library Undergraduate Poster Competition

Authors: Anna Blight Parker, Gareth Powell, Seth Bybee

*First place in poster design*

**Trees on Fire: Molecular Phylogeny of Pyrophorini** November 5, 2023

Entomological Society of America 2023, National Harbor

Authors: Anna Blight, Gareth Powell, Seth Bybee

**Finding Your Way in Science** November 3, 2023

Clarke County High School, Berryville, VA

Invited lecturer

## **Grants**

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**International Firefly Symposium Student Travel Grant** 2025

Fireflyers International Network

For travel to present research at the 2025 International Firefly Symposium

Amount Received: \$975

**Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Fund Grant** 2025

American Museum of Natural History, Richard Gilder Graduate School

Major Advisor: Gareth Powell

Project: Bioluminescence and Sexual Selection in *Ignelater* (Coleoptera: Elateridae) in the  
Bahamas

Amount Received: \$2,100

## College Undergraduate Research Award

2024

Brigham Young University, College of Life Sciences

Major Advisor: Seth Bybee

Project: Biogeography and speciation of *Photophorus* in Vanuatu and Fiji

Amount Received: \$4,000

## Honors and Awards

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- **Goodnight Doctoral Fellowship** August 2024-Present
  - North Carolina State University
- **First Place in Poster Design** March 2024
  - Harold B. Lee Library Undergraduate Poster Competition
- **Experiential Learning Travel Award** 2023
  - Brigham Young University, 2023
- **Dean's List**
  - Brigham Young University, College of Life Sciences
    - Fall 2019, Fall 2020, Winter 2021, Winter 2023, Fall 2023, Winter 2024
- **Merit-based Tuition Scholarship** 2019-2024
  - Brigham Young University
- **WAEPA Scholarship** 2019-2024
- **Clarke County Horseshoe Association Scholarship** 2019
- **Virginia Delegate to the National Youth Science Camp** 2019
- **Generation Nano: Superheroes Inspired by Science** 2018
  - Second place in High School division

## Teaching

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**ENT 495 General Entomology Teaching Assistant**

August-December 2025

North Carolina State University, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology

Professor: Gareth Powell

### Responsibilities

- Course and curriculum overhaul, including syllabus revision and assignment design
- Gave 4 recorded lectures
- Led review sessions for exams
- Assistance with exam and quiz writing
- Grading
- Responding to student emails

**Bio 100 Teaching Assistant and Lab Instructor** Aug. 2020-Apr. 2021, Jan. 2023-Apr. 2023

Brigham Young University, Department of Biology

Professor: Marci Adams

Responsibilities

- Taught a weekly lab
- Graded student papers and exams
- Held exam review sessions and office hours
- Answered student questions

**Exhibit Technician**

March 2023-May 2024

Monte L. Bean Museum

Responsibilities

Exhibits Contributed to

- Conceptualization of exhibit topics
- Text writing and editing
- Test exhibit with the public
- Exhibit design and build
- Maintenance and repair
- This is the Place: Utah's Biodiversity
- Seed Movement
- Insect light and color
- The Tree of Life

**Education Intern**

April 2020-August 2020

Blue Ridge Wildlife Center

Responsibilities

- Conceptualized, wrote, and led 1-hour Educational programs, in person and digitally, with and without education animals
- Development of information placards for a Wildlife Walk exhibit
- Produced educational video content for the Wildlife Center social media pages
- Daily care for education animals
- Rehabilitation care for patients at the Wildlife Center
- Assisted the veterinarian in caring for and treating rehabilitation patients

**Museums Studied In**

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- Florida State Collection of Arthropods (1 day) 2025
  - North Carolina State University Insect Collection (5 days) 2024
  - Monte L. Bean Museum (1 day) 2023

## Field Work

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- **Key Largo, Florida** (2 days) June 2025
  - Entomological field collection of Elateridae for ongoing projects
- **Finca Las Piedras, Perú** (2 weeks) May-June 2025
  - Entomological field collection of Coleoptera along with field measurements
- **Archbold Research Station, Florida** (5 days) May 2025
  - Field collection of Elateridae and field experiments for ongoing projects
- **Tonga: Tongatapu and Eua** (10 days) June-July 2024
  - Entomological field collection, training Tongan students, gathering ecological data for future studies
- **Lytle Nature Reserve, Utah** (6 days) September 2023
  - Entomological field surveys for a conservation report
- **Ecuador** (~45 days) May-June 2023
  - Entomological field collection of Odonata and Coleoptera

## Professional Societies

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- Society for the Study of Evolution 2025
- North Carolina Entomological Society 2025
- NCSU Entomology Graduate Student Association 2024-Current
- Entomological Society of America 2023-Current
- American Association for the Advancement of Science 2019-2020

## Professional Service

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- **Media Chair** 2025-Current
  - NCSU Entomology Graduate Student Association

## Community Outreach

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- Invited Speaker at 2025 Winchester, Virginia Stake Girls Camp July 23, 2025
  - Gave a 1-hour talk titled “Am I Bugging You?” covering insect diversity and natural history
  - Interactive light sheet at night
  - Reached ~70 young women aged 11-18 and ~12 adults

- Bugfest September 14, 2024
  - NCSU Entomology Graduate Student Association Insect Zoo
  - Reached an estimated 300 people during volunteer hours
- Tours of the NCSU Insect Collection 2024
  - Three separate tours reaching 8 people total

## **Languages**

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English

Spanish: ACTFL Qualified as Advanced Mid-High\* (fluent), based on written test (WPT) and oral interview (OPIc)

## **References**

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References available upon request.

\* For more information on proficiency in an Advanced mid-high ACTFL level, please see pages 20-21: [https://www.actfl.org/uploads/files/general/Resources-Publications/ACTFL\\_Proficiency\\_Guidelines\\_2024.pdf](https://www.actfl.org/uploads/files/general/Resources-Publications/ACTFL_Proficiency_Guidelines_2024.pdf)