

Mark C. Urban, Ph.D.

Professor, Arden Chair of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT, US

Dr. Urban is an expert on climate change impacts on biodiversity and evolutionary ecology of vernal pools, lakes, and streams

Biography

Mark C. Urban is an award-winning scientist, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Connecticut, founder and director of the Center of Biological Risk, and global expert on climate change impacts on nature and evolutionary ecology. An avid field biologist, Mark takes every opportunity to get out in the field to learn about the diversity of life and its threats. He routinely spends time in ponds, lakes, and streams in regions ranging from New England to the North Slope of Alaska. He founded and directs the Center of Biological Risk, the first center devoted to forecasting the complex risks to society mediated by ecosystems. He has authored over 60 scientific articles, appearing in top journals such as Science, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, and Nature Climate Change and has been cited more than 8000 times. By integrating ecology, evolution, and genomics, his work has uncovered new principles that routinely challenge existing ideas, including challenging the spatial scale of adaptation, the importance of adaptation in ecology, and an evolutionary reason for autoimmune disease. Most recently, his work has focused on designing global efforts to estimate and mitigate extinction risks from climate change on biodiversity. His work on climate change impacts on species extinctions was highlighted as one of the top scientific discoveries of 2015 by Discover Magazine and in The Royal Society's update to the 5th IPCC report. His research has been covered by news outlets around the world including The New York Times, NPR, CBS, CNN, BBC, Associated Press, Washington Post, The Guardian, and National Geographic. He has consulted on stories about climate change appearing in National Geographic, Sir David Attenborough's documentary Climate Change ? The Facts, and the television series, Years of Living Dangerously. His opinion pieces have appeared in The New York Times, Guardian, and Science. Since 2015, he has led an annual contingent of UConn students, faculty and staff to the United Nation's summits on climate change. Mark has given more than 70 presentations on his work, including to TEDx, World Wildlife Fund, and the Association for the Advancement of Arts and Sciences. He was awarded the Young Investigator and Presidential awards from the American Society of Naturalists.

Areas of Expertise

Predictive Modeling, Eco-Evolution, Climate Change, Extinction Risk, Biodiversity

Affiliations

Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP)

Event Appearances

Welcome to the Heat Age
TEDxUCONN

Education

Yale University
Ph.D. Environmental Science

Yale University
M.E.Sc Environmental Science

Muhlenberg College
B.S. Environmental Science and Political Science

Accomplishments

Arden Chair of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Professor Mark Urban, whose work on ecological communities and climate change has broadly influenced the scientific community, has been named the first Arden Chair of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Along with the Rosalind Chair, the position honors scientists who have made a substantive impact on studies of biological diversity.

2016 Presidential Award Winner

2016 Best paper published in The American Naturalist: Mark C. Urban and Jonathan L. Richardson. 2015. "The evolution of foraging rate across local and geographic gradients in predation risk and competition." American Naturalist 186:E16-E32.

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