

Matt Koski
PPE Vice-Chair Statement

I am a plant evolutionary ecologist driven to understand the processes that shape large-scale spatial patterns in reproductive biology. In particular my research combines field ecology, ecological genetics, and molecular and phylogenetic comparative approaches to understand how pollinators, the abiotic environment, and neutral processes contribute to the pronounced diversity of floral pigmentation and plant mating systems.

My fascination with the diversity in flowering plants began as an undergraduate taking field ecology and botany courses at University of Michigan's Biological Station. This fascination grew after college as a botany intern with the Bureau of Land Management, and a Research intern at El Verde Field Station in Puerto Rico. As a graduate student at the University of Pittsburgh, my dissertation focused on exploring how geographic shifts pollinators and abiotic factors shaped predictable clines in floral ultraviolet pigmentation. As a postdoc at the University of Virginia I have worked to disentangle how pollination processes and genetic legacies of range expansion contribute to variation in mating systems across a species' range. Currently, as a Research Assistant Professor, I am using a retrospective collections-based approach to evaluate the impacts of global change on floral pigmentation in a broad diversity of taxa. This coming August (2019) I'll be starting my lab at Clemson University and will be teaching courses on global change and species interactions, and evolutionary biology.

I am excited for the opportunity to serve as vice-chair of ESA's Plant Population Ecology Section for the chance to interact with members of the field at all academic levels, and to help shape the future of plant ecology research through the organization of symposia and sessions at ESA's annual meeting. I have been pleased to see ESA make strides towards a more inclusive and diverse environment and look forward to thinking of and implementing innovative ways that PPE in particular can be a leader in these efforts. I will also work to promote existing PPE opportunities such as student travel and postdoctoral excellence awards.