

## Biography for Jen Miller

Dr. Jen Miller is a wildlife conservationist dedicated to protecting biodiversity and strengthening human-wildlife coexistence globally. Her research has informed wildlife policy and management on issues such as wildlife trafficking, human-wildlife conflict, endangered species conservation and protected area management. She brings a global perspective to her work, with experience in Asia, Africa, Latin America and North America. Jen also teaches meditation classes to help conservationists develop resilience to navigate the heart-aching ecological and social crises of our planet.

In 2020, Jen joined the Combating Wildlife Trafficking Branch of the International Affairs program in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as an International Program Specialist. Here, she serves as a program officer, grantmaker and policy advisor to combat wildlife trafficking. From 2017-2020, she was a Senior Scientist in the Center for Conservation Innovation at Defenders of Wildlife, providing scientific guidance for law, policy and field conservation programs dedicated to protecting North America's threatened and endangered species. In this role she also contributed to wildlife science and advocacy related to the US-Mexico border wall, climate change and illegal wildlife trade. Prior to joining Defenders, Jen worked as a Postdoctoral Researcher with Panthera, UC-Berkeley, Cornell University and the University of Cape Town studying the ecology and conservation of African lions and leopards. Her PhD research, done in affiliation with the Wildlife Institute of India and in collaboration with WWF-India, explored the realities and people's perceptions of tiger and leopard depredation on livestock and developed predictive models to support management decision-making.

Jen has published 30+ peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals such as *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA (PNAS)*, *PLOS Biology*, *Conservation Biology and Ecology* and op-eds in *Scientific American* and *Economic & Political Weekly*. Her work has received press coverage by international media outlets including the *BBC World News*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Jen is a Fulbright Scholar, a Critical Language Scholar and a National Science Foundation Graduate Scholar, and has received awards for the practical applications of her science. She earned a PhD in Ecology from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies in 2015 and a BA in Organismal Biology from Claremont McKenna College in 2007. She is also a Certified iRest® Yoga Nidra Meditation Teacher and an Ordained Minister through the Universal Life Church.

As a vegetarian and childfree individual, Jen aims to align her actions with her environmental values. Outside the office, she enjoys meditation, bird watching, painting wildlife, baking pies and kayaking with her ornithologist husband [Dr. Sahas Barve](#) and fellow-birdwatcher cats Idli and Chakli. Jen is based in central Florida and works remotely for the Washington, DC headquarters of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



*Photo of Jen Miller. Credit: Sahas Barve.*

# Jen Miller

Wildlife Conservationist, Ecologist, Science and Policy Advisor and Grantmaker

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## EDUCATION

**PhD in Ecology and Wildlife Conservation** 2015

Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, New Haven, CT

**Bachelor of Arts in Organismal Biology** 2007

Claremont McKenna College, Claremont, CA | Magna Cum Laude with Department Honors

## RELATED PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

**International Program Specialist** Sept 2020-Present

Combating Wildlife Trafficking Branch, International Affairs, Washington, DC and remote

- Lead grantmaking programs to reduce threats from wildlife trade, including designing program objectives and strategy, writing funding announcements, managing grants, cooperative agreements and contracts, conducting oversight visits, evaluating success and developing outreach materials. Major programs include:
  - \$5M Species Conservation Catalyst Fund on Songbird Trade to reduce illegal songbird singing competition trade from Guiana Shield and Caribbean
  - \$3.7M interagency agreement with Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and FWS Office of Law Enforcement, including \$1M subaward to Convention on International Trade of Endangered Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Secretariat for capacity building in Laos PDR, Vietnam and the Solomon Islands
  - \$3M portfolio of awards to international NGOs to protect big cats, tortoises and freshwater turtles in Asia, Africa and Latin America
- Advise on policy and interagency relations related to international conservation and wildlife trafficking, including FWS positions in CITES and the Presidential Task on Wildlife Trafficking
- Developed, established and led International Affairs' One Health Team, hired a permanent IA One Health Coordinator and co-led the FWS Directorate's COVID-19 Pillar Subgroup on Preventing the Next Pandemic (2020-2022)
- Supervise Directorate Fellows Program undergrad student and mentor early career staff

**Acting Black-footed Ferret Recovery Coordinator** Aug-Oct 2023

Black-footed Ferret Recovery Program, Ecological Services, Ft Collins, CO

- As a developmental assignment for the FWS Advanced Leadership Development Program, supervised 3 senior staff and managed 10 wildlife biologists, veterinarians, vet techs and facilities staff. Supervised an animal captive breeding facility housing of >200 wild ferrets
- Coordinated ferret releases onto US government, state, Tribal and private land; reviewed press releases and participated in public outreach events; and led strategic visioning, workforce planning and staff development during a leadership transition.

**Acting Branch Manager** Feb-Mar 2021, Oct 2021-Apr 2022

Combating Wildlife Trafficking Branch, International Affairs, Washington, DC and remote

- Led a high-performing team of 5 full-time staff through leadership transition and organizational restructure while overseeing a \$10.7M program operations and supporting Division Chief and 4 Branch Chiefs on division-level decisions.

**Meditation Teacher for Conservation Professionals**

2021-Present

Freelance

- Teach classes and workshops for environmental professionals to develop resilience for managing workplace stressors, including eco-anxiety, eco-grief and compassion fatigue
- Invited speaker by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Society for Conservation Biology’s North American Conservation Congress, Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders, Arizona State University, iRest Institute

**Senior Scientist**

Dec 2017-Present

Center for Conservation Innovation, Defenders of Wildlife, Washington, DC

- Served as primary science adviser, spokesperson and liaison for the 140-person organization
- Collaborated with and provided science support to law, policy and field program leaders and staff projects on topics including US-Mexico border wall, wildlife trade and jaguary recovery
- Managed Science Advisor program with renowned external scientists, organized science internship program and supervised interns
- Published research on human-wildlife coexistence and endangered species policy effectiveness

**Postdoctoral Scholar**

Jan-Dec 2017

University of California, Berkeley, CA and Panthera, New York, NY

- Led 3 international research teams of 10-20 collaborators on conservation research on big cats
- Published 10 research papers on lion, leopard ecology and conservation effectiveness, including BBC, NYT-featured PNAS study on \$1-2 billion deficit for lions in Africa’s protected areas

**Postdoctoral Researcher**

May 2015-Dec 2016

Panthera, Cornell and University of Cape Town, Ithaca, NY and Cape Town, South Africa

- Published 2 scientific articles, training manual and field guide on sustainable lion trophy hunting
- Developed guidelines to advise professional hunters and wildlife authorities on hunting practices
- Launched Panthera’s Human-Felid Conflict Working Group with 15 cross-departmental staff

**Doctoral Candidate**

Aug 2009-May 2015

Yale School of Forestry & Enviro Studies, New Haven, CT and Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India

- Partnered with Indian Forest Department rangers and WWF-India field staff to study tiger and leopard human-wildlife conflict and livestock depredations in rural India
- Published 6 scientific articles on carnivore ecology and management decision support tools
- Managed administration of 4-year field project with 8 trips to India, including obtaining gov’t permission; fundraising >\$150,000; and hiring, training and supervising 5 field technicians in Hindi

**Fulbright Research Scholar in India**

Feb-Nov 2008

Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India

- Studied population trends of 3 threatened pheasants in the Great Himalayan National Park
- Supervised 4 field assistants and managed logistics of fieldwork in remote alpine sites

**LEADERSHIP & SERVICE**

**Member,** Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Council, FWS International Affairs

2024-Present

**Co-Lead and Advisor,** Facing Ecological Loss Together, FWS

2023-Present

- Community of practice to support FWS staff in building resilience to eco-grief

- Fellow**, FWS Advanced Leadership Development Program Jan-Nov 2023
- Trained in adaptive leadership and self-awareness through focus on self, group and organization, with a personal focus on political savvy, decision-making and deep listening.
  - Included 2-month developmental assignment in a supervisory role; personal coaching; and tackling a real-world Capstone Adaptive Challenge with a 6-person learning team.
- Grant Application Reviewer** 2015-Present
- FWS International Affairs (Rhino Tiger, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle, Latin America), National Science Foundation (Geography & Spatial Science), Conservation Leadership Programme
- Peer-review Journal Reviewer** 2013-Present
- Journals include: *Nature Communications*, *PNAS*, *Biological Conservation*, *Ecological Applications*, *Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Oikos*, *PLOS One*
- Professional Society Member**, Society for Conservation Biology and The Wildlife Society 2008-Present
- PhD Committee Member**, George Mason University and Central European University 2016-2023
- Journal Handling Editor**, *Conservation Science and Practice* 2019-2020
- Board Member**, Asia Section Board, Society for Conservation Biology 2017-2020
- Chief Financial Officer (\$25,000 annual budget) and Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Liaison
- Co-Founder**, Network for Conserving Central India 2014-2017
- Served on steering committee and organized 2 conferences to build local community of practice
- Mentor, Career Mentorship Program** 2014-2017
- Advised Masters, undergraduate and high school students at Cornell and Yale Universities

## HONORS

- Performance Award for Exceptional Performance, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** Annually 2021-2023
- STAR Award for Performance as Acting Branch Chief, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** 2021
- Exceptional Service Team Award**, US-Mexico Border Wall Team, Defenders of Wildlife 2019
- Best Talk for Science Applied to Wildlife Management**, South Africa Wildl Manag Assoc Symp 2016
- Herbert Bormann Prize for Best Scientific Paper**, Yale School of Forestry & Enviro Studies 2015

## GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS (SELECTED)

- Junior Research Fellowship (\$12,770)**, American Institute for Indian Studies 2012
- Exploration Fund (\$3,000)**, Lewis and Clark 2012
- Wildlife Conservation Fund (\$2,400)**, John Ball Zoo Society 2012
- Research Fellowships (\$12,000)**, Yale Tropical Resources Institute and Asian Studies Council 2010-2012
- Conservation Endowment Fund (\$23,592)**, Association of Zoos & Aquariums 2011
- Critical Language Scholarship** to study Hindi in India, U.S. Department of State 2010
- Graduate Student Research Fellowship**, National Science Foundation 2008
- U.S. Fulbright Student Research Scholarship** to India, U.S. Department of State 2008

## INVITED TALKS (SELECTED)

- Department Seminar Speaker on Wildlife Trafficking and Grantmaking** 2021-Present
- 10+ universities including U Florida, U Minnesota, Humboldt, McAlister, U Michigan
- Women in the Outdoors Panel**, Arc'teryx 2019
- Panel on Careers Pathways in Conservation**, Integrative Conservation Conference 2018
- Rock Creek Park Seminar**, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and National Zoo 2018
- Panel Speaker at World Wildlife Day Panel on Big Cats**, U.S. State Department 2018

## PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND TRAINING

- Federal grantmaking:** GrantSolutions, Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, Miradi Share
- Field research:** Carnivore and prey sign surveys, camera trapping, bird call counts, vegetation structure surveys, VHF biotelemetry and triangulation, mist netting, necropsy, mark-recapture, ESRI ArcMap
- Wellness:** Certified iRest© Yoga Nidra Meditation Teacher; ordained Minister by Universal Life Church
- Languages:** Hindi (intermediate), Spanish (beginning)

## OP-ED ARTICLES

- Miller, J.** 2019. How Trump's wall could alter our biological identity forever. *Scientific American*.
- Bird, B, R Peters and **JRB Miller**. 2018. Border wall disrupts more than people's lives. *Santa Fe New Mex.*
- Miller, JRB**, JDC Linnell, V Athreya, and S Sen. 2017. Human-Wildlife Conflict in India: Addressing the Source. *Economic & Political Weekly* LII:23-25.

## SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS (SELECTED – MORE THAN 30 TOTAL, SEE WEBSITE FOR FULL LIST)

- Rytwinski, T, MJ Muir, **JRB Miller**, A Smith et al. 2021. What is the evidence that counter-wildlife crime interventions are effective for conserving Africa, Asian and Latin American wildlife directly threatened by exploitation? A systematic map. *Ecological Solutions and Evidence* 5:e12323.
- Browne, C, EM Ronis, **JRB Miller**, Y Kapetanakos, S Gibbs, T Hendrix, D Carlson Bremer. 2021. Systems approaches to combating wildlife trafficking: Expanding existing frameworks to facilitate cross-disciplinary collaboration. *Frontiers in Conservation Science* 2.
- Wilkinson, C, A McInturff, **JRB Miller**, V Yovovich, K Gaynor, K Calhoun, H Karandikar, J Martin, P Parker-Shames, A Shawler, A Van Scoyoc, J Brashares. 2020. Ecological framework for contextualizing carnivore-livestock conflict. *Conservation Biology* 34:4. \*SCB award for best student-led publication.
- Delach, A, Caldas, et al, JW Malcom, M Salvo, **JRB Miller**. 2019. Agency plans are inadequate to conserve US endangered species under climate change. *Nature Climate Change* 9:999-1004.
- Malcom, J, MW Schwartz, M Evansen, WJ Ripple, et al, TE Lovejoy, LM Talbot, **JRB Miller** with 1,648 scientist signatories. 2019. Solve the biodiversity crisis with funding. *Science* 365:1256-1257.
- Peters, R, WJ Ripple, G Ceballos, R Dirzo, PR Ehrlich, TE Lovejoy, ME Soulé, EO Wilson, et al, **JRB Miller**, and 2,556 scientist signatories. 2018. Nature divided, scientists united: U.S.-Mexico border wall threatens biodiversity and binational conservation. *BioScience* 68:740-743.
- Lindsey, P\*, **JRB Miller\***, LS Petracca\*, et al. 2018. More than \$1 bil needed annually to secure Africa's protected areas with lions. *Proc of the Nat Acad of Sci* 115:788-796. \*Shared first authorship.

- van Eeden, LM\*, A Eklund\*, **JRB Miller\***, et al., A Treves\*. 2018. The best available science for preventing carnivore predation on livestock. *PLOS Biology* 16:e2005577. \*Shared first authorship.
- Begg, C, **JRB Miller**, and K Begg. 2018. Effective implementation of age restrictions increases selectivity of sport hunting of the African lion. *Journal of Applied Ecology* 55:139-146.
- Miller, JRB**. 2015. Mapping attack hotspots to mitigate human-carnivore conflict: Approaches and applications of spatial predation risk modeling. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 24:2887-2911.  
\*Won Herbert Bormann Prize for Best Scientific Paper at Yale School of Forestry & Enviro Studies
- Miller, JRB**, YV Jhala, J Jena. 2016. Livestock losses and hotspots of attack from tigers and leopards in Kanha Tiger Reserve, central India. *Regional Environmental Change* 16:17-29.