

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

Conservation Scientist, 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

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Society for Conservation Biology's Revive Working Group, Remote

Founder and President January 2025-Present

- Building an international working group to help conservation professionals manage workplace stressors like eco-grief, compassion fatigue and burnout
- Lead strategic visioning and fundraising, manage budget, convene Board and build partnerships
- Facilitate member meetings, speak at virtual and in-person events and coordinate activities

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

International Program Specialist Sept 2020-Present

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

- Develop and manage grant programs to reduce threats from illegal wildlife trade including:
 - \$5M Species Conservation Catalyst Fund on Songbird Trade to reduce songbird trafficking for singing competition trade from South America 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, Vietnam and the Solomon Islands
 - \$3M portfolio of awards to international NGOs in Asia, Africa and Latin America
- Lead strategic planning, agreement negotiation, program design, impact evaluation, communications and outreach, donor coordination, partnership building
- Advise on policy related to international conservation, including representing FWS positions in CITES and interagency Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking
- Travel domestically and internationally, including to remote project sites
- Hire, manage and evaluate Directorate Fellow and One Health Coordinator

Advanced Leadership Development Program Fellow Dec 2022-Nov 2023

National Conservation Training Center, WV and Black-footed Ferret Recovery Program, Ft. Collins, CO

- Selected for FWS' senior training in adaptive leadership and self-awareness; personally focused on developing skills in political savvy, decision-making and navigating change
- Included three 1-2 week-long learning modules at the National Conservation Training Center, personal coaching and 4-month collaborations with a 6-person learning team on a Capstone Adaptive Challenge to develop leadership solutions to a real-world FWS problem
- Served as Acting Black-footed Ferret Recovery Coordinator for 2 months, supervising three senior staff and managing 10 biologists, veterinarians, vet techs and facilities staff at a captive breeding facility housing >400 endangered ferrets. Coordinated ferret releases onto federal, state, Tribal and private land; participated in public outreach events; and led strategic visioning, workforce planning and staff professional development during a leadership transition.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) (continued)

Acting Branch Chief

Feb-Mar 2021, Oct 2021-Apr 2022

Combating Wildlife Trafficking Branch, International Affairs program, 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.

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

Senior Scientist

Dec 2017-Sept 2020

- Served as primary science adviser, spokesperson and liaison for 140-person organization
- Worked with law, policy and field program staff to align advocacy with conservation science on topics including private land management and Endangered Species Act species recovery
- Led scientist sign-on campaign to stop US-Mexican border wall from affecting habitat connectivity, resulting in 3,000+ endorsements, influential press and Congressional support
- Communicated Defenders' conservation vision and impact at public meetings, presentations, conferences, on press, radio and film interviews and in op-ed articles
- Revamped external Science Advisors to diversify gender, race and subject expertise; doubled the science internship program; hired, managed and mentored interns
- Maintained an active conservation science research program and published on livestock depredation by carnivores, climate change, and endangered species policy effectiveness

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

Postdoctoral Scholar

Jan-Dec 2017

- 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

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

Postdoctoral Researcher

May 2015-Dec 2016

- 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

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

Doctoral Candidate

Aug 2009-May 2015

- Partnered with Indian Forest Department land managers and WWF-India field staff to study tiger and leopard attacks on livestock in rural India and develop tools and best practices for herding
- 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

Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India

Fulbright Research Scholar in India

Feb-Nov 2008

- 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 ROLES (PRO-BONO)

- Co-Lead and Advisor**, Facing Ecological Loss Together, FWS 2023-2025
- Community of practice for navigating the chronic mental stress of conservation work
- Fellow**, FWS Advanced Leadership Development Program Jan-Nov 2023
- 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

SERVICE

- Peer-review Journal Reviewer** 2013-Present
- Journals include: *Nature Communications*, *PNAS*, *Biological Conservation*, *Ecological Applications*, *Journal of Wildlife Management*, *Oikos*, *PLOS One*
- Affiliate Faculty**, Environmental Science and Policy Department, George Mason University 2020-Present
- Professional Society Member**, Society for Conservation Biology and The Wildlife Society 2008-Present
- Member**, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Council, FWS International Affairs 2024-2025
- PhD Committee Member**, George Mason University and Central European University 2016-2023
- Journal Handling Editor**, *Conservation Science and Practice* 2019-2020
- Mentor, Career Mentorship Program** 2014-2017

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND TRAINING

Federal grantmaking and international agreements: Trainings in negotiation, grantmaking ethics, federal financial assistance U.S. CFR200 regulations and indirect costs; skilled in GrantSolutions grant administration software and Microsoft Access grants database; well-versed in U.S. laws on wildlife trade

Impact evaluation: Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, Miradi Share, theories of change

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

Languages: Hindi (intermediate), Spanish (beginning)

AWARDS

- Performance Award for Exceptional Performance, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** Annually 2021-2025
- 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)

Notice of Funding and Grant Application Reviewer	2015-Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">FWS International Affairs (Rhino Tiger, Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle, Latin America), State Department (Combating Wildlife Trafficking), National Science Foundation (Geography & Spatial Science), Conservation Leadership Programme	
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)

Distinguished Seminar Speaker on conservation grant design, Archbold Biological Station	2024
Instructor, Human Dimensions Foundations of Natural Resource Conservation , FWS National Conservation Training Center	2024
Invited speaker on songbird trafficking grants , CITES Songbird Technical Workshop	2023
Department Seminar Speaker on wildlife trafficking and grantmaking , 10+ schools and public venues including U Florida, U Minnesota, Villa Marin	2021-2024
Invited workshop lead on emotional resilience for conservationists , Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders, Society for Conservation Biology, University of Florida, others	2021-2024

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS (SELECTED – MORE THAN 30 TOTAL, SEE [WEBSITE](#) OR [GOOGLE SCHOLAR](#))

- Miller, JRB**, T Hendrix, D Carlson, S Carleton, MJ Muir. 2025. The cost of knowing what will stop wildlife trafficking: Organizations reallocating 3% annually could reveal what works to protect species. *Conservation Science and Practice*. In press.
- Rytwinski, T, MJ Muir, **JRB Miller**, A Smith et al. 2024. 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.
- LaBarge, LR, MJ Evans, **JRB Miller**, G Cannataro, C Hunt, ML Elbroch. 2022. Pumas Puma concolor as ecological brokers: a review of their biotic relationships. *Mammal Review* 52:360-376.
- 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.
- Miller, JRB** and OJ Schmitz. 2019. From landscape of fear to landscape of coexistence: applying spatial predator-prey interaction theory to understand and reduce carnivore-livestock conflict. *Biological Conservation* 236:464-473.
- Miller, JRB**, RT Pitman, GHK Mann, AK Fuller, GA Balme. 2018. Lions and leopards show no spatial, temporal or demographic consequences of intraspecific competition. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 87:1709-1726.
- 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**, KJ Stoner, MR Cejtin, TK Meyer, AD Middleton, OJ Schmitz. 2016. Effectiveness of contemporary techniques for reducing livestock depredations by large carnivores. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 40:806-815.
- 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.
- Miller, JRB**, JRM Ament, OJ Schmitz. 2013. Fear on the move: predator hunting mode predicts variation in prey mortality and plasticity in prey spatial response. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 83:214-222.

OP-ED ARTICLES & LAW REVIEWS

- Miller, J**. 2019. How Trump's wall could alter our biological identity forever. *Scientific American*.
- Rylander, JRC, M Evansen, **JRB Miller**, J Malcom. 2020. Defining habitat to promote conservation under the ESA. *Environmental Law Reporter* 50:10531-10539.
- Miller, JRB**, JDC Linnell, V Athreya, and S Sen. 2017. Human-Wildlife Conflict in India: Addressing the Source. *Economic & Political Weekly* LII:23-25.