**Personality in the City:**
*What environmental factors affect urban bird behavior?*

Dr. Kevin McGraw's lab is looking for an undergraduate student to assist with a year-long field study quantifying ecological variables that might contribute to behavioral differences found along an urban-rural gradient in house finches (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) from the greater Phoenix metro area. We have previously detected strong phenotypic divergence among urban and rural birds, with desert dwellers being more sexually attractive and showing higher levels of activity and displacement behaviors when near humans compared to their town and city counterparts. Our current research is aimed at understanding possible environmental factors (e.g. predation risk, human density, vegetation structure, street traffic) to these behavioral differences.

Student responsibilities include conducting a minimum of three monthly ecological surveys at each of six sites around the greater Phoenix area. We're looking for a student who is excited about getting local field ecology experience and contributing to a greater understanding of how urban factors influence biodiversity. You will have the opportunity to lead a long-term study as well as gain hands-on experience in other types of research (behavioral, bird handling) as desired. This study could easily become an honors or SOLUR project.

Applicants should have a major in the life sciences and an interest in ecological, evolutionary, and/or environmental research; they will be trained in all field and laboratory techniques by members of the lab. Starting this summer, students will be expected to work no less than 10 hours per week on this project; this includes background readings, actual field/lab research, and attendance at weekly lab meetings where we discuss our own research and other topics on animal behavior. The convenience of working on local populations of birds and the multi-dimensional nature of this project allow for somewhat-flexible and long-term work on aspects of the project that most interest the student.

If you are interested in this position, please send a resume and a one-page statement about your background and long-term academic goals by email to:

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