**Mounica Kota**

www.mounicakota.com

**EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Arts in Conservation Biology (May 2016)**

* Oglethorpe University, Atlanta, GA
* Minors in English & Urban Ecology; 3.8 GPA, *magna cum laude*, dean’s list (all semesters)

**Ph.D. in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior (expected 2023)**

* University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**Guest Lecturer, University of Minnesota EEB 8201: Foundations in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior (October 2019)**

* Lectured on classical competition theory and Lotka-Volterra models for predicting competitive outcomes

**Guest Lecturer, University of Minnesota BIOL 3700: Evolution in the Anthropocene (October 2019)**

* Facilitated student development and presentation of research projects

**Teaching Assistant for Animal Behavior (EEB 3411 & EEB 3412W; September 2018 – May 2019)**

* Taught 40+ students in lab per semester, lecturing on the main areas of inquiry in animal behavior and overseeing lab work
* Facilitated student research through development, implementation, data analysis, and pre-publication

**Guest Lecturer, Oglethorpe University BIO 215: Animal Behavior (October 2017)**

* Lectured on sexual selection, sexual signal evolution, and my current research

**Oglethorpe University Supplemental Instructor for Chemistry & Biology (August 2015 – May 2016)**

* Served as an undergraduate teaching assistant for general chemistry & biology classes
* Held 2-3 weekly group tutoring sessions for each subject and tutored up to 20 students per session
* Developed worksheets and quizzes, held exam reviews, and reviewed lecture material to supplement classroom instruction

**POSTERS, PAPERS, & PUBLICATIONS**

Posters

**Kota, M.** (2018, May). *Why Does Same-Sex Sexual Behavior Persist?* Presented at the 2018 Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Foundations poster session.

**Kota, M.** (2016, April). *Coloration of Eastern Bluebirds (Sialia sialis) as an Honest Indicator of Fitness.* Poster session presented at the 2016 Oglethorpe University Liberal Arts & Sciences Symposium.

**Kota, M.**, Northrup, J. Wagener, B., & Warden, D. (2016, April). *Dear Enemy or Nasty Neighbor: Territorial Male Cardinal Response to Playback Calls*. Poster session presented at the 2016 Oglethorpe PRISM (Presentations in Science and Mathematics) symposium.

Boldon, A., Choudhry, L., Gregerson, J., & **Kota, M**. (2015, April). *Effort or Distance: Testing Efficacy of Communication in Honeybees*. Poster session presented at the 2015 Oglethorpe PRISM (Presentations in Science and Mathematics) symposium.

Almeida, A., Gregerson, J., **Kota, M.**, & Scott, B. (2014, April). *Edge Effect: Nest Predation Rates in a Forest Fragment.* Poster session presented at the 2014Oglethorpe University Liberal Arts & Sciences Symposium.

Paper Presentations:

**Kota, M.** (2019, July). *Spermatophore retention may accommodate signal loss in pacific field crickets.*Paper presented at the 2019 Animal Behavior Society & International Ethological Conference.

**Kota, M.** (2014, April). *Traces of Scientific Influence in Ancient Literature.* Paper presented at the 2014 Oglethorpe University Liberal Arts & Sciences Symposium.

Publications:

**Kota, M.V.** & Olzer, R. *Insect Communication*. Encyclopedia of Animal Cognition and Behavior, *in press*. [not peer reviewed]

**Kota, M.V.**, Urquhart, E. & Zuk, M. (in revision) *A Post-Copulatory Pass: Spermatophore Retention May Accommodate Sexual Signal Loss in Pacific field cricket.*

**Kota, M.V.** (2019). *Signal loss and compensation in Pacific field cricket*Teleogryllus oceanicus*.* Metalaptea, Orthopterists' Society Newsletter, 39, 16-17. [not peer reviewed]

**Kota, M. V.** (2018). *Diversity Discussions at ISBE 2018- A Review.* ISBE Newsletter, 30, 19-20. [not peer reviewed]

Heinen-Kay, J.L. & **Kota, M.V.** (2018) Beauty in the eye, or brain, of the beholder. Review of the book *A Taste for the Beautiful: The evolution of attraction* by Michael J. Ryan]. *Evolution, 72,* 2268. [not peer reviewed]

**Kota, M.** (2016). *Bharati Mukherjee’s Jasmine: Decolonizing Text or Postcolonial Jane Eyre?* Oglethorpe Journal of Undergraduate Research, 6(2), 1-8.

**Kota, M.** (2016). *The Hybridizing Nature of Ancestor Presence in Morrison’s* Sula. Oglethorpe Journal of Undergraduate Research, 6(2), 1-14.

**Kota, M.** (2014). *Gender and Class Differences in 19th Century French Prostitution*. Oglethorpe Journal of Undergraduate Research. 3(1), 1-27.

**GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

* Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Research Grant (Summer 2019)
* Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Travel Grant (Summer 2019)
* Animal Behavior Society Diversity Travel Award (Summer 2019)
* Society for the Study of Evolution R.C. Lewontin Graduate Research Excellence Grant (May 2019)
* Orthopterists’ Society Theodore J. Cohn Research Grant (April 2018)
* Diversity of Views and Experiences (DOVE) Fellowship (August 2017 – August 2018)
* EEB Excellence Fellowship (August 2017 – August 2018)

**SCIENCE COMMUNICATION, OUTREACH, AND DIVERSITY INITATIVES**

**Program Assistant, Minnesota Academy of Sciences (October 2019 – Present)**

* Recruit volunteers and mentors for STEM programs run by the Minnesota Academy of Sciences
* Develop & edit curriculum, manuals, and programs for science teachers, volunteers, and students
* Oversee STEM programs, leading program mentoring sessions and tracking progress of program participants
* Review research and qualifying paperwork for science fair competition

**Mentor for Minnesota Academy of Science FORSE Program (October 2017 – Present)**

* Mentor middle school students at Bdote Learning School (Dakota & Ojibwe immersion learning program) through the development, implementation, and presentation of novel science fair projects

**Broadening Representation & Equity with Science (BREWS) Planning Committee Member (September 2017 – Present)**

* Started & continue to serve on a committee that hosts seminar speakers on different issues of equity within Ecology, Evolution and Behavior for data-driven discussions
* Maintain the BREWS website

**President of Graduate Students of Color Alliance (GSOCA) (August 2017 – Present)**

* Revived GSOCA, a discontinued graduate student organization that promotes community building and advocacy as a way of navigating the hurdles associated with being students of color
* Host regular community service, dialogue series, skill-building workshops, advocacy and peer support events

**Volunteer for University of Minnesota InSciEd Out Program (August 2017 – Present)**

* Classroom guest speaker and assistant for 2nd grade students in STEM education modules, exposing young students to diverse scientists and concepts
* Presented zebrafish toxicity module at Minnesota State Fair contact table (August 2018)

**Market Science Volunteer (July 2019)**

* Presented invertebrate learning module at Minnesota Midtown farmers market, teaching with hands-on insect examples

**Science Fair Judge, Minnesota State Science Fair (January 2019)**

* Reviewed, assessed, and scored middle school science fair projects at the MSSF

**Diversity Lunch at the International Society for Behavioral Ecology Meeting (July 2018)**

* Hosted a lunch during the ISBE meeting to discuss issues of accessibility for diverse populations in the Academy and society

**Animal Behavior Society Outreach Fair (July 2018)**

* Presented hands-on module about insect communication/song to 100+ children

**SKILLS**

* Multilingual (fluent in English, Telugu, Spanish)
* Mist-netting & bird banding
* Statistics & graphing in RStudio
* Recording bird and insect songs
* Cricket husbandry & colony maintenance
* Insect and arachnid collection, identification & specimen prep
* Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry techniques & analysis
* Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) imaging & specimen prep
* Podcast recording & voice acting (contributor for Om Sweet Om podcast)
* Sound analysis via Raven Pro (trained at Cornell Lab of Ornithology, October 2018)
* Creation of synthetic auditory stimuli (such as insect song) via MATLAB and Audacity

**ACADEMIC SOCIETIES**

* International Society for Behavioral Ecology (joined 2018)
* Animal Behavior Society (joined 2017)
* Orthopterists’ Society (joined 2017)
* Society for the Study of Evolution (joined 2017)
* Omicron Delta Kappa (initiated Fall 2014)