Stefan Stanescu

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Education

M.Sc. Conservation, Evolution, Ecology & Behaviour (CEEB) (2024-Dec. 2026)
McGill University, Department of Biology

B.Sc. Psychology Specialization, with Distinction (2024)
University of Alberta, Department of Psychology

Research Support — Total Support: $46,167 CAD

Bourse de Maîtrise en Recherche (2025)
Fonds de Recherche du Québec: Nature & Technologies (FRQ-NT)
$26,667 CAD

Support Program for Ecotoxicology Studies (M.Sc. - Ph.D.) (2024)
EcotoQ – Centre de Recherche en Ecotoxicologie du Québec
$6000 CAD

Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA) (2023)
National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)
$7500 CAD

URI Undergraduate Researcher Stipend (2023)
University of Alberta - Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI)
$6000 CAD

Other Scholarships & Awards — Total Support: $16,075 CAD

QCBS Excellence Award (2026)
Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science
$2000 CAD

Graduate Excellence Award in Biology (2025)
McGill University – Department of Biology
$2500 CAD

Philip Carpenter Fellowship in Biology (2024)
McGill University – Department of Biology
$2500 CAD

Faculty of Science Undergraduate Scholarship (2023)
University of Alberta – Faculty of Science
$5000 CAD

Jason Lang Scholarship (2023)
Government of Alberta – Student Aid
$1000 CAD

Ulean and Eudoxia Kushnirevs'ka-Tkachenko Prize in Russian (2022)

University of Alberta – Faculty of Arts
$575 CAD

Alexander Rutherford Scholarship (2020)
Government of Alberta – Student Aid
$2500 CAD

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Miller, R., Šlipogor, V., Caspar, K., Lois-Milevicich, J., Soulsbury, C., Reber, S., Mettke-Hofmann, C., Lambert, M., [...] , **Stanescu, S.**, [...] , Zanutto, J.A. (2025). A large-scale study across the avian clade identifies ecological drivers of neophobia. *PLOS Biology*

Self, J., Camacho-Alpizar, A., Binwal, P., Mir, U., **Stanescu, S.**, Whittaker, B., Guillette, L. (2026). Conformity and individual preference shape nest material use in zebra finches (*Taeniopygia guttata*). *PLOS One*

Conference Presentations

Stanescu, S., Lippold, A., Verreault, J., Guigueno, M.F. (July 2026). *Spatial Memory Relates to Inter-Individual Variation of Free-Range Foraging Movement in Ring-Billed Gulls* [Contributed talk]. The International Society for Behavioral Ecology Congress, Torino, Italy.

Stanescu, S., Lippold, A., Verreault, J., Guigueno, M.F. (April 2026). *Spatial Memory Relates to Inter-Individual Variation of Free-Range Foraging Movement in Ring-Billed Gulls* [Poster]. The 33rd annual Conference on Comparative Cognition, Montréal, QC, Canada.

Stanescu, S., Lippold, A., Verreault, J., Guigueno, M.F. (November 2025). *A Cognitive Quandary: Are Common Cognitive Measures in Ecology Effectively Used?* [Poster]. Société Québécoise pour l'Étude Biologique du Comportement, Montréal, QC, Canada.

Stanescu, S., Lippold, A., Verreault, J., Guigueno, M.F. (July 2025). *Spatial Movement, Memory, and Environmental Contaminants in Ring-Billed Gulls* [Contributed talk]. Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution, Sherbrooke, QC, Canada.

Self JL, Camacho-Alpízar A, Binwal P, Mir U, **Stanescu S**, Whittaker BA, & Guillette LM (March 2025). *Conformity in nest-building decisions* [Contributed talk]. CogSem, Department of Psychology, University of Alberta, Canada.

Self JL, Camacho-Alpízar A, Binwal P, Mir U, **Stanescu S**, Whittaker BA, & Guillette LM (March 2025). *Conformity in nest-building decisions* [Contributed talk]. The 32nd annual Conference on Comparative Cognition, Albuquerque, NM, USA

Stanescu, S., Lippold, A., Verreault, J., Guigueno, M.F. (November 2024). *The Brain-Behaviour-Cognition Relationship in Ring-Billed Gulls in a Spatial Foraging Context* [Contributed talk]. Société Québécoise pour l'Étude Biologique du Comportement, Montréal, QC, Canada.

Academic Service

Biology Teaching Task Force (2025-2026)
Graduate Student Curriculum Representative, McGill University

Department of Biology EDI Committee (2025)
Graduate Student Representative, McGill University

Post-Graduate Student Society Environment Committee (2025)
Graduate Student Member, McGill University

Post-Graduate Student Society Equity & Diversity Committee (2025)
Graduate Student Member, McGill University

Teaching

Teaching Assistantships
Biol 216: Biology of Behaviour (Winter 2025)
Biol 111: Organismal Biology (Fall 2024, Fall 2025, Fall 2026)

Academic Mentorship

Year(s)	Name of Mentee	Position	Institute
2025	Rachel Guo✢	NSERC USRA Student	McGill University
2024	Lorie Therrien✢	Undergraduate Summer Internship	UQAM
2024	Luciano Camacho-Calle✢	Undergraduate Summer Internship	McGill University

✢ **Research Mentor:** Trained student on practical and academic skills, including experimental design, apparatus design, data collection, data integrity, and data analyses.

Outreach

Soup & Science, 40th Edition - McGill Undergraduate Outreach (2025)
Presented at a a luncheon event geared towards a general undergraduate audience interested in research opportunities at McGill. Presented a short, 5-minute personal research presentation as well as on the laboratory's work. Following this, spoke to undergraduate students for 30-45 minutes about research opportunities at McGill and beyond.

Future of Wildlife Conservation Panel (2025)
Invited as a panelist for a public discussion on the future of wildlife conservation hosted by the McGill Students for Wildlife Conservation. This was an interdisciplinary conversation between students and faculty at multiple levels of academia, wherein we discussed our research in the context of local and global issues of conservation.

Undergraduate Psychology Association Annual Laboratory Mixer (2024)
Represented the Animal Cognition Research Group at our department's annual mixer, intended to showcase the research that takes place at the University of Alberta to junior undergraduate students. Explained the various projects our laboratory was working on, displayed experimental materials, and talked about the general research experience.

WISEST Summer Research Program Laboratory Tour and Q&A Session (2023)
Assisted in the preparation and leading of a tour of the Animal Cognition Research Group laboratory for 5 Women in Scholarship, Engineering, Science, and Technology (WISEST) summer research students, followed by a 30-minute Q&A. Displayed and explained various experimental stimuli, presented trial videos, and answered questions about our laboratory's research, as well as about the research experience in general.

***Wild Birds Unlimited* Outreach Event** (2023)
Helped prepare and lead a 3-hour outreach session about research conducted by the Animal Cognition Research Group, hosted by the wild bird store *Wild Birds Unlimited*, in Edmonton. Displayed experimental objects (nests, novel stimuli, foraging boards, etc.), as well as a summary video. Provided colouring pages for younger participants, as well as a book raffle for books about nest building.

Training & Certifications

Animal Policy & Welfare Oversight Committee – Theory & Practical (2024)
McGill University

Indigenous Canada Course (2023)

Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) Training (2023)
Women and Gender Equality Canada

Bias in Peer Review Training (2022)
Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Diplôme d'Études en Langue Française: B2 (2019)
France Éducation International

Skills

- R Studio
- BORIS scoring software
- AnyMaze tracking software
- Class 5 driver's license
- Languages:
  - French
  - Romanian
  - Russian (Limited working proficiency)