

## Upcoming CONC presentations

Some of the following information is subject to confirmation. Please check back closer to the time of the presentation for more details.

11 May 2021

Why are there so many Bird Species in the Tropics?

**Speaker:** Jason Weir

**About the presentation:** Why do the tropics harbour so many bird species?

The 19th century explorer Alfred Russel Wallace believed that low extinction rates in the relatively benign climates of the tropics had allowed for the gradual buildup of high species richness there, while high extinction rates at high latitudes prevented such a buildup. Others have instead argued that evolution occurs faster in the tropics than at high latitudes, resulting in more species being produced near the equator than toward the poles. Here I tackle this question by estimating whether the rates at which new species form and perish vary with latitude. My key finding is that species evolve most rapidly where diversity is low. Canada, not the Amazon, is the hotbed of evolutionary divergence.

**About the speaker:** Jason spent most of his childhood years roaming the Okanagan where he fell in love with birds at the age of 12. He did his PhD at University of British Columbia with Dolph Schluter, and he completed a Post Doc with Trevor Price at the University of Chicago. He is now a professor at the University of Toronto Scarborough. He and his students study rates of evolution in boreal birds from Canada, and tropical birds from Amazonian Brazil. (Website: <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~jweir/> )



8 June 2021

This would be the annual picnic. It looks like this will not be happening this year.

14 September 2021

**TBA**

12 October 2021

**TBA**

9 November 2021

**TBA**

14 December 2021

**TBA**