Nickolas James Hawkes

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| Term-time address: 28 Tregenver Road, Falmouth, TR11 2QWHome address: 6292 Kjerstad, Møre og Romsdal, NorwayMobile: 07936402682Email: njhawkes41@hotmail.comLinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/nickolas-james-hawkes/52/613/b67>Website: [http://njhawkes.weebly.com](http://njhawkes.weebly.co" \l "m) |
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Personal statement

A committed, focused and motivated bio-science undergraduate who aspires to work in this area of research. Achieved upper second class honours in 2nd year and is aiming for a first in the final year. Skills in independent and collaborative research have been demonstrated on several occasions with an esteemed work ethic fortified from an academic and physical background. A desire to continue studying on this trajectory is reflected by module choice, with 89% of optional module choices having a basis in either ecology or evolution.

Education

**BSc in Conservation Biology and Ecology at the University of Exeter 2011 to present**

**Relevant modules:**

Genetics (72%), evolutionary genetics (69%), analysis of biological data (72%), biodiversity and conservation (70%) population and community ecology, practical skills in ecology (Scotland), and co-evolutionary interactions.

**A levels at Haram Vidaregåande Skule 2007 – 2010**

Achieved a 4.8 average overall (A). Picked subjects**: Biology 1 & 2 (6, A\*),** Mathematics R1 & R2 (5, A), Physics 1 & 2 (4, B) and Chemistry 1 (5, A).

Relevant experience

**Summer research project Summer 2013** *Publication pending.*

* Collaborated with Maximilian Huckvale on a data set obtained from nest videos of Chestnut-crowned Babblers (*Pomatostomus ruficeps),* a cooperative breeder endemic to Australia. Invaluable experience was gained on how to standardize the collection of data (through meetings on skype), along with developing skills in time management. Data was collected on the temporal habits of the breeders, in addition, aspects of their behaviour such as decision-making were examined. The data was collected for Dr Andy Russell, senior lecturer in animalbehaviour at the University of Exeter.

**Scotland field course June 2013**

* Further developed our understanding of how to conduct research in the field, for instance by observing social interactions in the great skua (*Stercorarius skua*, a species that displays reverse sexual dimorphism) and by conducting a census of auks on a cliff face on Handa Island. On the spot thinking and self-confidence was also built through the discussion of various relevant topics: the hybridization of crows and the numerous species concepts, and ecotourism specifically in relation to the Cairnigorms.

**Lab experiment in evolutionary genetics Winter term 2012**

* Evolutionary experiment testing the composition of chemicals in sex pheromones in males of *Nauphoeta cinerea* and its relation to fitness. A 3D Wrightian landscape was created from the data and the correlation of the pheromones to behaviour was examined.

**Population and community ecology Summer term 2013**

* Compulsory module of second year examining the dynamics of populations. Dynamics ranging from stable points to chaos were inspected via theoretical simulations and mathematical models.

**Genetics Winter term 2011**

* Gained an understanding of the basic principles of genetics as well as an introduction to modern techniques in DNA sequencing such as PCR and gel electrophoresis.

Employment experience & skills

**Waiter at Hotel Alexandra Summer 2012, 2011**

* Worked as a waiter at the Hotel Alexandra in Loen for two summers. Gained experience in working in the service sector, made guests feel welcome at the hotel (as well as addressing any questions), increased my self-esteem and learnt quickly to be as efficient as possible. Received a letter of appraisal from Tauck for excellent service.

**Sports at Sogndal Folkehøgskule 2010 – 2011**

* A year spent developing myself physically and socially; with the fantastic opportunity of trying various sports (such as Telemark skiing), learning about the local culture and meeting several interesting people. Had an attendance rate of 99%.

Achievements and interests

**Ecosoc 2011-2014**

* Thoroughly enjoyed getting involved with Ecosoc, one of the most active societies on campus. Offers several academic opportunities to increase one’s experience as well as engaging with passionate and enthusiastic people.

**CUC climbing club 2011-2014**

* Active member of the climbing club on campus. Specializes in indoor climbing, but there are occasional excursions to local outdoor climbing areas.

**Football 2011-2014**

* Member of Perranwell FC (Satuday league) and Tremough FC (Sunday league). Football has and is a key part of my free time, demanding both physical and mental strength alongside general camaraderie.

**Tremough snorkel & dive society 2013-2014**

* Together with Ecosoc this offers plenty of practical experience that is useful and interesting. Currently logged two dives with Dive Newquay, and hope to achieve at least PADI’s advanced open water certification before the end of the year.

**Film & Music**

* Have played piano and guitar from a relatively young age, and enjoy a good film or interesting documentaries.

References

1. Personal tutor: Dr Nick Royle, senior lecturer in behavioural ecology at the University of Exeter, Cornwall campus. **Email:** N.J.Royle@exeter.ac.uk
2. Head of summer research project: Dr Andy Russell, senior lecturer in animal beh­aviour at the University of Exeter, Cornwall campus. **Email:** A.Russell@exeter.ac.uk