

Summer Explorer Series: Evolution in the Galápagos

Students Visit Galápagos for Field Work and Education Outreach



Ever wonder why...

snails come in different colors? We do too.

For Nicole Recla and Madison Bovee, field work in the Galápagos Islands came hand in hand with sea lion, tortoise and even flamingo encounters. During summer 2019, Recla, a junior, teamed with Associate Professor Christine Parent to investigate whether predators drive changes in snail shell camouflage while Bovee, a senior, worked with Associate Professor Brant Miller to see how evolutionary biology is taught in local Galápagos schools. Recla, from Eagle, studies biology while Bovee is from Sandpoint and majoring in elementary education. [Parent](#) is an evolutionary biologist in the [College of Science](#) and [Miller](#) specializes in science education in the [College of Education, Health and Human Sciences](#). Nicole Recla was partially funded under National Science Foundation grant 1757826; the total funding from this grant is \$363,930, of which 100% is the federal share.

U of I researchers are learning what drives evolution in the Galápagos — and innovating ways to teach evolutionary biology.

Nicole Recla studied whether predators drive the evolution of Galápagos land snail shell color across the archipelago.

Madison Bovee investigated how evolution is taught in the Galápagos and taught evolutionary biology through games and student research.

Between teaching and research, Bovee and Recla explored the islands — including snorkeling with Galápagos sea lions.

Article by [Leigh Cooper](#), University Communications and Marketing.

Photos courtesy of Madison Bovee and Brant Miller, College of Education, Health and Human Sciences, and Nicole Recla, College of Science

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