

Rachel K. Schulz

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Education

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

In Progress

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology, Brain and Behavior Area

Advisor: Dr. Ben Dantzer

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

May 2024

Bachelor of Science in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior and Neuroscience

Minors in Marine Biology, Health Psychology, and Public Health

summa cum laude, GPA: 3.858

Honors Thesis: Urban gray squirrels and chipmunks accumulate lead with minimal effects on aggression

Advisor: Dr. Emilie Snell-Rood

Grants

- **Evolution and Human Adaptation Program Research Award**, University of Michigan Evolution and Human Adaptation Program. April 2026. *Investigating the causes and consequences of variation in spatial memory in North American red squirrels* (\$1000)
- **Susan Webb Psychology Graduate Student Award**, University of Michigan Department of Psychology. April 2026. (\$1000)
- **Rackham Precandidate Student Research Grant**, University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School. April 2026. *Investigating the causes and consequences of variation in spatial memory in North American red squirrels* (\$1500)
- **Rackham Conference Travel Grant**, University of Michigan Rackham Graduate School. January 2026. (\$900)
- **Leonard Small Award**, University of Michigan Department of Psychology. April 2025. (\$1000)
- **Student Research Grant**, Animal Behavior Society. March 2025. *Endocrine causes of variation and plasticity in maternal behavior in red squirrels* (\$2000)

Research Experience

Ph.D. Student

August 2024 - present

University of Michigan, Advisor: Dr. Ben Dantzer

Field Technician

June - July 2024

Kluane Red Squirrel Project

- Proficiency in squirrel trapping and handling and radiotelemetry.
- Communicated with off-site project leaders to coordinate on-site data collection.

Field Assistant

May - July 2024

University of Minnesota, Advisor: Dr. Emilie Snell-Rood

- Conducted behavioral assays on urban gray squirrels and eastern chipmunks.
- Scored behaviors from videos of behavioral assays.

Undergraduate Field Technician

June - August 2023

University of Minnesota, Advisor: Dr. Emilie Snell-Rood

- Worked with a small team to study the behavior of urban gray squirrels and eastern chipmunks.
- Trapped and handled animals, including taking body measurements, placing ear tags, and conducting behavioral assays.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

September 2022 - May 2024

University of Minnesota, Advisor: Dr. Karen Mesce

- Performed microdissections on leeches and multiple cricket species to remove nerve cords and conducted dopamine staining and nerve backfills.

Undergraduate Research Assistant

May 2021 - August 2022

University of Minnesota, Advisor: Dr. Neil Anderson

- Conducted a semester-long independent research project aimed at improving the efficiency and success of perennial flax breeding.
- Maintained plants in greenhouses, fields, and the laboratory through planting, weeding, watering, harvesting, and tissue culturing.

Teaching and Mentoring**Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan**

January 2025 - present

- Research Methods in Psychology (upper-level writing intensive course) - Fall 2026
- Drugs of Abuse, Brain, and Behavior - Winter 2026
- Introduction to Behavioral Neuroscience - Winter 2025, Fall 2025

UROP Mentor, University of Michigan

August 2025 - April 2026

- Primary mentor of an undergraduate student completing a research project on animal behavior and cognition across the academic year as part of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

Presentations**Evaluating the use of maze tasks to quantify spatial memory in a wild mammal**

The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Conference

January 2026

From soil to squirrel: the legacy of lead pollution & its effects on urban wildlife behavior

University of Minnesota Spring 2024 Undergraduate Research Symposium

April 2024

Identification of dopaminergic neurons in the ground cricket, *Allonemobius allardi*
University of Minnesota Spring 2023 Undergraduate Research Symposium April 2023

Interspecific crossability study to determine combining ability in perennial flax
University of Minnesota Spring 2022 Undergraduate Research Symposium April 2022

Awards

University of Minnesota

- **Marshall Award**, Itasca Biological Station and Laboratories. June 2023.
- **Director's Scholarship**, Itasca Biological Station and Laboratories. February 2023.
- **Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program Scholarship (UROP)**, Office of Undergraduate Research. December 2021.

Service

Women+ Excelling More in Math, Engineering and the Sciences November 2024 & 2025,
February 2026

Volunteer group leader for two all-day events engaging local 4th-6th grade students in activities about physics and chemistry. Developed and led an activity about studying wild animal behavior for 6th-8th grade students.

Brains Rule April 2025
Volunteer activity leader at an annual outreach event for local middle school students aimed at fostering enthusiasm about the brain and science.

University of Michigan Campus Day March 2025
Volunteer at a speed networking event to talk about the college experience with visiting high school students from the Hannahville Indian Community and Potawatomi tribe.

Michigan Association of Psychological Scholars September 2024 - April 2025
Volunteer mentor for an undergraduate student.

Professional Affiliations

The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology	2024 - present
The Animal Behavior Society	2024 - present
American Society of Mammalogists	2025 - present