

Linda S. Hamilton “Conserving Colorado” Award

Colorado Natural Heritage Program
Warner College of Natural Resources
Colorado State University

Awards: 1

Apply by: April 18, 2025

Linda Hamilton lived and worked in Fort Collins for decades before deciding to pursue a degree at Colorado State University’s College of Natural Resources. After accomplishing this, Linda continued and obtained a master’s in environmental studies, proud to be considered a lifetime learner. Linda’s outdoor enthusiasm evolved to include trying to understand relationships within the natural world. She readily recognized value in protecting Colorado’s natural heritage. Over the years, Linda has worked as an environmental educator, interpretive hike leader, service learning program director, and a state park ranger. Linda volunteered for Colorado outdoor projects for many years. It was with pleasure that she established the Linda S. Hamilton Conserving Colorado Award, enabling undergraduate students to pursue interesting and pertinent work through the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) at Colorado State University.

Purpose of Award:

The purpose of the Hamilton Award is to facilitate undergraduate research and discovery in the field of conservation biology, and allow undergraduates to explore their passion for field-based research.

How the award works:

The total award is approximately \$2,500 (~ 4 weeks of fieldwork at \$15/hour) for a student as they conduct research on a species or ecosystem in Colorado. The student works directly with a CNHP biologist to develop a project that addresses a species or ecosystem. If the student is an honors student, this project can be used as the subject of his/her/their thesis.

Expected outcomes:

The student gets hands-on experience designing, executing, and analyzing a field-based research project on a rare plant, animal, or ecosystem in Colorado, and CNHP obtains new data on a species or ecosystems that is poorly understood in Colorado.

Applicant requirements:

1. At time of application, student must have minimum overall 3.334 GPA;
2. If selected, applicant must be willing to engage in fieldwork with CNHP during the summer in which funding is provided; and
3. Must be an undergraduate student enrolled in the Warner College of Natural Resources.



Hops blue butterfly

How to apply:

Submit Portable Document Formats (pdf) of:

1. Letter of interest (less than 3 pages) with 3 references;
2. Resume; and
3. Unofficial transcripts

to Jenny Cleveland; jenny.cleveland@colostate.edu) by 4 pm on “Apply by” date above.

Potential projects for 2025:

1. Comparing roost counts to videography for maternity colonies of bats;
2. Density of the rare Bell’s Twinpod along foothills of the Front Range;
3. Determining if temporary marks, such as a Sharpie pen or fingernail polish, are feasible short-term marking techniques for small mammals; and
4. Documenting other potential ant/rare butterfly relationships.

Past success stories:

Blaise Newman studied Preble’s meadow jumping mouse microhabitat use in Boulder County, Colorado. She is earning her PhD at University of Georgia.

Callie Puntenney and Rachel Maison studied hops blue butterfly occupancy and published their study in *Journal of Insect Conservation* (Patch occupancy and habitat of the hops azure (*Celastrina humulus*), a rare North American endemic butterfly: insights for monitoring and conservation). Callie is earning her master’s degree at Boise State University. Rachel is earning her PhD at Colorado State University.

Tristan Kubik documented the first known mutualism between the hops blue butterfly and multiple ant species. In 2017, he submitted his manuscript to *Entomological News* (Facultative myrmecophily in the hops blue butterfly, *Celastrina humulus*). He is earning his PhD at University of Texas.

Kira Paik and Toryn Walton conducted radiotelemetry of little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*) in the Yampa Valley to understand how little brown bats use day roosts. Kira is a master’s student in FWCB at CSU.

Nina Phillips studied habitat associations of ovenbirds along the Rampart Range and is publishing her work in *Southwestern Naturalist*.



Callie Puntenney and
Linda Hamilton at
Callie’s honors thesis
defense



Tristan Kubik and
Linda Hamilton



Kira Paik and Toryn Walton tracking
telemetered little brown bats in Yampa
Valley of Colorado