

## Stephanie Tolar

[www.linkedin.com/in/stephanie-tolar](http://www.linkedin.com/in/stephanie-tolar) | [www.stephanietolar.com](http://www.stephanietolar.com)

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### EDUCATION

#### Duke University

Master's Degree in Biology, December 2016

Certificate in College Teaching, December 2016

#### University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

B.S. in Environmental Sciences with Highest Honors and Distinction, 2014

B.A. in Italian with Distinction; Minor in Marine Science, 2014

Study Abroad in Bologna, Italy through the Bologna Consortial Studies Program, 2013

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### RELEVANT SKILLS

- Passion and enthusiasm for nature, environmental issues, and sustainability
  - Professional training in, work experience with, and deep commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility
  - Project management and time management experience for multiple ongoing projects, involving simultaneous deadlines and collaboration with other departments and agencies
  - Experience managing teams of volunteers and staff
  - Scientific writing, communication, and education experience
  - Graduate-level scientific training, including literature review, analysis, synthesis of information from multiple sources, and interpretation of scientific data in charts and graphs
  - Experience editing and proofreading with a variety of document types, focusing on accuracy, consistency, clarity, and engagement
  - Exceptional organizational skills
  - Detail-oriented approach to tasks and projects
  - Leadership and mentoring experience in a variety of settings
  - Excellent public speaking and presentation skills, including scientific presentations to both technical and non-technical audiences
  - Experience working on a team and independently
  - Proficient use of Microsoft Office, Google Suite, Adobe, and Monday.com
  - Knowledge of data entry and analysis, as well as spreadsheets and databases
  - Research experience, both independent and collaborative
  - Passion for lifelong learning, growth, and evolution
  - Five years of experience with remote/telework
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### WORK EXPERIENCE

#### NCF-Envirothon Education Specialist

*National Conservation Foundation/National Association of Conservation Districts* |

*November 2019 - October 2024*

- I acted as a project manager, curriculum developer, collaborator, writer, and editor for the educational materials for our annual international scholastic competition for high school students, including study

resources, student trainings, and assessments testing both theoretical knowledge and field skills in five different environmental science disciplines: Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife, and a Current Environmental Issue that changes each year. Our Current Issue topics were frequently focused on climate change impacts and sustainability. I managed deliverables for multiple competitions at a time with overlapping deadlines with different groups of collaborators. I aided in event planning for portions of the competition. I worked on long-term educational projects for the international program to support and supplement the annual competition. I also administered our Diversity Enhancement and Underserved Audience pass-through Grant Program starting in 2023, working with local Envirothon programs to design initiatives to increase diversity of participation in their events. Prior to taking on administration of the grants, I served on our Diversity Grant Committee. I wrote quarterly reports for the NCF Board of Trustees and our NCF-Envirothon Operating Committee. This was a remote/telework position.

### **Receptionist and Administrative Assistant**

*Carolina Outreach, LLC | November 2018 – November 2019*

- Working in a fast-paced environment in a mental health clinic, I handled check-in and scheduling for our clients, and fielded various concerns and questions. I provided current and potential clients with information about the services offered by our organization, helped to process client forms and documents, handled medical record requests and faxes, and completed various other administrative tasks as needed. All client matters were handled with the utmost confidentiality and discretion.

### **Off-Site and Adult Education Program Coordinator**

*Piedmont Wildlife Center | July 2017 – August 2018*

- I coordinated, designed curriculum for, and managed all of our off-site programs, as well as our adult environmental education classes. I organized summer, intersession, and track-out nature camps at our Orange and Wake County locations. I was also the primary educator at our Orange County location. I was involved in the hiring, supervision, and mentoring of our temporary and part-time educators, camp counselors, and counselors-in-training. I managed and taught at our after-school nature program at Forest View Elementary in Durham. I taught adult environmental education classes and coordinated our adult and family programs. I helped to update and design the Center's website. I wrote monthly progress reports for the Education team, as well as quarterly donor reports for our patrons. I gathered data for use in grant applications. I provided customer service in person, over the phone, and via email for our program participants, as well as analyzing feedback surveys about our programs.

### **Educator, Piedmont Wildlife Center | February 2017 – July 2017**

- I educated and mentored students, helping them to foster a deep connection with nature. I also supervised and mentored a counselor-in-training. I worked weekly with a homeschool group of middle school-age students, teaching them nature awareness skills and about the natural history of the land. I also developed and presented adult environmental education programs. I incorporated many different schools of environmental pedagogy, including traditional environmental education, natural resource interpretation, place-based learning, and nature connectedness.

**Nature Instructor, City of Raleigh Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources |**  
*February 2017 – May 2017*

- I presented engaging lessons on a wide variety of nature topics to students in preschool through fifth grade. My work encompassed both field and classroom experiences, animal handling, and a range of active learning methods.

**Substitute Counselor, Piedmont Wildlife Center | December 2016 – February 2017**

- I educated and mentored students, helping them to learn about and connect with nature.

**Graduate Student Teaching Assistant, Duke University Biology Department |**  
*August 2015 – December 2016*

**Teaching Assistant, BIO341L Plant Communities of North Carolina, Fall 2015**

- I co-led weekly field trips into plant communities across NC. I taught tree and plant identification, and coached students on how to look beyond the individual plant and see ecological connections.

**Teaching Assistant & Lab Section Instructor, BIO201L Intro. to Molecular Biology,**  
*Spring 2016*

- I independently taught a laboratory section in microbiology. Teaching included lectures and one-on-one interactions with students in a practical laboratory setting.

**Teaching Assistant, BIO209D Ecology of Human Health, Fall 2016**

- I met regularly with students one-on-one and in small groups to discuss primary literature in ecology and human health. I coached students on how to lead effective discussions, building on the pedagogical strategies encountered in my coursework. I helped to plan and develop parts of the course.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Leading Through Change Course - Nataly Kogan, 2023**

- 7-week course covering the neuroscience of change, why change is difficult to navigate on both personal and organizational levels, and science-backed skills to more effectively lead ourselves, our organizations, and our collaborators through these rapidly changing times while prioritizing compassion for ourselves and others

**Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Environmental Programs Course - Environmental Educators of North Carolina, 2022**

- 8-week course providing a strong foundation in the language, concepts, and principles of equity work for environmental educators and environmental professionals

**Universal Design for Learning Course - Environmental Educators of North Carolina, 2022**

- 6-week course on the Universal Design for Learning framework, including terms, techniques, tools, and resources to promote inclusivity and access to better serve diverse populations, specifically those with learning differences, accessibility needs, and language barriers

**Methods of Teaching Environmental Education** - *Environmental Educators of North Carolina, 2020*  
- Workshop covering curriculum development, assessment and activity planning, addressing the needs of a variety of students, and techniques to foster engagement and enthusiasm for learning

**Diversity and Equity in Environmental Programs** - *Duke University Nicholas School, 2017-2018*  
- Various workshops and classes covering diversity and inclusion in STEM education and how to address inequities. Some topics included implicit bias, differing cultural narratives, epistemologies in diverse learners, and creation of out-of-the-box solutions to address inequities, among others.

**Heart-Based Environmental Educator Training** - *Eco-Institute at Pickards Mountain, 2018*  
- An educator training focused on cultural mentoring, meeting students where they are, encouraging curiosity, developing naturalist skills, deep listening, and honoring each individual's story

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## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Honors Thesis Research on Salinity Tolerance in Cyanobacteria and its Implications for Expansion into Estuaries;** Mentor: Dr. Hans Paerl (UNC Institute for Marine Sciences, Thesis Defense: 2013, earning Highest Honors)

**Collaborative Capstone Research Project on Water Quality in the Pine Knoll Shores Canal;** Supervisor: Dr. Rachel Noble (UNC Institute for Marine Sciences, 2012)

**Research Assistant for Coastal Sediment Analysis, Shipworm Impact, and pan-European ARCH Project;** Supervisor: Luca Zaggia (National Council of Research - Institute for Marine Sciences in Venice, Italy; Summer 2012)

**Forest Succession Research Project at Mason Farm Biological Reserve,** compared 1980s data to post-Hurricane Fran re-growth; Supervisor: Dr. Peter White (UNC Biology Department, 2010 to 2011)

**Collaborative Research Project on Mineralogy of Bedrock and Overlying Soils in the Long Valley Caldera Area;** Supervisor: Dr. Drew Coleman (UNC Geology Department, 2010)

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## SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS

- February 2014: Speaker at the Curriculum for the Environment and Ecology Symposium in Chapel Hill – “Salinity Tolerance in Cyanobacteria and its Implications for Expansion into Estuaries”
- December 2013: Defense of Undergraduate Honors Thesis – “Salinity Tolerance in Cyanobacteria and its Implications for Expansion into Estuaries”
- December 2012: Undergraduate Presentation of Research in Progress – “Salinity Tolerance in Cyanobacteria and its Implication for Expansion into Estuaries”
- December 2012: Presentation of collaborative research project at the Morehead City Field Site to the scientific and local community – “Water Quality in the Pine Knoll Shores Canal”

- December 2010: Poster Session for Field Geology of Eastern California – “Mineralogy of Bedrock and Overlying Soils in the Long Valley Caldera Area”
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### **FIELD WORK**

- Week-long field excursion to the Aeolian Islands in Italy as part of a Volcanology course at the University of Bologna to study active and dormant volcanoes, historical sediment deposition from previous eruptions, and impacts to the surrounding landscapes (Spring 2013)
  - Student and Researcher at the UNC Institute for Environment Morehead City Field Site. Studied Marine Science. Gained extensive field and laboratory experience. Assessed the water quality of a canal in Pine Knoll Shores, NC and studied salinity tolerance in cyanobacteria (Fall 2012)
  - Designed a 2-month Research Assistantship at the Institute for Marine Sciences, National Council of Research in Venice and Lesina, Italy. Participated in 3 projects: (1) analysis of coastal sediments around the Venetian lagoon and port town of Chioggia, (2) monitoring damage caused by shipworms in the Venetian lagoon, and (3) the pan-European ARCH project in Lesina to establish management strategies for lagoon systems. Wrote a proposal for and received the Hogan Fellowship to fund my travel and living expenses. (Summer 2012)
  - Ten-day field excursion in St. John and the British Virgin Islands as part of a Coral Reef Ecology course; evaluated species diversity for coral, tropical fish, and invertebrates (Spring 2012)
  - 6-week study abroad experience at Universidad San Francisco de Quito Galapagos Field Station; lived with a host family and learned elementary Spanish, studied Human Ecology and Marine Ecology (Summer 2011)
  - Week-long field excursion to Bishop, CA, the Long Valley Caldera, Mono Lake, and Yosemite National Park as part of a course on the Field Geology of Eastern California (Fall 2010)
  - 4-week field ecology course at Flathead Lake Biological Station in Montana with fieldwork in Glacier National Park (Summer 2010)
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### **HONORS AND AWARDS**

2015, 2016: Duke Graduate School Summer Research Fellowship

2014: Chancellor’s James M. Johnston Distinguished Senior Award in the Undergraduate Program

2014: Kyser Award for Excellence in Italian

2014: Carolina Research Scholar

2010-2014: James M. Johnston Scholarship from UNC-Chapel Hill

2010-2014: Winston Scholarship from UNC Institute for the Environment

2010-2014: National Merit College-Sponsored Award Recipient

2010-2014: UNC-Chapel Hill Honors Program

2012-2014: Gamma Kappa Alpha Italian Honor Society

Summer 2011: Lineweaver Scholarship Recipient for Study Abroad in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador

Summer 2012: Hogan Fellowship Recipient for Research Assistantship at the Institute for Marine Sciences in Venice and Lesina, Italy

Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Fall 2013: Dean’s List

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