

**JUANITA CHOO**  
RESEARCH SCIENTIST  
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY GROUP  
OKINAWA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
[juanitachoo@gmail.com](mailto:juanitachoo@gmail.com)  
[homepage](#) | [googlescholar](#)

## EDUCATION

---

PhD. <i>Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior</i> , The University of Texas at Austin	2010
MA. <i>Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources</i> , Rutgers University	2002
BSc Honors. <i>Biology</i> , University of Queensland	1998

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

---

Research Scientist, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST)	2012-pres.
Post-doctoral Researcher and Lecturer, University of Michigan	2010-2012
Lecturer, Eastern Michigan University	2010-2011
Ethnobotanical Research Intern, Queens Botanical Garden (NY)	2002-2003
Plant Records Curator Willowood Arboretum (NJ)	2001-2002
Assistant Land Manager Hutcheson Memorial Forest Center (Rutgers, NJ)	2000-2002
English Foreign Language Educator, Kashima School of Business (Japan)	1998-2000

## ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

---

- Lamperty T, Diaz-Martin TZ, Swamy V, Karubian J, Choo J, Dunham A. Defaunation is associated with increased fine-scale spatial genetic structure in a small-seeded palm despite high abundances of small-bodied seed dispersers. In Review.  
*Molecular Ecology* <https://tinyurl.com/32zbkrvv>
- Kennedy S, Calaor J, Zurápití Y, Hans J, Yoshimura M, **Choo J**, Andersen JC, Callaghan J, Roderick GK, Krehenwinkel H, Haldre Rogers, Gillespie RG, Economo EP (2022) Richness and resilience in the Pacific: DNA metabarcoding enables parallelized evaluation of biogeographic patterns. *Molecular Ecology* <https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.16575>
- Choo J**, Gill B, Zuur A, Zent EL, Economo EP (2019) Impacts of an indigenous settlement on the taxonomic and functional structure of dung beetle communities in the Venezuelan Amazon. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 29:207-228 <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10531-019-01879-5>
- Choo J**, Carrasco C, Alvarez-Loayza P, Simpson BB, Economo EP (2017) Life history traits influence the strength of distance- and density-dependence at different life stages of two Amazonian palms. *Annals of Botany* 120:147-158 <https://doi.org/10.1093/aob/mcx051>
- Sheehan MJ, **Choo J**, Tibbetts EA (2017) Heritable variation in colour patterns mediating individual recognition. *Royal Society Open Science* DOI:10.1098/rsos.161008

- <https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.161008>
- Choo J**, Juenger TE, Simpson BB (2012) Consequences of frugivore-mediated seed dispersal for the spatial and genetic structures of a neotropical palm. *Molecular Ecology* 21:1019-1031 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-294x.2011.05425.x>
- Choo J**, Ishak H, Simpson B, Mueller U, Juenger T (2010) Characterization of 14 microsatellite loci in a tropical palm, *Attalea phalerata* (Arecaceae). *American Journal of Botany* 97:105-106 <https://doi.org/10.3732/ajb.1000281>
- Choo J**, Zent EL, Simpson BB (2009) The importance of traditional ecological knowledge for palm-weevil cultivation in the Venezuelan Amazon. *Journal of Ethnobiology* 29:113-128 <https://doi.org/10.2993/0278-0771-29.1.113>
- Choo, J** (2008) Potential ecological implications of human entomophagy by subsistence groups of the Neotropics. *Terrestrial Arthropod Reviews* 1: 81-93 <https://doi.org/10.1163/187498308x345442>
- Choo J**, Pang E, and Prociv P (2000) Hookworms in dogs of Kuching, Sarawak (North Borneo). *Transactions of the Royal Society for Medicine and Health* 94: 21-22 [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0035-9203\(00\)90425-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0035-9203(00)90425-5)

#### **OUTREACH PUBLICATIONS**

---

- Choo J** (2007) Entomophagy (the traditional consumption of insects by humans). In Bekoff B and Nystrom J Greenwood (Eds.) *Encyclopedia of Animals and Humans*. Westport, CT: Greenwood
- Choo J** (2003). Tet Nyguen Dan: The Vietnamese New Year. Queens Botanical Garden Newsletter.
- Choo J** (2002) The Everlasting Amaranth. Queens Botanical Garden Newsletter
- Choo J** (2002) Echinacea: Story of the ‘Sea-Urchin’ Flowers *Echinacea purpurea*. Willowood Journal.

#### **CONFERENCE / INVITED TALKS**

---

- Choo J, Carrasco C, Alvarez-Loayza P, Juenger T, and Simpson BB. Consequences of frugivore-mediate seed dispersal for the spatial and genetic structures of a Neotropical palm. 59<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting of the Ecological Society of Japan, Kyoto, Japan, March 2012
- Choo J “Ecology and indigenous uses of palms in the Neotropics” San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, July 2009
- Choo J, Carrasco C, Alvarez-Loayza P, Juenger TE, and Simpson BB. The dispersal and spatial population ecology of a Neotropical palm inferred from microsatellite analysis. *Frugivores and Seed Dispersal Symposium*, Montpellier, France, May 2010
- Choo J, and Zent, E. Hunter-gatherer impacts on the seed predation, dispersal, and seedling recruitment of *Attalea maripa*. *Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation*, Suriname, June 2008
- Choo J. and Zent, E. For the love of grubs: ecology and culture of weevil food resources. *Ecology, Evolution & Behavior Population Biology Seminar*, University of Texas at Austin 2006

- Choo J. The unlikely grub: consumption of weevil larvae by indigenous Venezuelans. *Ecology, Evolution & Behavior Symposium*, Austin, October 2004
- Choo J and Struwe L. A phylogenetic perspective on the ethnobotanical uses of palms. *Society for Economic Botany*, NYC, June 2003
- Choo J and Proctor H. Loss of larval parasitism in water mites. *Xth International Congress of Acarology*, Canberra, Australia, July 1998

#### FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

---

Okinawa Prefectural Government Sustainability Grant: 3 million yen; ~\$25,000	2022
Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation Travel Award: \$500	2010
Organization for Tropical Studies - Francis Boyssut Fellowship: \$2500	2008
EEB Research Fellowship, U. Texas (Austin): \$2000	2008
EEB Travel Award, U. Texas (Austin): \$1200	2008
Bruton Fellowship, U. Texas (Austin): \$ 1000	2006
The Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation: \$10,580	2006
Hartman Zoology Scholarship, U. Texas (Austin): \$2000	2006
American Philosophical Society Lewis and Clark Grant: \$4000	2005
Frank and Fern Blair Research Fellowship, U. Texas (Austin): \$3130	2005
The Explorers Club: \$1200	2004
Tinker Field Research Grant: \$800	2004
Smithsonian Tropical Research Grant	2004
Jean Andrews Fellowship, U. Texas (Austin): \$1500	2004
Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute Research Fellowship: \$500	2004
Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute Research Fellowship: \$500	2002
Summer Research Scholarship, University of Queensland: \$1000	1996

#### PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

---

##### *Journal reviewer*

American Journal of Botany, Molecular Ecology, Scientific Reports,  
Tropical Plant Biology and Integrative Biology

##### *Grant reviewer*

International Palm Society, The Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation

##### *Scientific Illustrator*

created scientific illustrations for: Walter, D.E., Proctor, H.C., Walter, D.E. and Proctor, H.C., 2013. Mites in soil and litter systems. *Mites: ecology, evolution & behaviour: life at a microscale*, pp.161-228.

Henderson, A.J., 2004. A multivariate analysis of Hyospathe (Palmae). *American Journal of Botany*, 91(6), pp.953-965

##### *Board membership*

Chair, Board of Governors, OIST Child Development Center 2018-2020  
led strategic planning, governance, and financial planning of the Center

Member, Board of Governors, OIST Child Development Center 2015-2017

## TEACHING

---

### *Lecturer*

University of Michigan Ecology – Ecology for EEB major 2011-2012  
Eastern Michigan University – Ecology 2011-2012

### *Teaching Assistant*

University of Texas at Austin 2003-2009  
– Ecology  
– Field Biology  
– Genetics and Evolution  
– Structure and Function of Plants  
Rutgers University 2000-2002  
– Introductory Biology  
– Vertebrate Biology

## MENTORING/ADVISING

---

Therese Lamberty (Graduate student, 2017-2019)  
Sayda Muhemmed (Graduate student volunteer, 2016)  
Latima Collins (Undergraduate, 2012)  
Lindsay Marie Balfour (Undergraduate, 2012)  
Kellie Fisher (Undergraduate, 2011)  
Kelsie Holden (Undergraduate, 2011)  
Sarah Press (Undergraduate 2010)  
Cecilia Carrasco Ramírez (Undergraduate, 2009-2011)  
Jasmine Gay (Undergraduate, 2009)  
Eric Chenyu Zhou (Undergraduate 2009)

## OUTREACH

---

OIST Sustainable Development Goal volunteer  
OIST X Onna Children School of Science volunteer,  
U. Texas (Austin) Women in STEM volunteer  
U. Texas (Austin) EUREKA program student mentor  
U. Texas (Austin) Science under the star Outreach lecture series volunteer,  
U. Texas (Austin) Environmental Science Institute outreach lecture series volunteer

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATIONS

---

Eukaryotic Metabarcoding, Physalia 2024  
Certificate in Sustainable Business Strategy, Harvard Business School 2023  
Metabarcoding in microbial ecology, Physalia 2023  
RAD-seq data analysis, Physalia 2019

Metagenomics Course, EMBO, Heidelberg, Germany	2013
Organization for Tropical Studies Plant Systematics, Costa Rica	2004
Organization for Tropical Studies Tropical Ecology and Conservation, Costa Rica	2003