

# Shamindri D. Tennakoon

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## Education

University of Florida – Gainesville, FL

[08/2015 - present]

PhD in Zoology, Department of Biology, Current GPA: 4.0/4.0

University of Peradeniya- Sri Lanka

[08/2009- 01/2014]

Bachelor of Science – Special Degree in Zoology (first class Honors), GPA: 3.93/4.00

## Research interests

Invertebrate paleontology and paleoecology, systematic paleontology, conservation paleobiology, marine ecology

## Graduate Research and Projects

Non-lethal predation of sand dollars in the fossil record

Systematics of cassid snails (Mollusca: Gastropoda) from the upper Eocene of Florida

Morphometric analysis of Cenozoic cassid snails (Mollusca: Gastropoda) to determine taxon/time specific trends in disparity and body size

Impacts of artificial reefs on mollusk communities

Echinoid Associated Traces (EAT) project; investigates evolutionary and ecological causes and consequences of predation on echinoids by focusing on the fossil record of drill holes on post-Paleozoic echinoids

Historical Ecology of Seagrass Meadows: Assessing Multi-Centennial Dynamics of Threatened Biodiversity Hotspots

## Publications

Petsios Elizabeth, Portell Roger W., Farrar Lyndsey, Tennakoon Shamindri, Grun Tobias B., Kowalewski Michal and Tyler Carrie L. (2021) "An asynchronous Mesozoic marine revolution: the Cenozoic intensification of predation on echinoids" *Proc. R. Soc. B*.2882021040020210400  
<http://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2021.0400>

Monarrez, P. M., Zimmt, J. B., Clement, A. M., Gearty, W., Jacisin, J. J., Jenkins, K. M., Kusnerik, K. M., Poust, A. W., Robson, S. V., Sclafani, J. A., Stilson, K. T., Tennakoon, S. D. and Thompson, C. M. (2021) "Our past creates our present: a brief overview of racism and colonialism in Western paleontology," *Paleobiology*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/pab.2021.28>

## Presentations

\*mentored student

\*Negrón K, Tennakoon S, Jamal F, Grun TB, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2020) [Poster]: Ecological and paleoecological implications of marginal traces in echinoids from the Gulf of Mexico. Presented at the Geological Society Annual Meeting 2020. Geological Society of America Abstracts with Program 52.

Tennakoon S, Petsios E, Portell RW, Farrar L, Grun TB, Kowalewski M, Tyler CL (2020) [Talk]: Drill Holes and Bite Marks Shed Light on the Role of Predation in the Evolution of Echinoids. Presented at the SACNAS National Conference 2020.

\*Negron K, Tennakoon S, Grun TB, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2020) [Poster]: Comparison of Non-Lethal Predatory Traces in Recent and Fossil Sand Dollars. South Eastern GSA Abstracts with Program 52. Conference canceled due to COVID-19.

Tennakoon S, Thompson C (2020) Holey rocks! the application of Florida fossil invertebrates to middle school learning standards in Alachua county, Fl. South Eastern GSA Abstracts with Program 52. Conference canceled due to COVID-19.

Tennakoon S, Jamal F, Grun TB, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2019) [Poster]: Non-lethal traces of predation in tests of recent and fossil echinoids. Geological Society of America Abstracts with Program 51.

Petsios E, Tyler CL, Portell RW, Farrar L, Tennakoon S, Kowalewski M (2019) [Talk]: Escalation of echinoid-associated predatory and parasitic drilling in the Mesozoic marine revolution. 11th North American Paleontological Convention at Riverside, CA.

Tennakoon S, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2019) [Poster]: Morphological disparity of Cenozoic cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda). 11<sup>th</sup> North American Paleontological Convention, Riverside, CA.

Tennakoon S, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2019) [Talk]: Fossil cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda) from the upper Eocene Ocala Limestone of Florida. Annual meeting of Florida United Malacologists 2019, Gainesville, Florida.

Tennakoon S, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2018) [Talk]: Morphometric analysis of Cenozoic cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda). Geological Society of America Abstracts with Program 50.

Tennakoon S, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler CL (2018) [Talk]: Morphometric analysis of Cenozoic cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda) from Florida. 5th International Palaeontological Congress, Paris, France.

Tennakoon S, Lindberg W, Kowalewski M (2018) [Talk]: Live-dead fidelity of mollusk assemblages in the Suwannee Regional Reef System, an artificial reef in Florida, USA. 5th International Palaeontological Congress, Paris, France.

Tennakoon S, Portell RW, Kowalewski M, Petsios E, Tyler, CL (2018) [Poster]: Carnivorous cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda) from the upper Eocene Ocala Limestone of Florida. South Eastern GSA Abstracts with Program 50.

Tennakoon S, Lindberg W, Kowalewski M (2017) [Talk]: Mollusk death assemblages as a baseline for assessing community shifts in artificial reefs: a comparison of dead and living mollusk assemblages in the Suwannee regional reef system, Florida. Geological Society of America Abstracts with Program 49.

Tennakoon S, Lindberg W, Kowalewski M (2017) [Talk]: Mollusks as a proxy for assessing ecological impacts of artificial reefs: a comparison of dead and living mollusk assemblages in the Suwannee regional reef system, Florida. South Eastern GSA Abstracts with Program 49.

Tennakoon S, Lindberg W, Kowalewski M (2017) [Poster]: Decadal-scale impact of artificial reefs on mollusk communities: a comparison of dead and living mollusks in the Suwannee Regional Reef System, Florida. Big Bend Science Symposium, Cedar Key, Fl

Tennakoon S, Meegaskumbura M, (2014) [Talk]: Systematics of cerithiform gastropods (Superfamily Cerithioidea) in Miocene of Sri Lanka. Peradeniya University International Research Sessions 2014 (iPURSE 2014).

## **Invited Presentations**

“Morphological variability of cassids (Mollusca: Gastropoda) from the upper Eocene Ocala Limestone of Florida” [2020] Florida Museum graduate student lightening talk series, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.

“Cenozoic cassid snails (Mollusca: Gastropoda)” [2018] Florida Fossil Hunters meeting, Orlando Science Center, Orlando Florida.

“Cassid gastropods from the upper Eocene Ocala Limestone, Florida and mollusk death assemblages as a tool to detect impacts of artificial reefs” [2018] Florida Paleontological Society meeting, Wyndham garden, Gainesville, Florida.

## **Awards and Scholarships**

SACNAS registration scholarship to attend the 2020 SACNAS National Conference

Scholarship for presenting at the ‘Future leaders in paleontology’ session at Geological Society of America annual meeting, 2020

Paleontological Society outreach and education grant for the project ‘Afterschool at the Museum: Hands-on Learning Experiences for Elementary and Middle School Students’, 2020

North American Paleontological Convention travel award, 2019

Florida Museum of Natural History travel award to attend the Geological Society of America annual meeting, 2018

Lelia and William Brayfield Scholarship Award, South West Florida Fossil Society, 2018

Brian Riewald Memorial Fund Research Grant, Department of Biology, University of Florida, 2017

The Florida Paleontological Society's Gary S. Morgan Student Research Award, 2016

R. Jerry Britt, Jr. Paleobiology Scholarship, Florida Museum of Natural History, 2016

Astronaut Trail Shell Club Scholarship, 2016

University of Florida International Center; Certificate of Outstanding Academic Achievement, 2016

F.P. Amerasinghe Memorial Gold Medal for Zoology (Highest GPA in the Zoology major cohort) 2014, University of Peradeniya

University Award for Academic Excellence 2014, University of Peradeniya

## **Appointments and Professional Experience**

Graduate teaching and research assistant, University of Florida [08/2015- present]

Lecturer (probationary), Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka [05/2017- present]

Research Assistant, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka [01/2015- 06/2015]

Teaching Assistant, Department of Zoology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka [02/2014-10/2014]

## **Professional Service**

Paleontological Society Diversity and Inclusion Committee-member [01/2020- present]

Vice-president of the University of Florida SACNAS (Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) chapter [04/2020-present]

Secretary and member of the 2020 Southeast SACNAS Regional Meeting organizing committee; [04/2019-04/2020]

University of Florida SACNAS chapter

University of Florida Department of Biology Diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility committee-member	[08/2020-present]
Florida Museum Student Association-member of the e-board	[05/2020-present]
Mentor-the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting, Phoenix, Arizona	[09/2019]
International student representative- Officer; Biology Graduate Student Association, University of Florida	[05/2019- 05/2020]
Graduate student representative; Greenhouse Committee-Officer; Biology Graduate Student Association, University of Florida	[05/2019- 05/2020]
Seminar support-Officer; Biology Graduate Student Association, University of Florida	[05/2018- 04/2019]
Student representative for Florida Museum University teaching committee	[08/2017- present]
Representing Invertebrate Paleontology at the Florida Museum Research day	[02/2019]
Judge for undergraduate research presentations, Florida Museum	[04/2019]
Judge for Alachua County, Florida school science fairs	[11/2018 and 11/2019]

## Outreach Programs

Afterschool activities and kits PS funded

The process and nature of Science and introduction to paleontology: virtual event for 4 <sup>th</sup> graders at Central Park Elementary School, Broward County, Florida (Scientist in every Florida School program)	[09/23/2020]
Interviewed for the stemCONNECT classroom connection program in Florida	[09/18/2020]
Introduction to Paleontology: virtual event for high school students in Vikhe Patil Memorial School, Pune, India	[09/13/2020]
Invertebrate Paleontology "Make your own Echinoid" activity table at the 'Girls Do Science' event at the Florida Museum, as a part of the United Nations International Women & Girls in Science Day 2020	[02/15/2020]
Invertebrate Paleontology Florida fossils and activity table (Scientist in every Florida School program) at the Science Night, Littlewood Elementary School, Gainesville, FL	[01/16/2020]
Volunteering at, Backyard biodiversity camp, Florida Museum	[06/2018]
Digital outreach event to introduce different scientists to students in Bunker Hill Elementary School, Washington D.C	[05/2018]
Invertebrate Paleontology table at the "She's a scientist" event, Florida Museum	[11/2017]

National Fossil Day, Florida Museum	[11/2017]
Science exhibition for K-12 students in Central Province, Sri Lanka, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka	[05/2017]
"Can you dig it?" - outreach event by the Florida Museum of Natural History	[03/2017 and 03/2018]

## Professional Activities

Organizing and co-chairing the session 'T86. Shape, Size, and Function: New Approaches to Morphometric Analyses' at the 2020 Geological Society of America annual meeting 2020

Co-chairing the session 'D23. Paleontology, Evolution and Development' at the Geological Society of America annual meeting 2018

Member of the organizing committee of the South Eastern SACNAS regional meeting 2020

Contribution to compiling antiracism resources for the Paleontological Society 2020

Member of the committee organizing professional/personal development webinars for the Paleontological Society 2020

Panelist at the Florida Museum graduate seminar on natural history museums, September 2020

## Certificates and short courses

Passport to great teaching certificate, University of Florida [2019-2020]

Paleontological Society short course on Pedagogy and Technology in the Modern Paleontology Classroom, Geological Society of America annual meeting 2018, Indianapolis, Indiana [11/2018]

Analytical Paleobiology summer workshop hosted at the Florida Museum (sponsored by NSF, Earth Rates, Paleontological Society, Society of Vertebrate Paleontology) [7/2018-8/2018]

## Trainings

Geospatial Analyses in R workshop organized by the UF data carpentries club [3/23-3/24/2021]

Spring programming in R course organized by UFIT [Spring 2021]

Unlearning Racism in Geosciences; URGE training (UF SACNAS board) [Spring 2021]

Academics for Black Survival and Wellness antiracism training [August 2020]

UF Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training [Spring 2021]

## Professional Affiliations

Association of Women Geoscientists  
Paleontological Society  
SACNAS

## Mentorship

Mentoring an undergraduate student for the NSF funded GEOutures program at the 2020 SACNAS National Conference	[October 2020]
Mentoring an undergraduate student (Kelsey Negron) on independent research using biological and fossil specimens, analytical techniques, and research presentations	[01/2020-present]
Training an undergraduate student on analyzing echinoid specimens for paleoecological research	[Spring 2020]
Training an undergraduate research assistant (Angelia Romano) in techniques used in Conservation paleobiology	[Spring 2017]