

Together for Wildlife

Together for Wildlife HCTF Conservation Scholarship Recipient 2025



Mitchell Brunet

Mitchell Brunet is a doctoral student in Biology at the University of British Columbia's Okanagan campus, where he investigates the ecological drivers of mule deer decline in British Columbia's Southern Interior. His research integrates GPS-collared mule deer and white-tailed deer, with forage sampling and data on predation to understand how habitat disturbance, competition, predation, and disease interact to shape deer populations.

Mitch's path to this work reflects a lifelong commitment to wildlife conservation rooted in his hunting background and many of the same principles that inspired the creation of the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation. He completed his B.Sc. in Wildlife Biology at the University of Guelph, where he began studying predator-prey dynamics and nutrition. He then earned a M.Sc. at the University of Wyoming, focusing on predator-prey ecology of mule deer and gaining extensive experience on capture, handling, and GPS monitoring of deer. His Ph.D. expands on this foundation, combining science with practical solutions to benefit wildlife and the people who value them.

In British Columbia's Southern Interior, extensive land disturbance has drastically altered the habitat available to mule deer. Concurrent with changes in the landscape, various rights-holders and stakeholders have noted declining mule deer populations. By evaluating the nutritional quality of disturbed landscapes, quantifying overlap between mule deer and white-tailed deer, and mapping predation risk, Mitch is identifying the key factors limiting mule deer and informing management actions such as habitat restoration, harvest regulations, and predator management.

Raised in a culture of hunting, fishing, and outdoor stewardship, Mitch is dedicated to working collaboratively with the many rights-holders and stakeholders who interact with wildlife, including hunters, First Nations, land managers, and conservation groups. His research supports HCTF's mission by providing science-based recommendations that ensure mule deer, white-tailed deer, and their predators remain integral to the ecosystems and traditions of British Columbia. Through partnerships and applied research, Mitch strives to translate ecological understanding into on-the-ground actions that secure "an opportunity for wildlife" for generations to come.



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