

**Professor of Evolutionary Biology and Genetics**

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**Summary**

I am an evolutionary biologist and geneticist based in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Nottingham where I have established a group working on the evolutionary biology, ecology and genetics of spiders and other invertebrates. We have a particular interest in spider dispersal and the implications for maintenance of variation within species. Our work also includes the production of synthetic biomaterials that are inspired by genomic characterisation of natural proteins such as spider silk, in order to produce sustainable alternatives for use in medical and engineering applications.

Public engagement remains a central part of our research efforts, for example through championing sequencing of the *Dolomedes plantarius* genome by the Wellcome-Sanger centre through engagement with the public and winning their vote, and working together with local schools to interest pupils in understanding more about spiders.

**Current ESA role**

I been a council member of the European Society for Arachnology since 2014. I previously co-authored the newsletter that typically follows the annual congress and I organised and hosted the congress here at Nottingham, together with my group, in the summer of 2017. I currently act as vice-President.