

**Speaker:**

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Date: Monday, Jan. 24, 2022

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Zoom: 948 0131 1028

Passcode: 347039

Title:

"Feather mites (Acariformes: Analgoidea, Pterolichoidea): their intimate relationships with hosts and each other"

Abstract:

Birds are habitats for a great diversity of symbionts, including thousands of species of permanently ectosymbiotic feather mites. Depending on the species, feather mites inhabit downy parts of the plumage, flat vanes of flight feathers, the interior of quills or the skin of the host bird. Skin- and quill-dwelling mites may cause damage to host integument but inhabitants of exterior surfaces of feathers do not appear to negatively affect birds; in fact, gut contents and correlations with host condition suggest that they have commensal or mutualistic relationships with their hosts. As well as interacting with their avian habitats, feather mites interact with the other occupants of the "pterosphere". These relationships include predation, competition and mating. In this talk I will provide an overview of the diversity and ecology of feather mites with particular focus on diet and reproductive biology.