

Karla Pelz Serrano

I am a conservation biologist working as a professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences at the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana in Lerma, Mexico. I obtained a B.S. in Biology from the Universidad Autonoma de Queretaro, Mexico, and then I pursued a PhD in Natural Resources and Wildlife Management from the University of Arizona to be able to work in conservation and restoration of biodiversity. This, because during the development of my professional education, I have become conscious of the problems that wildlife and natural resources have been challenged with since the last decade.

During the last ten years, I have been working in wildlife and habitat conservation projects in northwestern Mexico and southwestern U.S., I have seen first hand the degradation of ecosystems to the point which they can no longer sustain native species. This is the reason why I am interested in the conservation and restoration of species and their habitat, and in the identification of important areas for the conservation of biodiversity. I have worked in projects for the conservation of the American beaver, black tailed prairie dogs, black-footed ferrets, black bear, and raptors. Some of the research I have conducted focused on ecological aspects of species such as the black-tailed prairie dog, the American beaver and the coyote. However, I also have conducted research regarding the genetics of key populations of the American beaver, the tiger rattlesnake and the borrowing owl.

Besides my interest on research, I am also very interested in the development of new scientists. This is why since I was pursuing my PhD, I taught different courses in which I was able to transmit the importance of studying and conserving biodiversity. Teaching courses at the undergraduate and graduate level gave me the opportunity to show students how to generate research projects, how to carry them out and how to communicate their findings. Currently, as a professor at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Lerma, I have the opportunity to aid in the formation of young conservation biologists with a holistic view of the problems that biodiversity faces today. I am interested in conducting research on focal species in Mexico that required immediate conservation actions such as the axolotl, the volcano rabbit, flying squirrels, among others.