

Vishal Subramanyan

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EDUCATION

University of California, Berkeley

B.S., Ecosystem Management and Forestry

B.A., Statistics

Berkeley, CA

December 2024

Honors thesis: Exploring the relationship between urbanization and temporal behavior of mountain lions in the Bay Area

Advisor: Dr. Christopher Schell

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

California Wolf Project

Contract Photographer & Storyteller

Berkeley, CA

Jan 2025 - Present

- Working with the communications director on visual storytelling and social media content
- Partnership between UC Berkeley College of Natural Resources and California Department of Fish & Wildlife, with additional support from National Geographic Society

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen)

Contract Photographer & Storyteller

Los Altos, CA

Nov. 2024 – Present

- Midpen is a government open space agency that helps plants, animals and people thrive throughout the greater Santa Cruz Mountains region
- Working with Midpen's Natural Resources & Public Affairs Team
- Yearlong contract to document wildlife like bats, badgers, bobcats, and coyotes on Midpen's regional preserves

California Academy of Sciences

Content Creator

San Francisco, CA

April 2024 - Present

- Selected as one of the 5 members in the first-ever California Creators for Nature Cohort
- Year-long program to bring communities in California closer to nature through online storytelling and in-person events
- Photographed the Mount Lyell shrew, California's only remaining unphotographed mammal species, receiving global media coverage from CNN, NPR, NBC, CBS, the Guardian, and more.

Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)

Contract Photographer & Storyteller

Palo Alto, CA

March 2024 - Present

- POST is one of the most successful land trusts in the country, protecting open space on the San Francisco Peninsula and South Bay for the benefit of all
- Using DSLR and mirrorless camera traps to document wildlife on POST land
- Creating multimedia content, including behind the scenes videos and blog posts, to highlight the importance of habitat connectivity

University of California, Berkeley*Photographer & Storyteller*

Point Reyes National Seashore, CA

Jan 2024 – Aug 2024

- Using DSLR and mirrorless camera traps to capture the first ever high-quality footage of the Point Reyes subspecies of mountain beaver
- Project funded through a National Park Service Grant
- Created a short film on this rare subspecies and its role in the ecosystem

Yosemite Conservancy*Photographer & Storyteller*

Yosemite National Park, CA

May 2023 – July 2023

- Worked with Yosemite National Park to document conservation work of endangered great gray owl subspecies
- Project funded through grant from Yosemite Conservancy to NPS

University of California, Berkeley*Course Reader*

Berkeley, CA

June 2023 – Dec 2023

- Teaching assistant for the General Biology and California natural history course in UC Berkeley
- Worked to create engaging content for students through science articles, iNaturalist, Wikipedia, and more

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Rausser College of Natural Resources, UC Berkeley*Thesis Researcher*

Berkeley, CA

Jan 2024 - present

- For my honors thesis, I researched the impacts of urbanization on mountain lions under Dr. Christopher Schell and Ph.D. student Cesar Estien

Rausser College of Natural Resources, UC Berkeley*Research Apprentice*

Berkeley, CA

Jan 2023 – May 2023

- Undergraduate researcher in the Schell Lab, using camera traps and behavioral scoring to research impacts of urbanization on wildlife

Rausser College of Natural Resources, UC Berkeley*Research Apprentice*

Berkeley, CA

Aug 2022 – Dec 2022

- Undergraduate Researcher in the Brashares Lab, studying how cannabis production impacts wildlife

Essig Museum of Entomology, UC Berkeley*Research Apprentice*

Berkeley, CA

Jan 2022 – May 2022

- Photographed bees with Macropod camera system for digitization effort of bee specimens

Hopland Research & Extension Center, UC Berkeley
Research Apprentice

Hopland, CA
June 2019 – Aug 2019

- Field research intern at Hopland Research & Extension Center while I was in high school

VOLUNTEERING

Raptors are the Solution
Advocacy

Berkeley, CA
Nov 2018 - present

- Table at events, participated in legal campaigns to ban rodenticides in CA, managed social media

UC Berkeley Natural Reserve System Committee
Undergraduate Student Representative

Berkeley, CA
Jan 2024 - present

- Selected as the undergraduate student representative for the Berkeley Natural Reserves System Advisory Committee, where I represent the undergraduate student body at committee meetings discuss and vote on key issues surrounding the UC Berkeley natural reserves

MEDIA COVERAGE

3 Undergraduate Students Have Taken the First Photograph of the Mount Lyell Shrew, <i>NPR All Things Considered</i> , (link)	2025
Elusive Californian Mammal Captured on Camera for the First Time Ever, <i>CNN</i> (link)	2025
Live Interview: Mount Lyell Shrew Photographed Alive for the first time, <i>KTVU Channel 2</i> (link)	2025
See the First-Ever Photographs of the Mount Lyell Shrew, Finally Caught on Camera in California, <i>Smithsonian Magazine</i> , (link)	
Here's Looking at Shrew: How College Students got first ever photos of Elusive California Mammal, <i>Los Angeles Times</i> , (link)	
California Students Capture Palm-Sized Underground Mammal Alive on Camera for the first time, <i>CBS News</i> , (link)	2025
The Framing of the Shrew: California Students Photograph Mammal Never Caught on Film, <i>The Guardian</i> (link)	2025
An Elusive California Mammal has just been Photographed Alive for the first time, <i>SFGATE</i> (link)	2025
Rare Moment Captured: First-Ever Photo of Mount Lyell Shrew in the Wild, <i>NBC</i> , (link)	2025
An Elusive Mammal Never Caught on Film has Finally been Photographed, <i>KKTV</i> , (link)	2025
California's Most Elusive Mammal Caught on Camera for the first time, <i>SF Standard</i> (link)	2025
Rare Mount Lyell Shrew Photographed for the first time by College Students in Calif, <i>New York Post</i> , (link)	2025
Rare Animal in California Photographed for the first time ever, <i>PetaPixel</i> , (link)	2025
Much Ado About Shrew, <i>Defector</i> , (link)	2025
California's Most Elusive Mammal Photographed for the First Time, <i>UC Berkeley</i> , (link)	2025
An Elusive California Mammal has just been Photographed Alive for the first time, <i>SFGATE</i> (link)	2025
California's Most Elusive Mammal Caught on Camera for the first time, <i>SF Standard</i> (link)	2025
Rare Mount Lyell Shrew Photographed for the first time by College Students in Calif, <i>New York Post</i> , (link)	2025

What's Behind the Ghostly Appearance of this Rare Badger? <i>National Geographic</i> (link)	2024
Photography Chronicles: Documenting the South Bay's Most Elusive Wildlife, <i>POST</i> (link).	2024
Encounters with a Ginger Badger in Point Reyes, <i>Bay Nature</i> (link)	2024
How a Pair of Bobcats Fueled one Student's Passion for Wildlife Photography, <i>UC Berkeley News</i> (link)	2024
Keeping Wildlife in Focus, <i>Breakthroughs Magazine</i> (link).	2023
How a Young Wildlife Photographer Gets the Goods, <i>Bay Nature</i> (link).	2022
Bobcat in Livermore Sick From Mange, <i>Raptors are the Solution</i> (link).	2021
Teen Photographer Wows with Images of Elusive Bobcats in the Bay Area, <i>Bay Area News Group</i> , (link)	2018

HONORS & AWARDS

Highly commended, Urban Wildlife Category, Wildlife Photographer of the Year	2023
Winner, Stories of Survival Youth Photo Contest	2021
Winner, Share the Experience Monthly Photo Contest	2021
Honorable Mention, Tamron National Park Photo Contest	2021
Winner, California Watchable Wildlife Sierra Nevada Contest	2021
Silver Award, SINWP Bird Photographer of the Year	2021
Winner, calendar photo contest by Save the Bay	2021
Top 100, Audubon Photography Contest	2018
Winner, Nature's Best Backyards Photo Contest	2018
Winner, California Watchable Wildlife Jan- Feb Monthly Period	2018
Second Place, Nature's Best Yellowstone Forever Photo Contest Youth Category	2017
Best Wildlife Shots, Ranger Rick Photo Contest	2016

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

California Wolf Foundation Grant (first recipient) (\$4,800), <i>California Wolf Foundation</i>	2024
California Creators for Nature (\$20,000), <i>California Academy of Sciences</i>	2024
Rising Explorers Grant (\$2,100), <i>The Explorer's Club</i>	2024
Mary Bowerman Science & Research Grant (\$2,490), <i>Save Mount Diablo</i>	2024
SPUR Student Research Grant (\$1,100), <i>Rausser College of Natural Resources</i>	2023

SOCIAL MEDIA & ONLINE PRESENCE

[Instagram](#) (58k followers)
[Tiktok](#) (38.8k followers)
[Facebook](#) (4.4k followers)

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, & OUTREACH

Presented to the Chancellors of UC Berkeley and Santa Cruz, <i>Blue Oak Ranch Reserve</i>	2024
Mary Bowerman Science & Research Colloquium, <i>Save Mount Diablo</i>	2024
Science Communication Workshop, <i>UC Berkeley</i>	2024

Wildlife Photography Presentation, <i>Sierra Club Placerville</i>	2024
Ask the Naturalist: Wildlife Photography with Vishal Subramanyan, <i>Bay Nature</i> (link)	2024
Wild California: Insights from Three Remarkable Animals, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i> (link)	2024
Wildlife Photography Presentation, <i>Mount Diablo Bird Alliance</i>	2024
Unusual Perspectives: Wildlife Photography Presentation, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i>	2024
Photo Exhibition and Reception, <i>Rausser College of Natural Resources</i> , (link)	2024
Bioblitz Trip Leader, <i>Presidio Trust & California Academy of Sciences</i>	2024
From Mountain Beavers to Mountain Lions: Camera Trapping California's Hidden Wildlife, <i>California State Parks</i>	2024
Summer Systematics Institute Presentation, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i>	2024
California Wildlife Photography Presentation, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i>	2024
Party After Dark: Inspiring Change and Activism, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i> (link)	2024
Impacts of Rodenticides on Wildlife, <i>Sequoia Audubon Society</i>	2024
5 Photos with Vishal Subramanyan from Concept to Capture, <i>Bay Nature</i> (link)	2023
Impacts of Rodenticides on Wildlife, <i>Berkeley Bird Festival</i>	2023
Wildlife Photography Presentation at UC NRS Day, <i>UC Office of the President</i>	2023
Impacts of Rodenticides on Wildlife, <i>Environment & Open Space Committee at Woodside</i>	2023
Summer Systematics Institute Presentation, <i>California Academy of Sciences</i>	2023
Impacts of Rodenticides on Wildlife, <i>Berkeley Bird Festival</i>	2022
Wildlife Photography Presentation for Earth Day, <i>City of Fremont</i>	2019
Wildlife Photography Presentation for Earth Day, <i>City of Fremont</i>	2018
Bobcat Presentation & Photo Walk, <i>Livermore Area Recreation & Park District</i>	2018

TRAINING/SKILLS

Wildlife Photography:

8 years of experience with various wildlife photography techniques including telephoto lens photography, macro photography, and DSLR camera trapping. Have extensive experience with Nikon DSLR and Mirrorless cameras, Nikon lenses, and Cognisys and Camtraptions camera trapping systems.

Storytelling & Scientific Communication:

Six years of experience in storytelling, 2 years of experience scientific writing, and 6 years of experience in content creation tailored to conservation and wildlife research. Adept at producing high-quality visual and written content for conservation organizations. Experienced with photography and videography with a strong emphasis on ecological education and outreach.

Research and Analysis:

Experienced in handling and analyzing large datasets for ecological research. Proficient in statistical techniques, such as hypothesis testing for assessing wildlife patterns. Skilled in using statistical software and methods for temporal and spatial analysis.

Wildlife Field Techniques:

5 years of experience in wildlife camera setup and maintenance, live trapping, and telemetry for tracking wildlife. Skilled in GPS navigation, scouting, and placement for optimal wildlife camera trapping in both urban and remote backcountry environments. Experienced in recognizing and documenting wildlife behavior through direct observation and camera footage.

Software:

Proficient in RStudio, QGIS, ArcGIS Pro, Adobe Illustrator, Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Jupyter Notebook, and spatial analysis tools. Experienced with wildlife photography editing tools like Adobe Photoshop, Lightroom, Topaz, and DXO Raw.