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Melissa Pilgrim is Director of Research and an Associate Professor of Biology at the University of South Carolina Upstate. She obtained a B.S. in Biology from Stetson University, a M.S. in Biology from Southeastern Louisiana University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Arkansas. Melissa completed her post-doctoral work at the University of Georgia's Savannah River Ecology Laboratory prior to accepting her current position with USC Upstate.



Her primary research focus involves an integrative approach to investigating how ecosystems respond to environmental change (natural and anthropogenic). She is interested in large scale questions regarding anthropogenic influences on nutrient cycling and understanding how individual animal responses to environmental variation impact population level processes. Thus, her research program integrates field ecology, biogeochemistry (e.g., stable isotopes), and ecophysiology. Melissa uses herpetological systems as her animal models and currently has an army of students working with her in an undergraduate research group called Upstate Herpetology.