

# GRADUATE EXIT SEMINAR

NICOLE HENGST

## Movements and Habitat Relationships of Virginia Rails and Soras within Impounded Coastal Wetlands of Northwest Ohio



Most of the coastal wetlands within the western Lake Erie basin have been drained and lost to agriculture and development since the 1850s. Today the majority of remaining wetlands are impounded and managed to produce food and cover for waterfowl. While managed wetlands are an important source of rail habitat in Ohio, little is known about movements of rails in these wetlands, particularly how water level manipulation affects movements and habitat use of migrating and breeding rails. I studied Virginia rails (*Rallus limicola*) and soras (*Porzana carolina*), two wetland dependent rail species that migrate through and breed in northern Ohio and are listed as species of concern in the state. The main goals of my study were to 1) determine

seasonal, local, and regional movements of Virginia rails and soras and 2) provide empirical data on microhabitat selection about which there is only sparse information. Results from this study will provide a better understanding of rail movements in wetlands with water level manipulation and aid in more informed wetland management for rail species in northern Ohio.

Advisor: Dr. Robert Gates

**FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021**  
**1:00 P.M.**

Join the seminar via Zoom:

<https://osu.zoom.us/j/92294475615?pwd=U28rbDRzMGTsaHBmK2pnc24rd3Vtdz09>

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