

Hi. I'm Javier Mercado, I'm a research entomologist
in Rocky Mountain Research Station in Fort Collins.

From a very early age I was interested in nature.

I grew up in an island surrounded by the great outdoors, there was the ocean.

But also an island in the Caribbean, which has multiple sub-ecosystems in a small area
of land

from subterranean cave system, coral reef, subtropical rainforest, subtropical dry forest
and I was drawn to those environments.

Several people have inspired me throughout my career.

I saw this professor talking about his adventures with his dad
and how they described this fantastic new species of dragonfly.

And the dragonfly comes to the window and he just goes like this,

but he's focusing on the audience and grabbed the dragonfly by his hand and I was,
"Wow!

What is this guy?"

And that really got me back in the roots of where I started.

So in the University of Puerto Rico, I changed paths quickly from civil engineering to
biology.

And from there I took a position assistant ornithologist, they are the people
that study birds, in the only national subtropical rainforest
that the national forest system manages in Puerto Rico.

There I work with snakes and I work with birds for 11 years and in that time I met a lot
of people and I was invited once to host a research entomologist
from the Rocky Mountain Research Station.

And this came because of my -- they knew my interest about insects.

So I took the opportunity and the person that I met was Jose Negrón.

Jose Negrón also inspired me to pursue graduate school in the topic of entomology.