Dr. Jessica Orlofske
Inaugural Class of the Rundblad Research Fellows

Last summer, Dr. Jessica Orlofske, an assistant professor of biology at UW-Parkside, was one of three members of the inaugural class of the John J. Brander and Christine E. Rundblad Research Fellows at the Milwaukee Public Museum. The fellowship provides funds for summer research activities and also involves a service component to the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Dr. Orlofske’s research focused on determining the species composition of emerging riverine dragonfly assemblages in relation to habitat characteristics from sites in northern Wisconsin. Aquatic systems are some of the most stressed and threatened environments on earth and demonstrate a need for research and management. Research has shown that aquatic insects are sensitive to environmental disturbances and they can provide evidence of ecosystem health. Wisconsin is host to a number of species of dragonflies, including several threatened and endangered state and federally listed species.

The Rundblad Research fellowship program seeks to stimulate fundamental research by scientists doing research on Wisconsin biodiversity or environmental issues, especially those that utilize and strengthen the natural science collections at the Milwaukee Public Museum.

A Cobra Clubtail Dragonfly (Gomphurus vastus), one of the target species for this research.

L to R: Dr. Jessica Orlofske, Emily-Lou LaMartina, Danielle Tesar, Taylor Tesar, and Audrey Simard on the Black River in Black River Falls, WI.