I am a comparative physiologist who explores unique adaptations in birds.

Karen L. Sweazea, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona

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One of my research questions:
Why do birds have high blood sugar?

Technology I use:
I use birds in my research because they naturally have very high blood sugar and no evidence of diabetes. Understanding why birds have such high blood sugar and how they protect their tissues helps us learn more about diabetes in humans.

My most exciting discovery:
Birds have evolved ways to shield their proteins from interactions with their naturally high blood sugar.

I knew I wanted to be a scientist when...
I was originally a dance major in college. I was inspired to switch my major to Physiological Sciences after taking an Anatomy and Physiology class from a Forensics Anthropologist professor. Her stories were amazing!