1	Synthesizing multiple data types for biological conservation using integrated population models
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## 22 Abstract

Assessing the impacts of ongoing climate and anthropogenic-induced change on wildlife 23 populations requires understanding species distributions and abundances across large spatial and 24 temporal scales. For threatened or declining populations, collecting sufficient broad-scale data is 25 challenging as sample sizes tend to be low because many such species are rare and/or elusive. As 26 a result, demographic data are often piecemeal, leading to difficulties in determining causes of 27 28 population changes and developing strategies to mitigate the effects of environmental stressors. 29 Thus, the population dynamics of threatened species across spatio-temporal extents is typically inferred through incomplete, independent, local-scale studies. Emerging integrative modeling 30 31 approaches, such as integrated population models (IPMs), combine multiple data types into a single analysis and provide a foundation for overcoming problems of sparse or fragmentary data. 32 In this paper, we demonstrate how IPMs can be successfully implemented by synthesizing the 33 34 elements, advantages, and novel insights of this modeling approach. We highlight the latest developments in IPMs that are explicitly relevant to the ecology and conservation of threatened 35 36 species, including capabilities to quantify the spatial scale of management, source-sink dynamics, synchrony within metapopulations, and population density effects on demographic 37 rates. Adoption of IPMs has led to improved detection of population declines, adaptation of 38 targeted monitoring schemes, and refined management strategies. Continued methodological 39 40 advancements of IPMs, such as incorporation of a wider set of data types (e.g., citizen science data) and coupled population-environmental models, will allow for broader applicability within 41 42 ecological and conservation sciences.

## 43 1. Introduction: species in peril and data collection challenges

Biodiversity loss is one of the most pressing environmental problems, impacting ecosystem 44 functions, community dynamics, and human and wildlife health (Cardinale et al. 2012; Lefcheck 45 et al. 2015). Understanding the impacts of anthropogenic change on wildlife populations 46 necessitates research at large spatial and temporal scales (e.g., Alroy 2015). Together with 47 traditional local-scale research, regional to range-wide data are fundamental for effective 48 49 conservation (Keith et al. 2012; Edgar et al. 2016), particularly because many relationships 50 between environmental variables and ecological patterns are only evident when broad-scale data are considered (e.g., Mora et al. 2011; Pardikes et al. 2015). However, in an era when 51 52 macroscale conservation needs are not met due to limited research funding, it is not often 53 possible to obtain the necessary population-level and demographic data from a single collection 54 effort (Loss et al. 2015).

55 Even for threatened species that have restricted ranges, collecting data and estimating the ecological reasons for declines are challenging because such species tend to be rare and/or 56 elusive, which makes obtaining sufficient data for standard population models difficult (Lomba 57 et al. 2010; Harris et al. 2015). Data on demographic parameters (i.e., survival, recruitment, and 58 immigration) are necessary to develop mechanistic models, which allow for a process-oriented 59 approach to evaluating population trends and determining causes of declines (Véran & Lebreton 60 61 2008). Yet, demographic data on small or declining populations are often scarce because collection is intermittent and typically necessitates long study periods, sample sizes are low, and 62 researchers may hesitate to catch and mark individuals if doing so may cause harm (Lomba et al. 63 64 2010; Platts et al. 2014). These conditions result in limited longitudinal data to model population viability, extrapolate inference at large scales, and detect significant changes in population trends 65

66	within time frames for appropriate management actions (Taylor et al. 2007; Mosnier et al. 2015).
67	As a result, understanding the population dynamics of threatened species, and indeed most
68	species, is typically either inferred through independent local-scale studies (Thogmartin et al.
69	2007; Rushing et al. 2016) or achieved through large-scale niche modeling of distribution data
70	that is correlative with limited power to elucidate underlying mechanisms (Kearney & Porter
71	2009; Buschke et al. 2015). Emerging integrative modeling approaches that combine multiple
72	data sources across spatio-temporal scales into a single analysis provide a foundation for
73	overcoming these problems and allow research to scale from local biological processes to
74	regional-level patterns, where management occurs (Pacifici et al. 2017).
75	In this paper, we review integrated population models (IPMs), an approach to combine
76	multiple data types in a unified analysis to study the dynamics of animal populations. We
77	compiled and collated peer-reviewed articles, textbook chapters, and government technical
78	reports on IPMs that were relevant to biological conservation. Our paper builds on reviews by
79	Schaub and Abadi (2011) and Maunder and Punt (2013), both of which focus on taxa-specific
80	IPMs. Literature was searched through Google Scholar and ISI Web of Knowledge, using terms
81	such as: 'integrated population model' and 'integrative model', coupled with 'biological
82	conservation' and 'population management'. We also checked the bibliographies of relevant
83	papers to identify further pertinent literature. We outline the key components of IPMs, synthesize
84	the advantages of this approach for improved biological conservation and ecological inference,
85	and highlight the latest theoretical and technical developments in IPMs that are explicitly
86	relevant to the ecology and management of threatened species. We conclude with a perspective
87	on several potential avenues of IPM advancement related to the fields of ecology and
88	conservation science.

## 89 2. The power of integrated population models

Integrative modeling generally refers to the incorporation of multiple (1) data types on a single 90 target population, (2) analytical models or methods, or (3) predictions from multiple theories into 91 a model, thus 'integrating' several pieces of information into a single modeling framework. The 92 combined analysis of all available information allows for an understanding of processes 93 underlying ecological and demographic responses to environmental variability (Brown & 94 95 Collopy 2013; Grace et al. 2016; Fletcher et al. 2016). Conclusions that are inferred from 96 independent analyses can be hindered by an inability to accurately account for error in parameter estimates (Schaub & Abadi 2011), spatio-temporal correlations in covariate effects (Lieury et al. 97 98 2015), and possible biases in trend estimates (Tempel & Gutiérrez 2014). Integrative modeling 99 has the potential to resolve these issues by incorporating all available data into a single analysis and thus properly accounting for spatio-temporal variation and uncertainty in parameter 100 101 estimates (Dorazio 2014; Grace et al. 2016).

Integrated population models (IPMs) are a well-developed subset of integrative models in 102 which the analysis of the joint likelihood of two or more datasets allows for simultaneous 103 104 estimation of population abundance and the processes leading to population change. IPMs provide an approach for addressing issues of sparse or fragmentary population data by 105 incorporating multiple data types (e.g., census, productivity, telemetry) into a single, dynamic 106 model of the target population (Fig. 1; Schaub & Abadi 2011). IPMs typically include the unified 107 analysis of data on population abundance, trajectory, or structure (e.g., census, count, and/or 108 109 occupancy data) and demographic parameters (e.g., productivity data, capture-recapture data, dead recovery data; Besbeas et al. 2002; Abadi et al. 2010a; Schaub & Abadi 2011). The use of 110 IPMs in animal ecology began in the early 2000s (Besbeas et al. 2002; Besbeas et al. 2003; 111

112	Brooks et al. 2004; reviewed in Schaub & Abadi 2011), although variations of these models
113	were used in fisheries research and management as early as the 1980s (Fournier & Archibald
114	1982; reviewed in Maunder & Punt 2013). Fisheries IPMs have generally focused on stock
115	assessment to determine harvest quotas and are not examined here (except as they may pertain to
116	the conservation of a particular species). However, early work on integrated fisheries modeling
117	greatly advanced previous population assessment approaches, which relied on independent data
118	summaries of disparate stock data (Maunder & Punt 2013). These primary methodological
119	advances paved the way for subsequent inclusion of increasingly diverse data types and
120	development for additional taxa (Catchpole et al. 1998; Gauthier & Lebreton 2004).
121	A key feature of IPMs is the ability to model a population's underlying dynamics
122	including important life history elements by explicitly accounting for the processes that lead to
123	population changes over time (e.g., birth/death and immigration/emigration; Besbeas et al. 2002;
124	Brooks et al. 2004; Schaub et al. 2007). The objective of IPMs is to incorporate as much
125	mechanism as possible to estimate a population's trajectory and assess the primary factors
126	causing changes in abundance and demographic rates (Schaub & Abadi 2011). By incorporating
127	all available data on a population, IPMs overcome limitations of traditional independent analyses
128	(Véran & Lebreton 2008; Tempel et al. 2014; Hostetler et al. 2015) and allow for (1) the
129	simultaneous estimation of demographic parameters and population trajectories, while
130	standardizing the error structure across different data types and accounting for multiple sources
131	of uncertainty (Besbeas et al. 2002; Schaub & Abadi 2011); and (2) the direct linking of
132	variation in population abundance to changes in stage-specific vital rates and covariate effects
133	(Johnson et al. 2010; Mosnier et al. 2015).

The hierarchical structure of IPMs separates the underlying (and unobservable) 134 ecological mechanisms from the observation process, allowing for disentanglement of process 135 variation from sampling variation (Gould & Nichols 1998, Besbeas et al. 2002). This is typically 136 done in IPMs through a state-space formulation, which assumes that abundance may be over- or 137 under-counted (de Valpine & Hastings 2002; Schaub & Abadi 2011). The importance of 138 accounting for potential biases due to imperfect detection during sampling has been 139 140 demonstrated repeatedly in studies estimating the population dynamics and trends of species 141 (e.g., Royle et al. 2005; MacKenzie et al. 2009, Nichols et al. 2009). Failure to accurately account for the sampling process can lead to misleading or even erroneous inferences on 142 143 population status (Ruiz-Gutiérrez & Zipkin 2011; Guillera-Arroita et al. 2014). It is especially important to consider the sampling methodology for situations in which detection varies spatially 144 145 or through time, as well as in cases where it is important to know the absolute size of a 146 population, such as in conservation applications (e.g., population viability analysis). Unfortunately, many data collection protocols do not allow for explicit estimation of detection 147 probabilities (e.g., non-replicated point counts, species checklist programs). IPMs provide an 148 approach for incorporating such data types even if it is not possible to estimate detection at every 149 site or with every data collection technique, leading to unbiased inference of both demographic 150 rates and population trends. 151

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# 153 **3.** Components of integrated population models

IPMs are built according to three general steps (Fig. 2; Brooks *et al.* 2004; Schaub *et al.* 2007;
Schaub & Abadi 2011). First, one develops a population model linking abundance and
demographic rates that captures the important life history features of the target species. This is

157 typically a stage- or age-structured matrix projection model (i.e., Lefkovitch matrix or Leslie matrix, respectively) where the population size of each stage/age class is assumed to be a 158 function of the population size in the previous year and the demographic rates (Caswell 2001). 159 The population model describes the relevant recruitment, survival, and immigration processes 160 that reflect dynamics and can include density-dependence and stochasticity in stage transitions. 161 Demographic stochasticity, which tends to be important in small populations, is modeled by 162 163 assuming that changes in abundance occur probabilistically rather than through deterministic 164 equations (e.g., using the binomial distribution to estimate the number of individuals that survive between time steps; Melbourne & Hastings 2008). Environmental covariates (Rhodes et al. 165 166 2011) and/or random effects (Fieberg et al. 2010; Tempel & Guitiérrez 2014) can be added using standard approaches and link functions. The complexity of the population model depends on the 167 questions of interest, the intricacies of the organism's life cycle, as well as the quality and 168 169 quantity of available data.

Next, the likelihoods of each dataset are formulated to estimate the parameters (e.g., 170 survival, fecundity, and population size) defined in the population model. The likelihood 171 functions, which are specified independently for every data type, describe the probability of an 172 observed outcome (i.e., the data) conditional on particular parameter values. For example, 173 capture-recapture data can be analyzed using Cormack-Jolly-Seber models, which generally 174 utilize a multinomial likelihood to estimate survival and capture probabilities (Lebreton et al. 175 1992; Kéry & Schaub 2012; Schaub et al. 2015). A state-space likelihood, one in which the true 176 demographic process is modeled separately from the observation process, is often used for time-177 178 series data types (e.g., count data) and can be specified using random sampling noise (de Valpine & Hastings 2000) or through known sampling processes (e.g., imperfect detection; Péron et al. 179

2012). It is essential that the component likelihoods for the different data types have at least
some parameters in common (Fig. 1); this is the mechanism by which information is shared
across datasets in an IPM.

Finally, the joint likelihood of all datasets combined is specified, typically by multiplying 183 the individual component likelihoods defined in the second step. Thus, in addition to the 184 assumptions of each of the component likelihoods, an implicit assumption of IPMs is 185 186 independence among likelihoods and datasets (Mosnier et al. 2015; Weegman et al. 2016). In the 187 strictest sense, this implies that animals seen in one data type are not observed in other datasets, although this rarely occurs in practice (Schaub & Abadi 2011). It is important to evaluate the 188 189 potential effects on parameter estimates if the independence assumption is violated. Lack of independence among datasets can lead to overconfidence in parameter estimates in the form of 190 inflated precision. Abadi et al. (2010a) simulated data with varying levels of independence and 191 192 found that a lack of independence had minimal impacts on parameter accuracy in an IPM using census, capture-recapture, and productivity data. Yet, this result may not hold true for every data 193 type combination and IPM structure. Recent IPM development has focused on approaches that 194 do not require independent datasets (Chandler & Clark 2014, Lee et al. 2015) and this remains an 195 area of active research. 196

Once the joint likelihood is specified, the IPM is analyzed to estimate parameter values.
The hierarchical structure of IPMs naturally lends them to Bayesian analysis (Lee *et al.* 2015),
although the joint likelihood can be analyzed using either frequentist (e.g., maximum likelihood)
or Bayesian frameworks (Schaub & Abadi 2011). Bayesian analysis has become a common
method for describing uncertainty in fisheries and wildlife management (Walsh *et al.* 2015) and
facilitates the inclusion of additional information in the form of prior distributions. Prior

distributions can be developed from previous studies on different populations or similar species,
as well as meta-analyses or expert opinion (Gelman *et al.* 2014; McCaffery & Lukacs 2016).
Using an IPM in a Bayesian framework allows for the most efficient use of the available data
and the best possible description of uncertainty, and is the most rigorous method for
incorporating parameter and demographic uncertainty in forward projections (Hoyle & Maunder
2004; Lee *et al.* 2015).

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# **4. Integrated population models as a tool for conservation**

To successfully manage populations for conservation purposes, it is necessary to track changes in 211 212 demographic parameters, identify vital rates having the greatest influence on population growth, 213 as well as determine the factors driving spatial and temporal variation in those key rates and whether or not those relationships are stationary (Nichols et al. 2011, Shoemaker & Akçakaya 214 215 2015). IPMs are especially valuable in the study of declining or small populations because gains in accuracy and parameter precision are most apparent in complex models with large numbers of 216 217 parameters, as is often the case for conservation-focused projects encompassing multiple interacting threatening processes (Rhodes et al. 2011). Increased precision is especially 218 219 important in cases where the objective is to evaluate temporal patterns in parameter estimates and/or detect significant population trends, including subtle declines (Abadi et al. 2010a). As 220 221 such, IPMs are well-suited for wildlife conservation research, providing a powerful tool for holistic analyses on threatened populations, as exemplified by a number of recent applications 222 223 (Supplementary material: Table A1). Below we discuss a number of conceptual and practical 224 advances made possible through the development of IPMs.

#### *4.1. The spatial scale of conservation management*

227 By utilizing all available data that contain both direct and indirect information about demographic rates, the IPM framework allows for estimation of parameters that would otherwise 228 229 be difficult or impossible to evaluate if data were analyzed separately (Abadi et al. 2012; Lee et al. 2015; Wilson et al. 2016). In particular, IPMs can provide information on the sources of 230 population-level gains (i.e., immigration versus recruitment) without explicit movement data 231 232 (Altwegg et al. 2014; Lieury et al. 2015). Quantifying the relative contributions of immigration 233 versus reproduction to population growth facilitates identification of the relevant spatial scale for effective conservation and appropriate action (Baillie et al. 2000). If local-level reproduction has 234 235 strong effects on population dynamics, the spatial scale of dynamics and required conservation actions will also be local. Conversely, if population dynamics are more strongly influenced by 236 237 immigration, the scale of management depends on the extent to which local populations interact 238 and the rate at which individuals migrate, typically necessitating conservation planning at a much broader spatial scale than that of the target population. 239

240 Immigration is one of the most difficult demographic parameters to measure empirically because of challenges tracking individuals (Duarte et al. 2015; Szostek et al. 2014). Failure to 241 incorporate immigration in population models may conceal processes inherent in the target 242 population and potentially lead to erroneous conclusions about the effectiveness of management 243 (Brown & Collopy 2012; Altwegg et al. 2014). Estimation of immigration becomes possible 244 when count data are combined with productivity and capture-recapture data, as in the IPM 245 246 framework (Robinson et al. 2014, Schaub & Fletcher 2015). Count data intrinsically contain 247 information about all demographic processes in a population, allowing for extraction of additional information on immigration rates when modeled with independent data sources 248

249 (Abadi et al. 2010b). However, estimates of immigration can also reflect any systematic biases in other vital rates and should be interpreted with caution when explicit data on movement are 250 unavailable. Parametrizing an IPM such that the number of immigrants is a random number 251 252 (centered on an expected mean value) rather than as a rate (dependent on population size, which can lead to unrealistically high estimates) may help with estimating immigration, particularly in 253 small populations (Schaub & Fletcher 2015). Assessing the amount of immigration into a 254 255 population can help identify whether a local population is a sink and how it might be managed 256 effectively. For example, Schaub et al. (2010) found that a population survey of eagle owls (Bubo bubo) indicated that abundance was stable. However, using an IPM that combined the 257 258 survey data with data from radio-tracking, age-at-death, and productivity, the authors found that the population was actually a sink, highly dependent on immigration for stability. Additional 259 260 studies have demonstrated a similar contribution of immigration to population stability and 261 temporal variation in population growth (Schaub et al. 2010; Brown & Collopy 2013; Schaub et al. 2013; Altwegg et al. 2014; Tempel & Gutiérrez 2014), whereas other populations of 262 conservation concern are growing or maintaining stability without reliance on high immigration 263 rates (Demerdzhiev et al. 2015). 264

Extending IPMs to multi-state systems (e.g., multiple sites, disease states, breeding conditions) can provide a more precise and nuanced understanding of results by enabling inference on patterns of condition-dependent demographic rate parameters. In particular, multisite IPMs allow for estimation of dispersal at the landscape level, yet capture-recapture data need only be collected at a subset of sites within the species' range (McCrea *et al.* 2010; Péron *et al.* 2010). This advancement has important implications for determining the optimal spatial scale for conservation; understanding temporary emigration; and identifying locations with the highest 272 reproductive success and/or survival, information that can be used to prioritize locations for273 management interventions.

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275 4.2. Population synchrony within metapopulations

Population synchrony, or coincident changes in the size of local populations, is a common 276 ecological phenomenon exhibited by many taxa including insects, molluscs, birds, amphibians, 277 278 and mammals (reviewed by Liebhold et al. 2004). Synchronous dynamics over a species' range 279 can be critical in conservation as it increases the extinction risk of spatially structured populations (Harrison & Quinn 1989). However, little is known about the relative effects of 280 281 demographic rates on synchrony because of difficulties obtaining data, estimating rates independently for all populations, and making spatial comparisons (Jorgensen et al. 2016). An 282 283 IPM framework is particularly advantageous for analyzing data from geographically-distinct 284 populations because it is possible to handle differing sampling protocols and survey periods among sites (Schaub et al. 2015), enabling conservation management to scale from a single 285 population to an entire metapopulation or species. Using an IPM, relevant demographic rates 286 from all study areas within a metapopulation can be estimated concurrently by partitioning 287 sources of variation in population growth rates using covariates and random effects. In a 288 spatially-structured IPM of a barn swallow (Hirundo rustica) metapopulation, Schaub et al. 289 (2015) decomposed the variation in population growth and demographic rates into global and 290 local temporal components using random effects and examined population synchrony in 291 292 parameters using post-hoc correlations. It is also possible to assess synchrony by explicitly 293 estimating the variance and covariance structure in vital rates among local populations to make inferences on correlations directly within a model (Péron & Koons 2012). Determining both the 294

295 degree and causes (e.g., specific environmental and/or demographic drivers) of synchrony within metapopulations provides an opportunity to adjust management strategies accordingly. Recent 296 IPM developments have expanded these approaches to a multi-species context, facilitating 297 enhanced understanding of how changing community dynamics, and synchrony among species, 298 may impact a target species (Lahoz-Monfort et al. 2017). Methodological approaches for 299 quantifying synchronous patterns in population parameters fill a significant knowledge gap in 300 301 understanding how metapopulations react to long-term changes in the environment and can be 302 used to improve predictions of future environmental scenarios.

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# 304 *4.3. Density effects on population dynamics*

305 Accurate understanding of how populations are regulated often requires evaluation of the effect of density on different age or stage classes. Density dependence is an important ecological 306 307 concept and determining how it operates is crucial to evaluating how populations persist in complex ecological systems and to developing effective management plans (Stubbs 1997). 308 309 Despite numerous methods for studying density dependence in wild populations (reviewed in Lebreton & Gimenez 2013), many approaches do not assess the effect of density on multiple 310 demographic parameters simultaneously while accounting for errors incurred during the 311 sampling process. The state-space framework within IPMs can overcome this shortcoming 312 whereby the effects of density can be incorporated on individual parameters - not just on 313 population growth - while simultaneously accounting for uncertainty in the data due to 314 315 stochasticity and detection biases (Gamelon et al. 2016). The additional data included in the 316 model as a result of the IPM approach allow these parameters to become identifiable. Abadi et al. (2012) developed an IPM to assess of the effect of density dependence on demographic 317

parameters (and thus overall population growth rate) and revealed negative effects of density on
adult survival of red-backed shrikes (*Lanius collurio*). Model simulations demonstrated
improved precision in estimates of density-dependent relationships as compared to a regression
model, providing a framework for understanding the mechanisms by which populations are
regulated. This approach could be further extended to assess non-linear density dependence,
delayed density dependence, Allee effects, as well as density dependence at the population level
using a derived population growth rate parameter.

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# 326 *4.4. Data collection priorities*

327 The charismatic nature of many threatened species (e.g., birds of prey, top predatory taxa, iconic 328 migrants) leads to disproportionate attention and monitoring by different entities, including 329 professional researchers, public administrators, and volunteers (Tenan et al. 2012). In some 330 cases, spatially-extensive data, typically in the form of population counts (e.g., aerial surveys, regional censuses), are collected by conservation organizations or government programs (e.g., 331 332 North American Breeding Bird Survey) while independent researchers simultaneously collect more intensive (but spatially-limited) data types, such as capture-recapture and productivity data. 333 The involvement of multiple stakeholders with differing goals and protocols can lead to a 334 relative wealth of data, albeit with heterogeneous data types. For instance, regional-scale count 335 336 surveys (e.g., lek counts) are frequently the most extensive information available for sage-grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*, *C. urophasianus*), a threatened species in the western United States; 337 however, these data are minimally informative of vital rates and do not account for imperfect 338 339 detection during sampling (Walsh et al. 2004; Kelling et al. 2015). Recent data collection efforts on the sage-grouse have consequently focused on obtaining intensive, short-term demographic 340

341 data, allowing for development of an IPM to rigorously estimate population growth rates as well as survival and fecundity (Davis et al. 2014). IPMs compensate for diversity in data collection by 342 reducing biases inherent in a single dataset and providing more precise estimates of demographic 343 rates than can be obtained from separate analyses (Hoyle & Maunder 2004; Oppel et al. 2014; 344 Harris et al. 2015). Yet, the caliber of individual datasets ultimately determines the quality of 345 inference, and integrated modeling techniques cannot remove inherent biases within a dataset. As 346 347 with all analyses, careful consideration of sampling protocols, potential biases of data collection, 348 and *a priori* biological hypotheses are necessary for high quality inference within an IPM framework. 349

350 From a management perspective, the incorporation of multiple data types into a single analysis can reveal data collection priorities that would otherwise be unclear from separate 351 analyses. For example, if population estimates from an IPM are substantially different than those 352 353 from annual census data, it is possible that count data alone may be unreliable for obtaining accurate population estimates because of missing information. In such cases, allocating resources 354 355 to the supplementary collection of individual-based demographic data (e.g., capture-recapture, productivity, and/or telemetry data) would likely contribute to more precise estimation of 356 population trends and critical parameters compared to an exhaustive population census (Lee et 357 al. 2015). Coupling IPMs with simulations of several data types can help in the assessment of the 358 relative inferential value of different data sources, a useful exercise for evaluating potential 359 adjustments in field data collection efforts. 360

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362 *4.5. Conservation efficacy* 

363 IPMs can elucidate the efficacy of conservation actions relative to natural population processes.

364 Several studies have used IPMs to investigate the extent to which management actions (e.g., nest

365 box installation, predator control, supplementary feeding) have contributed to population recovery through improvements in demographic rates (Altwegg et al. 2014; Demerdzhiev et al. 366 2015; Lieury et al. 2015). Distinguishing between various factors that contribute to population 367 change consequently allows for the prioritization of conservation actions. For example, Altwegg 368 et al. (2014) found through analysis of an IPM that immigration was the most important driver of 369 growth in an urban population of peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), more so than recruitment, 370 371 even with the aid of nest box deployment. These results revealed the critical importance of 372 protecting falcon populations in remote environments to the successful maintenance of the urban population and the welfare of the species as a whole. 373

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## **5.** Areas of advancement: extensions of integrated population models

Initial IPM development within wildlife ecology focused on combining annual census data with
capture-recapture data (Besbeas *et al.* 2002; Brooks *et al.* 2004). Over the last decade, IPMs have
expanded to include many additional data types. Although the foundations of IPMs are well
developed, novel uses continue to spur technical advancements and expand their applicability
within ecology. Below we highlight several advancements that are particularly relevant for
conservation applications of IPMs.

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# 383 *5.1. Retrospective and prospective analyses*

Estimates of demographic rates and population size and structure obtained from IPMs can be used in subsequent analyses to gain a deeper understanding of the reasons for past population changes (i.e., retrospective analyses; Szostek *et al.* 2014; Abadi *et al.* 2017) and to predict future population trajectories (i.e., prospective analyses; Oppel *et al.* 2014). IPMs allow for correlation assessment between annual estimates of demographic parameters with population growth rates to 389 quantify the impact of demography (Figure 3a&b; Schaub et al. 2013). The strength of the correlation between population growth and demographic rates indicates the magnitude with 390 which temporal variation in a given demographic parameter contributes to the temporal variation 391 of population growth (Robinson et al. 2014; Schaub et al. 2013; Szostek et al. 2014; Tempel et 392 al. 2014). This approach is particularly useful in the study of populations that never reach a 393 stable steady state because of non-stationary environmental conditions, and can be combined 394 395 with formal methods for assessing transient dynamics (e.g., Koons et al. 2016, Koons et al. 396 2017). Evaluating the transient dynamics of populations is notoriously difficult, but it is especially important for threatened species inhabiting areas that experience significant climate 397 398 and/or habitat changes (e.g., locations undergoing invasion; Ezard et al. 2010).

399 IPMs are particularly well-suited for enabling predictions of future population sizes 400 (Figure 3c&d). Analysis in a Bayesian framework aids predictions as posterior sampling can be 401 used to obtain a full assessment of all uncertainties involved in forecasts (Kéry & Schaub 2012; Gelman et al. 2014; Servanty et al. 2014). The posterior distributions of the predicted future 402 403 population sizes can be used to compute population-level extinction probabilities or population prediction intervals (i.e., intervals that include the projected unknown population size at a 404 specified future time with a given probability or confidence level), both typical components of 405 population viability analyses (Servanty et al. 2014). Model results generated from IPMs can be 406 407 adjusted to predict population sizes and extinction probabilities under different management scenarios that may alter various demographic rates (Duarte et al. 2017, Saunders et al. In 408 409 review). In Figure 3d, we simulate results from an IPM of a hypothetical passerine population to 410 estimate changes in extinction probabilities under conditions that either increase productivity by 20% (e.g., through nest predation control) or reduce temporal variability in adult survival by 411

50% (e.g., through removal of competitors and/or primary predators), as compared to no
management (example and code taken from unpublished work by M. Schaub & M. Kéry).
Conducting this type of exercise helps identify the most practical strategy for maintaining
population persistence into the future.

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417 5.2. Spatially explicit IPMs

418 Development of IPMs using spatially explicit capture-recapture data (Efford et al. 2009; Royle et 419 al. 2013) extends the utility of conventional IPMs by (1) accounting for spatial variation in demographic, movement, and detection parameters and (2) enabling the ability to make spatially-420 421 explicit predictions of abundance or vital rates (Chandler & Clark 2014). The basis of the 422 spatially explicit IPM is a spatial point process describing the number and locations of 423 individuals in a population during the initial time period, and the variation in abundance (and 424 density) over time as a function of death, recruitment, and movement (i.e., immigration/emigration). Both capture-recapture and survey (either count or detection-425 426 nondetection) data can be modelled conditional on the point process (Chandler & Royle 2013; 427 Royle et al. 2013), thus avoiding the conventional and restrictive requirement that these two datasets be independent. 428 Like non-spatial IPMs, the spatially explicit IPM can account for process variation and 429

account for process variation and
observer error when predicting population size under future environmental conditions. Unlike
classic IPMs, which are unable to account for individual heterogeneity in vital rates and
detection probability (Abadi *et al.* 2013), the spatially explicit IPM fully accommodates
spatially-induced individual heterogeneity in demographics and capture or detection
probabilities, increasing accuracy of parameter estimates and expanding the framework's utility

435 (Chandler & Clark 2014). The model provides a straightforward means of predicting abundance or density in unsampled regions and time periods, and can be used to map and project species 436 distributions and vital rates at broad spatio-temporal scales. This spatial point process framework 437 avoids the problems associated with scaling up continuously-varying measures such as density or 438 movement, which can introduce bias in non-spatial models (Melbourne & Chesson 2005). These 439 advantages are particularly beneficial in conservation-related projects where logistical and 440 441 financial constraints frequently prevent survey coverage across a species' entire range (or over 442 long time periods), yet inference is required at a broad scale for range-wide management decisions. 443

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## 445 *5.3. Environmental uncertainty*

Uncertainty surrounding ecological responses to environmental factors should be incorporated 446 447 into population assessments as environmental stochasticity can play a significant role in the viability of a population, particularly for threatened species (Kanno et al. 2015). Existing 448 449 demographic projection models assess the effects of future environmental conditions on population trends, but often fail to rigorously integrate uncertainty around both demographic and 450 environmental processes (Crone et al. 2013; but see Gauthier et al. 2016). This can lead to 451 erroneous predictions, particularly if there is uncertainty about how future environmental 452 scenarios may affect demographic parameters (Coulson et al. 2001). Oppel et al. (2014) 453 developed an approach to incorporate environmental variation into IPMs to explicitly account for 454 both environmental and demographic stochasticity in a single modeling framework, providing a 455 comparatively more realistic assessment of population viability under unknown future 456 environmental conditions. The fundamental idea is to draw future values of environmental 457

variables from probability distributions to simulate environmental uncertainty (Heard *et al.* 2013)
and to then use the results in combination with IPM parameter estimates (and their full
uncertainties) to project population trends (Oppel *et al.* 2014). Although incorporating both
demographic and environmental stochasticity into models can result in considerable uncertainty
surrounding population projections (Jenouvrier 2013), the wider credible (or confidence)
intervals represent a more realistic assessment of future population viability.

464

465 *5.4. Two-sex IPMs* 

Typical IPMs are female-based models (i.e., only female life history is specified for the state 466 467 process) that frequently do not account for mate availability, differing sex ratios, or polygamy among individuals (Schaub & Abadi 2011; but see Véran & Lebreton 2008). Yet, two-sex 468 models are required when vital rates significantly differ between males and females, males are 469 470 the limiting sex in the population, or when life history characteristics vary by sex such that modeling the dynamics of a single sex is inadequate (Gerber & White 2014; Shyu & Caswell 471 472 2016). Even in cases when demographic rates are similar between the two sexes, incorporating data from males can lead to overall improved inference on female vital rates simply because of 473 the additional data (Péron & Koons 2012). Recent IPM advancements allow for the investigation 474 of population dynamics and quantification of cause-specific mortality rates in non-monogamous 475 species, enabling the use of IPMs in a new suite of mating systems (Tenan et al. 2016). In this 476 framework, the state process is specified using a two-sex population model, in which the annual 477 number of breeding individuals is determined by explicitly modeling the probability that males 478 479 and females breed (i.e., access to reproduction) as a function of the availability of opposite-sex individuals (Jenouvrier et al. 2010). Many carnivores have polygamous mating systems and mate 480

availability can play an important role in population viability, especially when populations are
small (Gerber & White 2014). Large terrestrial carnivores are a highly endangered group of
species; the advent of the two-sex IPM extension, which contains a nonlinear mating function
(Tenan *et al.* 2016), offers an opportunity to expand the use of IPMs into a much broader set of
at-risk species.

486

# 487 5.5. Technical advancements: goodness-of-fit assessments

488 Goodness-of-fit evaluations for IPMs are typically either not conducted or they are done in an ad hoc fashion (Abadi et al. 2010b; Schaub & Abadi 2011). A newly proposed approach, motivated 489 490 by Bayesian *p*-values and using calibrated simulation, offers the first potential evaluation 491 procedure of IPMs (Besbeas & Morgan 2014). For each component dataset, a discrepancy 492 measure determines whether the model fits the data well, or either over- or under-predicts the 493 outcome as compared to simulated data generated from the estimated model parameters. Different goodness-of-fit discrepancy measures can be used to highlight various aspects of fit 494 495 and multiple discrepancy measures can be used in tandem to evaluate more complex integrated models, such as one that includes density dependence on productivity (i.e., the productivity 496 parameter is related to population size through a threshold dependence). Besbeas & Morgan 497 (2014) illustrate the performance of their goodness-of-fit metric using capture-recapture data and 498 count data, assessing the utility of different discrepancy measures (e.g., Freeman-Tukey 499 discrepancy measure, Pearson chi-square statistic) for each data type. Their comprehensive 500 501 approach adopts a common evaluation procedure for all components of an IPM and establishes a 502 consistent criterion that researchers can use when conducting model selection. Model fit is notoriously difficult to assess in hierarchical models and remains an area of active research 503

504 (Hooten & Hobbs 2015). For example, Carvalho et al. (2016) evaluated the efficacy of several recently-proposed diagnostic tests (e.g., residuals analysis, catch-curve analysis) in identifying 505 model misspecification in both the observation and system dynamics components of integrated 506 507 stock assessments. The authors found that residual analyses were the best detector of misspecification of the observation model while age-structured production models were best at 508 detecting misspecification of the system dynamics model (Carvalho et al. 2016). A similar 509 510 comparison of commonly-used diagnostic tests (e.g., Bayesian p-values) for IPM component 511 models could help identify appropriate methods for assessing both model fit and model selection within IPMs. 512

513

## 514 **6.** The future of integrated population models

We foresee several potential avenues of IPM advancement related to the fields of ecology and
conservation science, which we highlight below while providing suggestions for future modeling
efforts.

518

## 519 6.1. Inclusion of citizen science data

IPMs have the potential to address complex conservation questions at unprecedented scales using 520 widely-collected volunteer data. Citizen science data are well-suited to integrated modeling 521 522 because their wide geographic distributions of volunteers can provide much richer datasets than 523 are typically available (Sauermann & Franzoni 2015), and the prevalence of these programs has surged in the last few years (Pimm et al. 2014). The full potential of citizen science has yet to be 524 realized as the vast majority of such data have not been included in any research (Theobald et al. 525 2015). Problems due to variable effort over time, lack of random sampling, and informal 526 protocols continue to present challenges. Several statistical techniques have recently been 527

528 employed to account for these biases, especially methods that use random effects and hierarchical structures (Fink et al. 2010; Sauer & Link 2011; Kelling et al. 2015; Barrows et al. 529 2016; Saunders *et al.* 2017). IPMs have the potential to advance these methods even further by 530 appropriately combining datasets while accounting for errors across multiple citizen science 531 programs. For example, the use of eBird detection-nondetection data 532 (www.ebird.org/content/ebird) or count data from the Breeding Bird Survey 533 534 (www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/index.cfm) in an IPM framework (i.e., with local-scale capture-535 recapture data) has the potential to reveal large-scale population trends, shifts in species niches, and/or the varying importance of demographic processes across spatial and temporal scales 536 537 (Sauer & Link 2011; Sullivan et al. 2014). Ahrestani et al. (2016) recently used an IPM framework to combine two broad-scale avian citizen science datasets (Breeding Bird Survey and 538 539 Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) to assess population trends and latent 540 recruitment of gray catbird (Dumetella carolinensis) and wood thrush (Hylocichla mustelina). It is possible that other data types, including citizen-reported mortality data such as car collisions 541 542 with wildlife (RoadKill: www.adventurescience.org/ roadkill.html) and bird-window collisions (Project BirdSafe: www.mn.audubon.org/project-birdsafe; Project Safe Flight: 543 www.nycaudubon.org/project-safe-flight), can be used in conjunction with planned surveys to 544 help inform population dynamics (Loss et al. 2015), although additional model development is 545 needed. 546

547

548 6.2. Incorporation of unmarked data types into demographic estimates

549 Capture-recapture or other "marked" data types (e.g., dead recovery data) are the typical sources
550 for demographic analyses (Lebreton *et al.* 1992). However, recently developed approaches for

551 modeling unmarked data within a population dynamics framework provide a promising avenue 552 for estimating parameters such as survival, fecundity, and even immigration from only count and detection-nondetection data (Dail & Madsen 2011; Zipkin et al. 2014b; Rossman et al. 2016). 553 Time series data can be modeled according to a Markovian process whereby individuals remain 554 in the population through a stochastic survival process and are gained to the population either via 555 recruitment or immigration (Dail & Madsen 2011). A crucial feature of these data are repeated 556 557 observations at each step in the time series (i.e., repeated sampling during periods of closure), which allow for estimation of the detection process separately from the underlying state process 558 (Royle 2004). Incorporating these new models for time series or census data within an IPM 559 560 framework would lead to greater accuracy and precision of demographic rates and population 561 trends (Zipkin et al. 2017). Stage-structured (Link et al. 2003) and seasonally segregated (Link 562 & Sauer 2007) count data are especially useful because they can allow for estimates of both 563 population abundance and demographic parameters, similar to those obtained from capturerecapture data (Zipkin et al. 2014a, b). Many rare and/or threatened species have available only 564 limited capture-recapture data or none at all; the ability to estimate demographic parameters 565 using only unmarked data offers the potential to expand integrative modeling approaches to less 566 invasive and intensive sampling methodologies. 567

568

# 569 6.3. Coupled population-environment modeling

570 Integrated population modeling is an ideal analytical platform for coupled population-

571 environment models that are designed to project population trajectories under forecasts of future

- 572 conditions (e.g., climate, land-use changes). Although a growing number of studies have linked
- 573 climate-dependent demographic models to climate simulations (Jenouvrier *et al.* 2012; van der

574 Meer et al. 2016; Gauthier et al. 2016), this has not yet been done using IPMs, likely because most population models are parameterized from a single dataset. Uncertainties in climate 575 modeling scenarios have been described extensively (Hawkins & Sutton 2009), but methods for 576 combining uncertainties from both climate and integrated models have not yet been attempted 577 (other than with random environmental noise, e.g., Oppel et al. 2014). Developing an approach 578 that links future environmental scenarios with integrated models is crucial to deriving accurate 579 580 projections of population change (Ehrlén & Morris 2015), and properly accounting for sources of 581 uncertainty and potential variation.

582

# 583 7. Conclusions

Monitoring the consequences of anthropogenic alterations is increasingly urgent as changing 584 585 environmental and climate conditions continue to modify the population dynamics of species 586 worldwide. Record species losses have hastened efforts to identify extinction risks and ameliorate the ultimate causes of decline (Pimm et al. 2014), but methodological and statistical 587 advancements often lag behind the pace necessary to enact management decisions. 588 Characterizing population dynamics and trends at broad spatial scales can be challenging, as it is 589 difficult to measure all relevant parameters, and data on those that are measured may be 590 representative of only a sample of the population (Robinson et al. 2014). Yet the spatial and 591 temporal scope of ecological research and conservation efforts has expanded greatly over the last 592 few decades (e.g., Fink et al. 2010; Robinson et al. 2014; Loss et al. 2015), requiring ever more 593 efficient data collection and analytical methods. Collection of demographic data, which are 594 necessary to understand mechanistic changes in population dynamics, is complicated when the 595 population of conservation concern is rare, sparsely distributed, or includes life stages that are 596

difficult to observe in the field (Harris *et al.* 2015; Mosnier *et al.* 2015). The development of
IPMs and their recent application to threatened and declining populations overcomes many
drawbacks associated with classical modes of inference, and has advanced our ability to
investigate environmental and demographic drivers of population change as well as more
accurately estimate trends.

The key strength of IPMs is that each sub-model borrows information from other sub-602 603 models, making use of all available data from a study system, leading to the best possible 604 inference on a target population (Schaub & Abadi 2011). Although IPMs can be complex and beyond the expertise of some ecologists and conservation practitioners, the software for their 605 606 implementation is freely available (e.g., R, JAGS, BUGS, NIMBLE, Julia, C++, INLA, ADMB) and example code for typical models can be found online (e.g., Kéry & Schaub 2012, Chapter 607 11). More user-friendly tutorials and how-to papers, especially within a Bayesian framework, 608 609 would enable a wider audience to become familiar with IPMs and their implementation. IPMs should be broadly adopted for conservation-focused projects with multiple data sources, 610 611 including those with data types not typically incorporated (e.g., citizen science programs), because IPMs can be used to better understand and detect population declines (Schaub et al. 612 2010; Mosnier et al. 2015), prioritize populations of conservation concern (Altwegg et al. 2014), 613 enhance monitoring schemes (Tempel et al. 2014), and adjust management strategies (Johnson et 614 al. 2010; Demerdzhiev et al. 2015). These capabilities are improving recovery for threatened and 615 declining species worldwide, and have the potential to continue to do so with further method 616 617 development and application.

618

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628

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#### 967 Figure Legends

Figure 1. Graphical depiction of a hypothetical integrated population model showing the 968 potential for different data sources to contribute to shared inference on demographic parameters 969 and population abundance. Four common types of population data are shown; all data types 970 shown are not required in an IPM and other data types can be incorporated. Demographic 971 parameters are represented with purple rectangles, observation parameters with green rectangles, 972 973 and data are symbolized with blue diamonds. Arrows demonstrate the dependences between 974 nodes. Sub-models are represented by dotted yellow rectangles and titled with the typical data type and model structure. Node notations:  $n_a$  = number of adults assessed for reproduction,  $n_0$  = 975 976 number of juveniles produced, f = per-capita recruitment rate,  $\omega =$  immigration rate,  $s_1 =$  firstyear survival probability,  $s_i$  = juvenile survival probability (for individuals older than one),  $s_a$  = 977 adult survival probability, y = population count data,  $\sigma^2$  = observation error on count data, N = 978 979 true population abundance, t = telemetry data,  $p_t$  = encounter rate for telemetry data, d = recovery rate of dead individuals, m = capture-recapture data,  $p_m =$  capture probability for 980 marked individuals. Figure adapted from Schaub & Abadi 2011. 981 982 Figure 2. The process for developing an integrated population model for conservation 983 applications. IPMs jointly analyze data on population size and demographic parameters. A 984 variety of data input types can be used in IPMs, including (1) telemetry or radio-tracking data, 985 (2) productivity/fecundity data, (3) population survey/census data as collected through transects, 986 point counts, or ground counts, (4) dead recovery/carcass data, (5) occupancy (detection-987 988 nondetection) data, and (6) capture-mark-recapture data as collected by tagging, banding, or

other external marking techniques (top panel). The modeling process includes (1) identifying the

990 relevant population model with the aid of a life cycle diagram, (2) determining the likelihoods 991 for individual datasets relative to the demographic rates identified with the population model and 992 the sampling processes, and (3) using the joint likelihood to estimate parameter values (middle 993 panel). Joint analysis of multiple datasets allows for more precise estimates of population 994 abundance and demographic rates, such as stage-specific survival and recruitment. Two outputs 995 of particular interest within a conservation context are estimation of immigration rate and trends 996 in population abundance (bottom panel).

997

Figure 3. Examples of possible (a & b) retrospective and (c & d) prospective analyses using 998 999 results from an integrated population model incorporating three simulated 20-year datasets (i.e., population counts, capture-recapture, productivity) from a hypothetical red-backed shrike 1000 1001 (Lanius collurio) population (male shown in inset). Post-hoc correlations (r) between annual 1002 population growth rates and IPM-generated estimates of (a) immigration rate and (b) adult survival are plotted to demonstrate retrospective analyses that can elucidate the contribution of 1003 1004 demographic rates to variation in population growth (adapted from Schaub et al. 2013, Tempel & Gutiérrez 2014). IPM-generated population abundance can be projected forward for prospective 1005 1006 analyses to examine (c) the distribution of the time to extinction (of simulated populations that went extinct), as well as (d) cumulative extinction probabilities under different management 1007 strategies (e.g., increase productivity by 20%, reduce temporal variability in adult survival by 1008 50% shown; example and code taken from unpublished work by M. Schaub & M. Kéry). 1009 1010





# Figure 2. Data input types:

![](_page_47_Figure_1.jpeg)

#### Steps in the modeling process:

![](_page_47_Figure_3.jpeg)

Example life cycle diagram of a geographically open population assuming an annual pre-breeding census. The two stages are one-year-old adults ( $N_1$ ) and older adults ( $N_a$ ). Demographic parameters are survival ( $s_1, s_a$ ), fecundity (f) and immigration (w). The model assumes that individuals reproduce starting at age one and only one-year-old adults can immigrate.

![](_page_47_Figure_5.jpeg)

The likelihood for each data type is defined separately using the demographic (where  $N=N_1 + N_a$ ) and detection  $(\sigma_y^2, p)$  parameters. For example, the state-space model (L<sub>ss</sub>) using count data (y) is the product of the process (L<sub>SY</sub>) and observation (L<sub>obs</sub>) models; likelihoods (L<sub>CMR</sub> and L<sub>RS</sub>) for other data, here capture-recapture (m) and reproduction ( $n_0, n_a$ ) data, are also defined.

Step 3: Inference from joint likelihood  $L_{IPM} (y, m, n_0, n_a | N, s_1, s_a, f, \omega, p, \sigma_y^2)$  $= L_{OBS} \cdot L_{SY} \cdot L_{CMR} \cdot L_{RS}$ 

The joint likelihood (L<sub>IPM</sub>) of the model is the product of the individual likelihoods. A key assumption is that datasets are independently collected and parameters appear in multiple individual likelihoods. Detection and demographic rates are estimated using the joint likelihood, typically with Bayesian analysis.

#### **Conservation-related outputs:**

![](_page_47_Figure_10.jpeg)

Two common IPM outputs sought for conservation: population size over time (left; figure based on whooping cranes from Wilson et al. 2016) and immigration rate (right; figure based on white-fronted geese from Weegman et al. 2016). Immigration is typically difficult to estimate and can rarely be inferred with classical capture-recapture analyses or using other individual datasets. Similarly, improved accuracy on demographic rates leads to increased precision of trend estimates compared to using only count indices, which can facilitate conservation decisions on threatened and endangered species. IPMs are also useful for the estimation of spatially explicit age-specific survival, reproduction, and movement rates.

![](_page_47_Figure_12.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Figure_0.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Figure_1.jpeg)