

Megan Newstead

PROFILE:

I have recently finished studying a post graduate masters degree in island biogeography and conservation. I am an enthusiastic learner with aspirations to help influence environmental conservation both locally and abroad. I work well individually and within team especially with like minded people to achieve a goal, with the highest possible quality.

WORK AND LIFE EXPERIENCE

Research - 2018 - present

Throughout my undergraduate and master's studies, research formed a central component of my academic development. I actively engaged in both independent and collaborative projects, gaining experience in designing methodologies, analysing data, and synthesising findings into clear, evidence-based reports. Currently, I am further advancing these skills through independent research initiatives with the Government Marine Resources Team, where I contribute to ongoing projects and strengthen my abilities in critical analysis, scientific writing, and data-driven decision-making.

Maldives Whale shark Research Programme - 2023

As a volunteer the days were based on a survey boat which travelled along a transect in a marine protected area in South Ari Atoll. The aim was to record marine mammal encounters, in water whale shark measurements and boat presence in the area. Evenings were spent identifying each individual whale sharks and adding the database. The experience was informative on the way in which NGOs work and the time and perseverance needed to gather valuable, reliable data.

Marine Mammal Boat Survey - 2022

In the Summer of 2022 I participate in a week long boat based survey spanning from plymouth to Lands-end. The aim was to record marine mammals within certain parameters of the yacht. Working as a team on rotation jobs included marine mammal watch, data recording, helming the boat and providing the team with refreshments to keep morale high in a range of weather conditions. It was important to stay motivated, enthusiastic and determined to provide the best quality of data possible.

Marine resources, Government of Jersey - 2020-2021

For my placement year I worked in Jersey (in the channel islands) for the fishery department. The placement was filled with many different tasks, field work and research. I was able to develop my communication skills working with many people, taking part in meetings, presenting data and honing my presentation skills. The role required good time management, self motivation and organisation. Whilst working with marine resources, I had the opportunity to participate in research and reporting guidelines for an updated wildlife law (wildlife Law 201) focusing on marine species.

Multiple papers that I wrote during and after the placement have been referenced or included into annual reports for Jersey.

Swim teacher and Lifeguard , Le Mourier swim school and Aqua-splash : 2015-2024

As a swim teacher, communication was key to gain confidence and trust of my pupils, being able to adapt to clearly communicate with various ages, various levels of understanding and disabilities. I have learnt to deal with others in a professional and respectful manner, ensuring my pupils had understanding and remained safe. On a daily basis I needed to be able to work under pressure and adapt to any situation. I have gained the ability to confidently and efficiently work in a team or solo when teaching a class or organising holiday camps. I also developed a confidence in following through with decisions that I have made.

VOLUNTEERING :

I have volunteered at conservation companies such as SITEs in Costa Rica to improve turtle hatchery conditions, whilst taking part in lectures with the local community and night walks to help support turtle populations from local poaching. This was a process which was essential to involve local communities, steering them away from poaching and supporting transitions into conservation work.

I have also participated in marine and terrestrial volunteering in Greece. The activities included data collection, report writing and presentation of findings. Working with the community was a significant part to help communicate between communities and researchers, bridging the gap between scientific knowledge and community understanding.

EDUCATION:

University of Exeter: MSc. Island biogeography and Conservation : Distinction (September 2024)

University of Plymouth (undergraduate): BSc, Ocean science and Marine Conservation (with placement), : Upper 2:1 (June 2022)

SKILLS:

- PADI Dive master (2023)
- GIS, Matlab, R-studio and Excel experience
- AIDA level 2 (free-diving) (2024), Level 2 STA Swim teacher, Intermediate Power boat (RYA) (2022)

ACADEMIC AND WORK REFERENCES:

Sean Dettman (Masters Tutor) : Head of Masters degree course at University (JICAS) and is my tutor for progress and academic support (sean.dettman@jicas.ac.je)

Francis Binney (Placement and dissertation advisor) : Marine researcher at Marine resources (F.Binney@gov.je)