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Research Interests/Experience:

My main research interests include the behaviour, photo-identification, distribution and abundance patterns and conservation of marine mammals.

Previous research experience includes:

Honours thesis: “The distribution, abundance and photo-identification of common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) within St Vincent Gulf, South Australia”. Supervisors: Dr. Mike Bossley (Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society) and Dr. Ken Sanderson (Flinders University).

Research for the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), collecting follow-up data from my honours thesis on the distribution, photo-identification and relative density estimates of common dolphin in Gulf St Vincent, South Australia. During this time I also assisted Dr. Mike Bossley with his research (primarily, photo-identification) of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*) in the Port Adelaide River.

I have worked for the South Australian Museum (SAM) Adelaide, assisting with dolphin and seal post-mortems and was Emmanuel Martinez (PhD Student, Massey University) research assistant in Akaroa, New Zealand, collecting data on the effects of tourism on Hector dolphins (*Cephalorhynchus hectori*). This research included behavioural and photo-identification analyses. I have additionally worked on the population size of east Australian humpback whales (*Megaptera Novaeangliae*) and the width of their migratory corridor as part of as part of Dr. Mike Noad’s research team off North Stradbroke Island, Queensland, Australia.

Thesis:

Impact and management of the dolphin-swim industry in Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, Australia

Supervision:

Dr. Carol Scarpaci (Victoria University, Melbourne)

Dr. Karen Stockin (Massey University, Auckland)

Study Aims:

This study aims to

- a) Document whistle production in bottlenose dolphins in Port Phillip Bay according to: vessel traffic; boat approach type; behaviour; group composition; group orientation; swimmer presence; and approach number.
- b) Determine if there is a difference in bottlenose dolphins behaviour and whistle production according to whether vessels only are present or vessels and swimmers are present.
- c) Determine if whistles produced by bottlenose dolphins in Port Phillip Bay can be utilised as a proxy to gauge the impact of tourism across time.
- d) Determine if compliance of tour vessels to conditions stipulated in dolphin-swim regulations impacts on whistle production and behaviour of dolphins.
- e) Document bottlenose dolphins' responses to approaching vessels according to group composition.
- f) Measure the effectiveness of a new condition stipulated in the 2010 dolphin-swim regulations to increase tourist education.
- g) Determine if tourists' biocentric short and long-term values increase due to dolphin swim tour participation.
- h) Determine the variables that promote education and tourist satisfaction during a dolphin swim tour.

Funding:

- ❖ Victoria University Research Fund
- ❖ Victorian Marine Science Consortium Support
- ❖ ANZ Holsworth Wildlife Research Endowment

Publications/Reports:

- ❖ Filby, N., Bossley, M., Sanderson, K., & Stockin, K. (2010) Distribution and Population Demographics of Common Dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) in the Gulf of St Vincent, South Australia. *Aquatic Mammals - In press*.