

## Sonja Feinberg

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### **Education**

2024. MSc in Marine Mammal Science, University of St. Andrews. With distinction. GPA: 17.9

2017. BA in Environmental Studies - Sustainable Design, Pacific University. GPA: 3.987

### **Field Work & Research Experience**

#### **Aerial Observer. New England Aquarium Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life**

June 2025 - Present

- Participate in aerial surveys for marine megafauna in the Gulf of Maine
- Support data proofing and management

#### **Biological Scientific Aid. NOAA Fisheries Antarctic Marine Living Resources Program**

August 2024 - March 2025

- Captured, measured, and attached/recovered scientific equipment for the following species: brown skua, chinstrap penguin, gentoo penguin
- Captured, measured and took DNA and whisker samples of Antarctic fur seal pups
- Resighted penguin and skua bands and monitored the nests of banded birds
- Annotated videos of foraging penguins
- Proofed and entered data promptly into designated databases using Excel and R
- As a federal purchase card holder: researched, purchased, tracked, and inventoried scientific equipment and supplies for the the field camp

#### **Gray Seal Volunteer Research Assistant. Sea Mammal Research Unit, University of St Andrews**

October 2023 - May 2024

- Assisted with ongoing research involving six juvenile gray seals in temporary captivity
- Prepared and distributed food to the seals and assisted with animal-handling

#### **Cetacean Volunteer Research Assistant. Alaska Whale Foundation**

July 2021 - September 2021 &

May 2022 - July 2022

- Participated in 10-to14-hour surveys from 19-foot and 26-foot vessels
- Photographed flukes and identifying features of humpback whales
- Collected water samples using a Vertical Point Water Sampler
- Collected acoustic recordings of foraging humpback whales by deploying a hydrophone
- Remotely supervised 50 volunteers in an Archival Video Project, creating and managing a dataset of over 3,000 humpback whale sightings

#### **Elephant Seal Volunteer Research Assistant. Point Blue Conservation Science**

December 2021 - February 2022 &

December 2022 - February 2023

- Censused, flipper-tagged, and applied dye stamps to northern elephant seals
- Conducted land-based cetacean surveys, identifying humpback whales, gray whales, and killer whales with the aid of binoculars and a spotting scope
- Resighted tags on California sea lions, Steller sea lions, northern fur seals, northern elephant seals, and harbor seals
- Surveyed for seabirds, shorebird, songbirds, owls, and salamanders
- Entered and proofed data in Microsoft Excel and Access

## **Humpback Whale Volunteer Research Assistant. Marine Mammal Research Program**

March 2022

- Participated in 6-to-10-hour surveys from a 26-foot vessel in Maui
- Photographed and identified humpback whales
- Processed UAV footage of humpback whales for a photogrammetry project
- Created an aerial photo-identification catalog of humpback whales, creating and managing a dataset of over 1,000 individuals

## **Volunteer Research Assistant. Kwiáht: Center for the Historical Ecology of the Salish Sea**

September 2020 - December 2020

- Dissected fish approximately 70mm to 100mm in length to examine their stomach contents and otoliths
- Identified several species of zooplankton 3mm to 5mm in length

## **Other Employment**

### **Camp and Outdoor School Director. Woolman at Sierra Friends Center**

May 2018 - July 2020

- Hired and managed 25 staff to oversee 60 youth for six weeks of overnight programming, including multi-day backpacking trips
- Created and ran an outdoor education program: facilitated three day programming for middle school and high school students
- Wrote and taught basic ecology, wilderness exploration, and team building curricula

## **Awards**

2024. Medal (Biology Taught MSc level) - awarded for the best performance in Taught MSc level Biology, University of St Andrews

2017. Honored Senior. Sustainable Design Department, Pacific University

## **Notable Skills & Certificates**

2025. Remote Pilot Certificate (Part 107) to operate small Unoccupied Aircraft Systems (sUAS), Federal Aviation Administration

2025. Proficient in R, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Access for data management and analysis

2024. Proficient in MATLAB for analyzing hydrophone and biotelemetry data

2024. Proficient in QGIS for analyzing and visualizing biotelemetry data

2023. Powerboat Level 2 Powerboat Handling, RYA

## **Publications (in press)**

Evans, L.I., van Aswegen, M., **Feinberg, S.**, Currie, J.J., Stack, S.H., Szabo, A., Bejder, L., 2025. *Elevating photo-identification: Aerial-identification improves re-sight rates and supports long-term monitoring of humpback whales*. Mar. Mammal Sci.

Hinke, J., Alvstad, K., **Feinberg, S.**, Leslie, J., Woodman, S., Krause, D., 2025. *First full census in 45 years of a large colony of breeding penguins at False Round Point, King George Island*. Polar Biology.