



The United Kingdom and Ireland Regional Student Chapter  
of the Society for Marine Mammalogy



# 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference – Galway

10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020

#UKIRSC20

## Conference Programme

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<b>Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>20:00 - 23:00</b>	<b>Icebreaker Event</b> (Massimo Bar, Galway City) - Vegetarian and vegan finger food will be provided
<b>Friday 10<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>08:30 – 08:50</b>	<b>Registration</b> ( <i>Outside Room G0995 - GMIT</i> )
<b>08:50 – 09:00</b>	<b>Welcome from the UKIRSC Committee</b> ( <i>Room G0995 - GMIT</i> )
<b>09:00 – 09:10</b>	<b>Welcome from Head of Department</b> <i>Dr. Rick Officer</i>
<b>09:10 – 09:25</b>	<b>“Reflection on role as a PhD supervisor”</b> Invited Speaker: <i>Dr. Ian O’Connor, GMIT</i>
<b>09:25 – 10:45</b>	<b>Session 1: Physiology &amp; Genetics</b> <i>Session Chair: Izzy Langley, Sea Mammal Research Unit, Scotland</i>
09:25 – 09:40	<b>Elizabeth Boyse</b> (University of Leeds) “Understanding marine predator habitat use in the Mediterranean through eDNA”
09:40 – 09:55	<b>Cátia Silva</b> (Durham University) “Genetic variation of wild dolphins facing Morbillivirus infection: an immunogenomic approach”
09:55 – 10:10	<b>Laura Oller</b> (Abertay University) “Characterising grey seals' blubber structure”
10:10 – 10:15	<b>Holly Armstrong</b> (University of Plymouth) “Blubber heat shock protein and redox enzyme mRNA abundance, and oxidative damage in female grey seals ( <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> ): support for the life-history-

	oxidative stress theory from an animal model of simultaneous lactation and fasting”
10:15 – 10:20	<b>Charlotte Dempster</b> (The Keiki Kohola Project / California State University Channel Islands) “Using a UAS to track variation in body condition in maternal female humpback whales over the breeding season provides a useful tool to assess the quality of nursery grounds”
10:20 – 10:25	<b>Lauren Arkoosh</b> (Abertay University) “Seals as sentinels of antimicrobial resistance: mapping antimicrobial resistance genes in UK waters”
10:25 – 10:30	<b>Sarah Dickson</b> (University of Leeds) “Estimating the prevalence of common skin diseases in a population of harbour porpoise ( <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> ) off the coast of North West Pembrokeshire”
10:30 – 10:35	<b>Eva-Maria Bønnelycke</b> (University of St Andrews) “Wearable near-infrared spectroscopy as a tool to monitor safe levels of anaesthesia”
10:35 – 10:40	<b>Inês Catarina Fonseca Madeira Costa</b> (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology) “Harbour seals ( <i>Phoca vitulina</i> ), grey seals ( <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> ) and the 3R’s: Rescue, Rehabilitation and Release”
10:45 – 11:15	<b>Coffee Break &amp; Poster Session</b> <i>(Café Foyer - GMIT) Bring your own mug</i> <i>Sponsored by the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group and the Marine Institute</i>
11:15 – 12:15	<b>Session 2: Marine Mammals &amp; Human Interactions</b> <i>Session Chair: María Pérez Tadeo, Marine and Freshwater Research Centre, GMIT</i>

11:15 – 11:30	<b>James Robbins</b> (University of Portsmouth) “Ship strike in the North-East Atlantic: Investigating the occurrence of whale collisions and near-misses”
11:30 – 11:45	<b>Aude Benhemma-Le Gall</b> (University of Aberdeen) “Balancing the risk: Harbour porpoises respond to piling and vessel activities during offshore windfarm construction”
11:45 – 12:00	<b>Cian Luck</b> (University College Cork) “Estimating seal bycatch from limited observer coverage”
12:00 – 12:05	<b>Aimee Kate Darias-O'Hara</b> (University of St Andrews) “Investigating the response of mother-calf pairs of Bottlenose dolphins to small-craft noise”
12:05 – 12:10	<b>Rita Meireles de Castro (IMBRSea)</b> “Mitigating Small-Scale Fisheries Bycatch: Assessment of existing approaches for marine mammal and sea turtle conservation”
<b>12:15 – 12:30</b>	<b>“Protecting Ireland’s Marine Mammals”</b> <i>Invited Speaker: Loraine Fay, Marine Mammal Ecologist, National Parks &amp; Wildlife Service</i>
<b>12:30 – 13:15</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b> <i>Feel free to bring your own lunch</i>
<b>13:15 – 16:00</b>	<b>Workshop 1: Grant Writing</b> <i>(Dr. Joanne O’Brien, GMIT)</i> <i>(Room G0509 - GMIT)</i> <i>Capacity: all attendants.</i>
<b>16:00 – 16:30</b>	<b>Coffee Break &amp; Poster Session</b> <i>(Room G0509 - GMIT) Bring your own mug</i>



	<i>Sponsored by the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group and the Marine Institute</i>
<b>16:30 – 18:30</b>	<b>Workshop 2: Arts and Communication for Marine Mammal Science</b> <i>(Ken O’Sullivan, Sea Fever productions and Sara Niksic, University of St. Andrews)</i> <i>(Room G0509 - GMIT)</i> <i>Capacity: all attendants.</i>
<b>18:30 – 19:25</b>	<b>Dinner Break</b>
19:25 – 19:30	<b>Elizabeth Robinson</b> (University of Bristol) “Right Over the Edge: In Search for the North Pacific right whale” <i>(Theatre G1000, GMIT)</i>
<b>19:30 - 21:30</b>	<b>Movie Night: Ireland’s Deep Atlantic</b> Invited guest: <i>Ken O’Sullivan, Sea Fever Productions</i> <i>(Theatre G1000, GMIT)</i>
<b>Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>08:45 - 09:00</b>	<b>UKIRSC Announcements</b> <i>(Room G0995 - GMIT)</i>
<b>09:00 – 09:30</b>	“ <b>Marine mammal acoustics in Irish waters and underwater noise</b> ” Invited Speaker: <i>Dr. Joanne O’Brien, GMIT</i>
<b>09:30 – 10:20</b>	<b>Session 3: Acoustics</b> <i>Session Chair: Cynthia Barile, Marine and Freshwater Research Centre, GMIT</i>
09:30 – 09:45	<b>Morgane Pommier</b> (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology)



	“Exploring habitat use of bottlenose dolphins in the Shannon Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC) through visual and acoustic monitoring”
09:45 – 09:50	<b>Hayley McLennan</b> (University of Plymouth) “Habitat modelling of harbour porpoises in South West England using visual and acoustic data”
09:50– 09:55	<b>Catherine Gibson</b> (Queen’s University Belfast) “Exploring humpback whale ( <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> ) acoustic behaviour in the eastern North Atlantic”
09:55 – 10:00	<b>Freddie Hack</b> (University of St Andrews) “Spatial and temporal trends in habitat usage of Chilean dolphins around Isla de Chiloé based on C-POD data”
10:00 – 10:05	<b>Nicole Todd</b> (MaREI Centre, University College Cork) “A multi-method approach to understanding the ecology of harbour porpoise in Irish waters”
10:05 – 10:10	<b>Megan Ryder</b> (University of St Andrews) “Identifying the foraging habitat of Scotland’s bottlenose dolphins using Passive Acoustic Monitoring”
<b>10:15 – 10:50</b>	<b>Coffee Break &amp; Poster Session</b> <i>(Café Foyer - GMIT) Bring your own mug</i> <i>Sponsored by the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group and the Marine Institute</i>
<b>10:50 – 11:20</b>	“ <b>Double-cap careers: combine academia and non-academia</b> ” Invited Speaker: <i>Dr. Simon Berrow, GMIT / IWDG</i>
<b>11:20 – 12:35</b>	<b>Session 4: Foraging Ecology &amp; Population Biology</b> <i>Session Chair: Laura Oller Lopez, Abertay University, Scotland.</i>

11:20 – 11:35	<b>Thomas Bean</b> (University of Aberdeen/ Icelandic Orca Project)  “Long-term trends in diet of Moray Firth harbour porpoise ( <i>Phocoena phocoena</i> ) under threat from bottlenose dolphin attack: insights from stable isotope analysis”
11:35 – 11:50	<b>Maeva Terrapon</b> (University of St Andrews)  “Comparison of humpback whale ( <i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i> ) habitat use in two major feeding areas of the western North Atlantic Ocean”
11:50 – 11:55	<b>Izzy Langley</b> (Sea Mammal Research Unit, University of St Andrews)  “Competitive seals: How do we measure competition in a wild population?”
11:55 – 12:00	<b>Kim Ellen Ludwig</b> (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology)  “Dolphin gone missing – Estimating mortality in Bottlenose dolphins based on photo-ID records”
12:00 – 12:05	<b>Olivia O’Connor</b> (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology)  “Assessing survival and mortality rates of small cetaceans”
<b>12:10 – 12:30</b>	<b>Poster Session</b>
<b>12:30 – 12:45</b>	<b>Conference close</b>  Prize for best talk/poster
<b>12:45</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>  <i>(Bring your own lunch)</i>
<b>12:45 – 14:30</b>  <i>(Session 1)</i>	<b>Workshops 3: Public Speaking (2 sessions)</b>



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<p><b>14:40 – 16:25</b> (Session 2)</p>	<p><i>(Dr. João Frias, Marine and Freshwater Research Centre, GMIT)</i> <i>(Room G0509 - GMIT)</i> <i>Capacity: 16 attendants in each session.</i></p>
<p><b>20:00</b></p>	<p><b>Drink in town followed by Conference Goodbye Dinner</b> <i>(High Café – Galway City)</i></p>
<p><b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January</b></p>	
	<p><b>Traveling day</b> <i>Outdoor activities for those interested to be confirmed.</i></p>

