

Robert A. Di Giovanni Jr.
CURRICULUM VITAE

General Information

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Citizenship: USA

Education

Master's Degree State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York
December 2002 concentration in applied ecology

Bachelor of Science in Biology, Long Island University Southampton, Southampton,
New York, December 1996 *cum laude*

Suffolk Community College, Riverhead, New York, Fall 1991 to Spring 1994
Dean's List: '92, '93, Spring '94. Who's Who Among Junior College Students 1994.
Member Student Advisory Committee, 1993

Teaching Experience

September 2006 to present: Was the instructor on record for marine mammals (MAR 370) during the fall of 06' and spring of 07' at Southampton campus for State University of New York. This course deals with the general biology of marine mammals and the conservation issues they face.

January 2006 to present: Was the instructor on record for marine mammal and sea turtle rehabilitation and research (MAR 375). This course was developed specifically for the winter session of 06' and has now been incorporated into a full semester course offered in the spring. The course included practical fieldwork and interaction with marine mammal and sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation team.

Spring 05'06'07: Guest lecturer for Sea turtles and Marine Birds (MAR371).

2001 through 2005: Guest lecture for various marine courses given at Long Island University, Southampton campus.

Work Experience

New York State Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Program

11/96 to date: **Foundation Director / Senior Biologist**, Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation, Riverhead, New York. I am responsible for all aspects of the Foundations operations, from the development of education programs, research programs, facility design and upgrade, fundraising, grant writing and development. During my tenure the foundation has grown from a staff of three full time biologists and an operating budget of \$350,000 to \$1,000,000 in 2005. I am responsible for coordinating rescue and release operations of stranded marine mammals and sea turtles. In addition I am currently principal investigator on a NMFS grant to assess marine mammal treatment protocols. This is accomplished with the use of satellite tags to monitor post release success. As a primary member of our 24-hour response team, I have responded to over 2900 strandings and have directed staff and volunteers in various rescue and rehabilitation techniques. These techniques include the disentanglement of Leatherback sea turtles, animal transport, and post-rescue animal care. I have performed and assisted with postmortems on thirteen cetacean species: *Megaptera novaeangliae*, *Balaenoptera physalus*, *Tursiops truncatus*, *Delphinus delphis*, *Phocoena phocoena*, *Globicephala melas*, *Grampus griseus*, *Stenella coeruleoalba*, *Kogia breviceps*, and *Lagenorhynchus acutus*, *Balaenoptera borealis*, *Eubalaena glacialis*, *Steno bredanensis* five species of pinniped: *Phoca vitulina*, *Phoca groenlandica*, *Phoca hispida* *Halichoerus grypus* and *Cystophora cristata*, and four species of Sea Turtle: *Lepidochelys kempii*, *Dermochelys coriacea*, *Chelonia mydas*, and *Caretta caretta*. It is my responsibility to prepare animal care reports and to present these data to our veterinary staff, outside researchers, and other stranding network personnel. I have worked with the sea turtle marked recapture program in New York State and have been involved with the PIT tagging of sea turtles. Since 2001 I have satellite tagged close to 20 animals ranging four species of seals, three species of dolphins and two species of sea turtles. In addition, I function as naturalist on the whale watch cruises operated by the Riverhead Foundation and Cornell cooperative Extension. I have conducted numerous seal & cetacean shipboard and aerial surveys within the

New York Bight. Coordinate the open water capture of two bottlenose dolphins that were in distress. Coordinate the efforts related to the first mass stranding of common dolphins in New York.

Supervisor: The Riverhead Foundation Board of Directors
467 E. Main Street
Riverhead, NY 11901
(631) 369-9840

July 30, 2007 to August 30, 2007 **Chief Scientist** for a marine mammal survey from North Carolina to the Bay of Fundy. Coordinate aerial survey portion of cetacean abundance survey for NMFS, NEFSC. The aerial portion was operated independently of the ship-based surveys. Only two survey days were coordinated with the shipboard surveys. This was coordinated through Dr. Palka, who functioned as chief scientist on the ship survey.

Supervisor: Dr. Debra Palka

July 24, 2006 to September 1, 2006 **Biological technician** for a marine mammal survey in northern Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy. Functioned as team leader for the aerial survey component of the survey.

Supervisor: Dr. Debra Palka

January 18 through April 30, 2005 conducted broad scale aerial surveys in the New York Bight. This project was funded through a grant from NOAA right whale grant program and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). NOAA funded this project at \$186,000, while NFWF funded a continuation of this project for \$226,000. I was the P.I. on both grants.

July 14 through August 4, 2004: **Biological acoustics technician** for cetacean abundance survey for 2004. Worked with Rene Swift acoustic team leader on the R/V Endeavor out of Narragansett, RI. The two-person team monitored for cetacean vocalization on a 24-hour basis. As tech was responsible for assisting with all repairs to the equipment and standing two six-hour watches a day to identify cetaceans picked up on the hydrophone.

Supervisor: Dr. Debra Palka
NOAA, NMFS, NEFSC
166 Water ST
Woods Hole MA, 02543
508-495-2387

June 12 through July 12, 2004: **Chief scientist** on aerial survey portion of the 2004 cetacean abundance survey. Responsible for conducting survey in the coastal waters of the United States from Maryland in the south up through the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy and out off the Scotian shelf. Coordinated the aerial team of seven observers with the shipboard survey run by Dr. Debra Palka.

Supervisor: Dr. Debra Palka

February 2003: **Biological technician** for live capture of gray seals on Muskeget Island off Nantucket MA. The purpose of this project was to assess pup mortality and survivorship and genetic stock structure.

Supervisor: Dr. Gordon T. Waring
NOAA, NMFS, NEFSC
166 Water ST
Woods Hole MA, 02543
(508) 495-2311

September 2002: **Biological technician** for live capture of harbor seals in Sweden. The purpose of this project was to capture harbor seals in order to collect biological samples and attach radio tags.

Supervisor: Dr. Gordon T. Waring and Dr. Tero Harkonen

August 2002: **Biological technician** for a marine mammal survey in northern Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy. Functioned as team leader for the aerial component of the survey. Coordinated the aerial team of seven observers with the shipboard survey run by Dr. Debra Palka.

Supervisor: Dr. Debra Palka

February 2002: **Biological technician** for live capture of gray seals on Muskeget Island off Nantucket MA. The purpose of this project was to assess pup mortality and survivorship and genetic stock structure.

Supervisor: Dr. Gordon T. Waring

03/12/01 to 03/21/01: **Biological technician** for live capture of harbor seals in Cape Cod MA. The purpose of this project was to capture harbor seals in order to collect biological samples and attach radio tags.

Supervisor: Dr. Gordon T. Waring

07/24/00 to 08/04/00: **Temporary Observer** for the sea turtle aerial survey. NOAA, NMFS and NEFSC conducted the survey. The survey was a pilot study to assess the feasibility of conducting sea turtle abundance estimates from an aerial platform.

Supervisor: David Potter
Oceanographer
NOAA, NMFS, NEFSC
166 Water ST
Woods Hole MA, 02543
(508) 495-2262

07/21/99 to 08/30/99: **Temporary Observer** for the 1999 marine mammal survey team. NOAA, NMFS and NEFSC conducted the survey. The survey area ran from Cape Cod MA north to the Bay of Fundy and along the eastern coast of Nova Scotia. This survey included shipboard and aerial components.

Supervisor: David Potter

02/22/99 to 03/12/99: **Observer** for the marine mammal and turtle shipboard line transect survey in NW Atlantic waters. I was an independent contractor on this survey under order number 40ENNF900096.

Supervisor: Dr. Richard Merrick
NOAA, NMFS, NEFSC
166 Water ST
Woods Hole MA, 02543
(508) 495-2291

07/17/98 to 08/21/98: **Temporary Observer** for the 1998 marine mammal survey team. The survey was conducted by NOAA, NMFS and NEFSC under job vacancy number E/NMF/W/98023.SML. The survey area ran from Cape Hatteras NC north

to the Bay of Fundy and along the eastern coast of Nova Scotia. This survey included shipboard and aerial components.

Supervisor: David Potter

01/93 to 11/96: **Stranding Technician/ Stranding Supervisor**, Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation, Riverhead and Hampton Bays, New York.

Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation, Riverhead and Hampton Bays, New York. In addition to the responsibilities outlined above, I assisted with the surgical removal of rocks from the stomach of *P. groenlandica*, and with the removal of a long line hook from the esophagus of *C. caretta*. I also repaired the carapace of *C. caretta* which was damaged as the result of a boat strike; and the carapace of *L. kempii* which was damaged as the result of cold stunning. In addition I worked with veterinarians in the development of cold stunning protocols for sea turtles including ventilation techniques, fluid therapies and dietary requirements. I developed inventory control systems along with safety criteria in the handling of stranded animals. Additional responsibilities included instructing students on bay investigations, proper sampling techniques pertaining to water quality analysis and sampling of benthic and pelagic organisms. In addition I was involved with the transport of a common dolphin from our facility in Riverhead to Marineland in Florida.

Summer 1992: **First Mate Whale Watch Cruise**, Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation, Hampton Bays, New York. As mate on the boat my responsibilities included ship maintenance, passenger safety and training of volunteers in the collection of scientific data including Fin and Humpback whale photo identification data.

Professional Affiliations

1997 The Society for Marine Mammalogy
02/93 to date: Member Northeast Regional Stranding Network

Additional course work

February through May 2004: Attended a remote sensing graduate course given at State University of New York at Stony Brook. Course focused on analysis of GIS data.

September 2003: Attended a course on the analysis of tracking data given by Dr. Philip Hooge at the United States Fish and Wildlife Training Academy in West Virginia. Course focused on the analysis of tracking data and used the Arc view extension animal movement.

Presentations / Publications

DiGiovanni R., K. Durham, J. Wocial.: How do we measure success-a case study of nine satellite- tracked animals. Abstract from the 2007 Northeast Regional Stranding Conference hosted by Mystic Aquarium and Cape Cod Stranding Network.

Scott, R.A., R. DiGiovanni Jr., and Durham, K., Evidence of Human Interaction in Pinnipeds Stranded in New York State. Poster: Defenders of Wildlife conference, Sarasota FL .

Waring G. T. , R. DiGiovanni, A. Ferland, and S. Wood, Review of Criteria for Index Sites for Monitoring Seal Abundance and Trends: Application to southern New England. Abstract NAMCO conference on harbour seals.

DiGiovanni R., K. Durham, J. Wocial, Pisciotta. R. D.V.M., Hanush, R. D.V.M. Chaillet, A, Sabrosky, A and Scott, R.: Post Release Monitoring of a male Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) rehabilitated and released in New York waters. Abstract from the 16th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, San Diego, CA .

Durham K, R. DiGiovanni .,J. Wocial, . First documented report of a harbor seal pup (*Phoca vitulina*) in New York waters. Abstract from the 16th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, San Diego, CA .

DiGiovanni R., K. Durham, J. Wocial, K. Zawacki. Post Release Monitoring of juvenile Harp seals (*Phoca groenlandica*) released in New York Waters. Abstract from the 15th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals, Greensboro NC.

Gerle. E., DiGiovanni. R., Pisciotta. R. D.V.M. A fifteen year review of Cold-stunned Sea Turtles in the New York Bight. Abstract from the Proceedings of the 18th Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation.

Gerle. E., DiGiovanni. R., An Evaluation of Human Impacts and Natural Versus Human Induced Mortality in Sea Turtles In The New York Bight. Abstract from the Proceedings of the 17th Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation.

Sadove. S., R. Pisciotta, and R. DiGiovanni . Assessment and Initial Treatment of Cold-Stunned Sea Turtles. Chelonian Conservation and Biology, 1998, 3(1): 84-87.

Sadove. S., K. Durham, R. DiGiovanni, and C. Carminati. Logistics and Preparation for the Capture and Release of A Long Finned Pilot Whale (*Globicephala melaena*). Abstract from the Proceedings of the 1995 Northeast Regional Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Conference.

Pisciotta. R. D.V.M., Durham. K., DiGiovanni. R., Sadove. S., and Gerle. E. A Case Study of Invasive Medical Techniques Employed in the Treatment of a Severely Hypothermic Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle. Abstract from the Proceedings of the 1995 Northeast Regional Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Conference.

Durham. K., DiGiovanni. R. Anomalous Occurrences in Pinniped Strandings in Long Island Waters. Presentation at the 1995 Northeast Regional Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Stranding Conference.

Grants Received

2007: John H. Prescott Rescue Assistance Grant Program. \$100,000
2006: John H. Prescott Rescue Assistance Grant Program. \$100,000
2005: John H. Prescott Rescue Assistance Grant Program. \$100,000
2004: John H. Prescott Rescue Assistance Grant Program. \$100,000
2003: John H. Prescott Rescue Assistance Grant Program. \$ 57,000

2005: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Marine Mammal Abundance Survey for North Atlantic Right Whales in the New York Bight, \$226,000

2005: NOAA Fisheries Marine Mammal Abundance Survey for North Atlantic Right Whales in the New York Bight, \$186,000

2003: Levitt Foundation, \$26,000 for first year and \$20,00 for the next two. Project title, **Pocket PCs Make Learning in Context a Breeze: Study of Local Marine Pollution Using State of the Art Technology**

Special Skills

Certified PADI Advanced Open Water Diver and Rescue Diver

HAZWOPER 40 hour training, CPR First aid through American Red cross

Incident Command System Training 100, 200, 300 and 400 levels

Currently enrolled on flight training for single engine aircraft.

Certification of completion in survival course on aircraft emergency ditching and egress training

Knowledge of Arcview, Word Perfect 6.1, dBASE, Quattro Pro, Microsoft office, RAMAS metapop and Ecolab in addition to general computer network knowledge

Excellent management and organizational skills