

2022 NARWC Board Nominees

Regina Asmutis-Silvia, Whale and Dolphin Conservation

Regina is the Senior Biologist and Executive Director of Whale and Dolphin Conservation's North American office. She is appointed to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team and a member of their Gear Advisory Panel. She oversees WDC's right whale conservation work including its collaborative effort to trial on-demand gear in the lobster fishery. In addition, she worked directly toward the expansion of federally designated right whale critical habitat and the implementation, extension, and expansion of the right whale vessel strike speed rule. Through the development of boater outreach programs, she helped to increase the reporting of live right whale sightings and entangled right whales from commercial whale watching vessels along the US east coast.

Tim Cole, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Tim Cole is a Fisheries Biologist at the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Fisheries Science Center. He leads NOAA's Northeast right whale aerial surveys, is involved in NOAA's large whale serious injury determination process, and works with the US Coast Guard developing systems and protocols for right whale protection.

Philippe Cormier, CORBO, Inc

Nathan Crum, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWC)

Nathan Crum is an Associate Research Scientist at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWC). He has worked for FWC's North Atlantic right whale research program since 2017 and has led the program since 2020. Nathan's research focuses on understanding the demography, distribution, and movements of right whales in the Southeastern US and on estimating the effects of management actions on the risk of vessel strikes. He earned a Master's degree in Natural Resources at Cornell University and is nearing completion of a Master's degree in Statistics at the University of South Florida.

Laura Ganley, New England Aquarium

Laura Ganley is a Postdoctoral Associate Research Scientist in the Spatial Ecology and Mapping Program (EcoMap) at the New England Aquarium. She has been studying large whales in the Gulf of Maine since 2005. Laura has extensive aerial survey experience, having flown right whale surveys in the southeast U.S., Cape Cod Bay, and in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. Laura's Ph.D. centered on estimating right whale abundance from aerial surveys and determining the environmental and biological mechanisms driving variations in abundance. In EcoMap Laura uses species distribution and mechanistic modeling techniques to understand the impacts of climate change and wind energy development on large whales, assess the utility of protected species observer data collected by wind energy developers, and quantify the exposure of large whales to vessels.

Clay George, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Clay George is a senior wildlife biologist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources based in Brunswick, GA. Clay has coordinated the state's right whale recovery project since 2005, including research, management, policy and outreach efforts. He is a Level 5 disentanglement responder, a member of the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team and Southeast Implementation Team, and the PI of the NOAA permit that covers most of the Consortium's data collection efforts in the Southeast U.S. Clay previously served on the Consortium board from 2007 to 2016. He has a MS in wildlife ecology and management from the University of Georgia, and a BA in biology and English from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

Allison Henry, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Allison currently works as a Fishery Biologist on NEFSC's large whale team. She has been an observer and data collector on right whale aerial and shipboard projects conducted by NOAA and various NGOs since 2003,

ranging from the Scotian shelf to the SEUS. When not in the field she is usually mired in serious injury and mortality determinations for all North Atlantic large whales.

Christy Hudak, Center for Coastal Studies

Christy Hudak has been an associate scientist in the Right Whale Ecology Program at the Center for Coastal Studies for 11 years. Her work has contributed to right whale conservation in several ways. Her main work on the assessment of the zooplankton resource in Cape Cod Bay and surrounding waters has provided guidance to managers for the assessment of right whale habitat quality, behavior, and distribution trends. For example, the monitoring of the right whale's food resources that is central to Christy's field work in Cape Cod Bay provides background information for the health assessments of individual right whales and has been widely used as a proxy for assessing small-scale distribution characteristics in feeding habitats. Christy has also contributed to the right whale photo identification and sightings database via aerial and vessel platforms. She has collaborated with specialists from many organizations to provide data, samples (fecal, eDNA, baleen), and guidance in projects involving statistical modeling, genetics, acoustics, and the application of novel technology for the detection of right whales.

Katie Jackson, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

I am a biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (a state government agency). I have been conducting right whale research and monitoring in the Southeast U.S. calving area since 2004. The FWC is a major data contributor to the NARWC and I am one of the primary data contacts for the Southeast. I have experience with aerial and small vessel surveys, photo-ID, biopsy sampling, disentanglement, and strandings as well as long-term database management and multi-agency collaboration. I believe I could use this knowledge to be an effective member of the NARWC board and would be happy to serve.

Zack Klyver, Blue Planet Strategies

Zack is the Maine-based Science Director of Blue Planet Strategies. His work is focused on working with fishermen to test ropeless fishing gear and the role innovative technology can play in reducing right whale entanglement and in improving fisheries. Zack is also working with an international team on the ecosystem services and economic valuation the NARW as an opportunity to generate conservation funding. Before co-founding BPS in 2019 with environmental lawyer, Roger Fleming, Zack worked as a whale watch naturalist for 30 seasons from Bar Harbor, Maine. He introduced thousands of passengers to right whales that were sighted on tours off the Maine coast. Zack worked for coastwise consulting for nearly a decade as a NARW observer on ships (and occasionally on planes) between North Carolina and Florida during the calving season. Likewise, Zack supported Moira Brown and colleagues in a series of winter right whale surveys off the coast of Maine in 2010 and 2011 with the NEAQ and Canadian Whale Institute.

Bob Lynch, Center for Coastal Studies

Bob Lynch joined the consortium in 2010, contributing boat-based right whale sightings data as an intern at the Center for Coastal Studies (CCS). In 2011 and 2012, he conducted aerial surveys focusing on right whales for CCS and the Northeast Large Pelagic Survey Collaborative (NLPSC), and worked part-time on the CCS Marine Animal Entanglement Response (MAER) team. In 2014, he joined the MAER team full time, and has since become a permitted Level 5 Disentanglement Responder under the National Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program.

William McLellan, University of North Carolina, Wilmington

William McLellan is Adjunct in the Department of Biology and Marine Biology at UNC Wilmington since 1995. He is a Master Necropsy Team Leader and has worked on cetacean mortality events in locations around the world. He has led or assisted the necropsy of far too many NARWs along the US and Canadian Atlantic coasts. Other research activities have included conducting aerial surveys for marine mammals, first with dedicated NARWs surveys for NOAA along the southeast and mid-Atlantic coast and then two decades of surveys for the US Navy USWTRT, Ship Shock and AFTT programs. He has managed the UNC Wilmington Marine Mammal Stranding Program since 1996 and has assisted with over 100 graduate and undergraduate

research projects at UNCW. He serves on the NEIT, SEIT, ALWTRT, PLTRT, BDTRT, HPTRT, Emeritus WGMMUME and is a past Board Member serving three prior terms on the Right Whale Consortium Board.

Lyne Morissette, M- Expertise Marine

Owning a M.Sc. in wildlife management and Ph.D. in zoology, Lyne is an expert in conservation biology. She's the CEO of a consulting firm in environmental mediation and an associate professor at ISMER (Université du Québec à Rimouski). Since 2000, her research have focused on marine mammal and fisheries interactions. During the last decade, she has specialized on NARW and is very involved in research projects focusing on the coexistence between whales and humans (fishing or shipping activities) in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, as well as the development of innovative technologies (buoys on demand, detection systems for ships, etc.) allowing this coexistence between the two main industries involved in the fate of these whales. Lyne has a large network of collaborators in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and works, amongst others, with 12 fishermen associations (snow crab and lobster) to develop solutions to protect the species. She was a board member of the NARWC in the past and would be very keen to take up this position for another term.

Susan Parks, Syracuse University

Susan Parks is an Associate Professor in the Biology Department at Syracuse University located in Syracuse, NY. Her research focuses on the behavior and acoustic communication of North Atlantic right whales, with studies conducted of variation in behavior and sound production across right whale habitats. She has been an active member of the right whale consortium for the past 22 years, and has previously served on the NARWC board as a general member, and Vice Chair and Chair with her last term ending in 2016.

Dan Pendleton, Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium

Dan Pendleton is a Research Scientist at the New England Aquarium. Dan earned his BS in Mathematics, and his PhD in Natural Resources and right whale habitat modeling from Cornell University in 2010. He participated in over 10 years of vessel-based right whale surveys in the Bay of Fundy and has participated in NARWC annual meetings since 2005. Dan's research is focused on measuring the effects of climate change and human activities on North Atlantic right whales. Dan collaborates with oceanographers, observers and field teams, and resource managers. His specific research activities include hindcasting and forecasting species distributions, understanding and predicting the dynamics of predators and prey abundance (e.g., whales and zooplankton), measuring phenological shifts, and assessing risks to marine mammals from human activities.

Jessica Redfern, Anderson Cabot Center for Ocean Life at the New England Aquarium

Dr. Jessica Redfern is a Senior Scientist and Chair of the Spatial Ecology, Mapping, and Assessment Program (EcoMap) at the New England Aquarium's Anderson Cabot Center. The goal of the EcoMap program is to assess risk to marine species from human activities and climate change. EcoMap uses innovative monitoring and modeling techniques to provide a framework for internal and external collaborators to develop solutions to marine conservation challenges. Examples of the conservation challenges that EcoMap addresses include ship strikes, chronic noise, entanglement, and minimizing impacts of wind energy. Jessica develops cetacean-habitat models and uses predictions from these models to assess risk to cetaceans. Her current projects include assessing the risk of ships striking whales in areas with high shipping traffic around the world, developing methods to assess entanglement risk, identifying priority habitat for large whales, and using oceanographic data to interpret trends in the abundance of cetaceans.

Rob Schick, Duke University

Rob Schick is a quantitative ecologist working at Duke University. His research focuses on the distribution, movement and health of marine mammals. He has been involved in the right whale community since the early 2000's, and is actively working on 3 right whale projects: the Population Consequences of Multiple Stressors that examines links between stressors health and vital rates (SERDP funded); a project to refine and extend density maps by jointly modeling aerial observations with passive acoustic detections in Cape Cod Bay and beyond (NOAA OPR funded; and examining the impacts of offshore wind on NARW (BOEM funded). In addition he will contribute to the project relating genomics to health (funded by Genome Canada).

Elizabeth Thompson, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Canada

My work with right whales really started in 2017 while working with Transport Canada's National Aerial Surveillance Program aboard the TC-Dash 8 aircraft. We worked closely with DFO and NOAA to increase right whale monitoring efforts in the Gulf of St. Lawrence which continues to this day. Since 2019, I transferred to DFO and have been working as a biologist in Gulf Region/Science in the Marine Mammal unit. Currently, our team's main focus includes the coordination, monitoring, and collection of North Atlantic right whale data in eastern Canada. I have participated in the last two NARW Consortium meetings and have worked closely with the New England Aquarium (NEAQ) to build a capacity in Canada for preliminary identification of NARW. In addition to being the lead on the identification program for NARW imagery in Canada, I also coordinate the submission of Canadian government photographic data to the NEAQ each fall/winter. I have also participated on NOAA NARW survey in Canada, and developed a Shiny App to more quickly identify the 'Gulf whales' which faithfully have been returning to the Gulf of St. Lawrence in recent years. These efforts have allowed us to better collaborate with our colleagues and partners in our efforts to protect the right whales while in Canada and personally, has allowed me to feel really connected to each of their stories.

Angelia Vanderlaan, Fisheries and Oceans Canada/Canadian Whale Institute/Dalhousie University

Dr. Angelia Vanderlaan is Research Scientist at Fisheries and Oceans Canada, an Associate Research Scientist with the Canadian Whale Institute, and an Adjunct Scholar with the Department of Oceanography at Dalhousie University. In 2010, Angelia completed her Ph.D. in Biological Oceanography from Dalhousie University where her research quantified the risk to North Atlantic right whales from ocean-going vessels and fishing gear. This research was used in the design and justification for conservation initiatives to protect right whale from vessel strikes in Canadian waters. Angelia continues her right whale research in her current positions and focuses on further risk analyses, habitat suitability modelling, and detection technologies for a real-time alert system to warn mariners of the presence of right whales to reduce the risk of lethal vessel strikes. Angelia received a Bachelor of Science Co-op in Marine Biology and Statistics (Combined Honours) from Dalhousie University and a Master of Science in Statistics from the University of Victoria.