

PhD Keeps Amy Guest Busy

Amy Guest

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The last 6 months have been a huge learning curve, kicking-off my PhD, getting back in to 'study mode' and seeing the project plans start to take shape.

In March, June and July I carried out different components of an integrated-internship at the Natural History Museum which included remote administration work as well as a laboratory placement at the NHM lab in London, where I extracted DNA from herbarium algae specimens from South Georgia. I was able to develop useful lab skills using a range of technology plus experience in extracting DNA using Qiagen DNA kits, which will prove useful for my own project later on. This was a Darwin Initiative funded project headed by Professor Juliet Brodie.

Three intensive R courses also kept me busy in April and May, as well as additional remote courses provided by UoA throughout the year for their international postgraduate students.



Excitingly, October saw my fieldwork begin for my 'temporal change' chapter, with dives in Port William and Berkeley Sound in the shallow depths, supported by crucial project partner SMSG and their volunteers. Use of a Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV) has also

shown what interesting predators and scavengers are present in the shallow Falklands waters when the divers are not around scaring them off!

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Besides this, I have been busy reading relevant literature, collating my notes in to an ongoing literature review, reaching out to new collaborators around the world and gaining a better understanding of what my next 3 years will look like.

Collaborators on the project include: the Shallow Marine Surveys Group, British Antarctic Survey, the University of Chile, the University of Magallanes and the Natural History Museum, London. My PhD Supervisors include Dr. Paul Brickle (SAERI/UoA), Professor Stuart Piertney (UoA) and Dr. Alex Douglas (UoA). A big thanks to local sponsors, Falkland Islands Government's CDS fund, the John Cheek Trust and RBC Ltd.

