

# Jaclyn A. Aubin

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## Education

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### **PhD, Integrative Biology** (2020 - 2025)

University of Windsor, ON

Co-supervisors: Dr. Daniel Mennill & Dr. Valeria Vergara

Thesis: Vocal communication, social structure, and responses to disturbance in belugas (*Delphinapterus leucas*)

### **MSc, Cognitive and Behavioural Ecology** (2017 – 2020)

Memorial University of Newfoundland, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Eric Vander Wal

Awarded: “Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies”

Thesis: Investigation of allocare in the St. Lawrence Estuary beluga population

### **BSc, Honours in Marine Biology** (2011-2015)

Memorial University of Newfoundland, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Suzanne Dufour

Thesis: Investigation of iron accumulation in the tissues of symbiotic thyasirid clams

## Publications

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### **Published**

Cotillard T, Sécheresse X, **Aubin JA**, Mikus M-A, Vergara V, Gambs S, Michaud R, Martins CCA, Turgeon S, Chion C, Roca I. (2024). Automatic detection and classification of beluga whale calls in the St. Lawrence Estuary. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 156, 3723-3740.

**Aubin JA**, Dobney SL, Foreman SAM, Doucet SM, Norris DR, Williams H, Mennill DJ. (2024) Birds respond more strongly to locally-common versus locally-rare songs: a playback experiment with Savannah sparrows. *Animal Behaviour*, 212, 127-135.

Prokopenko CM, Ellington EH, Robitaille A, **Aubin JA**, Baluffi-Fry J, Laforge M, Webber QMR, Zabihi-Seissan S, Vander Wal E. (2024). Friends because of foes: synchronous movement within predator-prey domains. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 379(1912), 20230374.

**Aubin JA**, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Mennill DJ, Vergara V. 2023. Fly with care: Belugas show evasive responses to low altitude drone flights. *Marine Mammal Science*, 39(3), 1-22.

**Aubin JA**, Vander Wal E, Michaud R. 2022. Protection, energetic assistance, or social perks: How do beluga offspring benefit from allocare? *Marine Mammal Science*, 39(1), 77-97.

**Aubin JA**, Vander Wal E, Michaud R. 2021. Prospective evolutionary drivers of allocare in wild belugas. *Behaviour*, 158(8-9), 727-756.

Newudiuk L, Boyle SP, Ethier JP, **Aubin JA**, Ballufi-Fry J, Dedeban E, Laforge MP, Prokopenko CM, Turner JW, Webber QMR., Vander Wal E. 2021. Sociopolitical factors drive conservation planning timelines: a Canadian case study with global implications. *Biological Conservation*, 257(1), 109091.

### ***In Press and Accepted***

**Aubin JA**, Mennill DJ, Michaud R., Vergara V. 2026. Beluga societies: the social and cultural lives of an enigmatic odontocete. *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology*. In press.  
*Expected publication: January 2026*

**Aubin JA**, Mennill DJ, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Vergara V. 2026. From calls to communities: Acoustic monitoring of contact calls indicates spatial structure in endangered belugas. *Animal Behaviour*.  
*Accepted Jan. 5, 2026*

### **Competitive Awards and Scholarships**

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Mitacs Elevate Postdoctoral Fellowship (07/2025)	\$120,000
Animal Behaviour Society Student Grant (06/2022)	\$2,000
Biology Graduate Leadership Award for Excellence (05/2022)	\$500
Ontario Graduate Scholarship (06/2020) – declined	\$15,000
NSERC Canada Graduate Scholarship -Doctoral (04/2020)	\$105,000
Dr. Jon Lien Memorial Recruitment Scholarship (09/2017)	\$5,000
NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award (05/2014)	\$4,500

### **Academic Work Experience**

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#### **Post-Doctoral Fellow (2025 - )**

Mennill Sound Analysis Lab, University of Windsor – Windsor, ON

Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Mennill

- Develop and lead a research project on belugas in the Churchill River Estuary
- Perform analyses and write manuscripts for publication

#### **Field Technician (2023 - 2025)**

Kent Island Savannah Sparrow Project, University of Windsor – Kent Island, NB

Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Mennill

- Record, re-sight, and assist in banding wild birds
- Perform playback experiments on wild birds

#### **Teaching Assistant, Ecology (2020 - 2024)**

University of Windsor – Windsor, ON

Supervisor: Dr. Daniel Mennill

- Co-develop a series of labs aimed at scientific writing and communication
- Provide detailed feedback to foster students' scientific writing skills

**Teaching Assistant, Selected Topics in Animal Behaviour (2019)**

Memorial University of Newfoundland – St. John's, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Carolyn Walsh

- Prepare and present critique writing workshop
- Assess student learning through worksheets

**Field Technician (2018 - 2019)**

Moose Sustainable Stewardship Project, Memorial University – Lac-du-Bonnet, MB

Supervisor: Dr. Eric Vander Wal

- Use ATVs, snowmobiles, and snowshoes to deploy camera traps in remote locations
- Present project goals and progress reports to First Nations stakeholders

**Field Technician (2018 - 2019)**

Fogo Island Caribou Calf Collaring, Memorial University – Fogo Island, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Eric Vander Wal,

- Use telemetry equipment to track collared caribou
- Capture, collar, sex, measure, and tag caribou calves

**Teaching Assistant, Biology of Vertebrates (2018 - 2019)**

Memorial University – St. John's, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Eric Vander Wal

- Prepare and lead midterm and final review sessions
- Mentor students in difficulty

**Field Technician (2018)**

Snowshoe Hare Foraging Project, Memorial University – Bloomfield, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Eric Vander Wal

- Trap, collar, and sex snowshoe hares
- Use telemetry equipment

**Drone Pilot/Field Assistant (2017 - 2018)**

Groupe de Recherche et d'Éducation sur les Mammifères Marins - Tadoussac, QC

Supervisor: Robert Michaud

- Pilot drones in the field and deploy hydrophones
- Perform behavioural analysis of beluga pods from drone footage

**Photo-identification Technician (2016)**

Groupe de Recherche et d'Éducation sur les Mammifères Marins - Tadoussac, QC

Supervisor: Robert Michaud

- Carry out cetacean photoidentification protocols in both field and laboratory settings
- Raise public awareness of local conservation issues and research projects

**Marine Science Technician (2016)**

Department of Fisheries and Oceans – St. John's, NL (2016)

Supervisor: Dr. Rick Rideout

- Perform histological analysis of halibut tissues
- Identify clusters of rodlet cells in gonadal tissues

**NSERC Undergraduate Student Researcher (2014)**

Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Suzanne Dufour

-Collect marine bivalve specimens

-Perform histological analysis of tissues

**Undergraduate Lab Technician (2013-2014)**

Memorial University of Newfoundland - St. John's, NL

Supervisor: Dr. Suzanne Dufour

-Prepare PCR for bacterial 16S rRNA sequences

-Assess PCR results via gel electrophoresis

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**Mentorship**

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Co-supervised and mentored 8 undergraduate students in field techniques and bioacoustics data analysis.

Co-supervised 2 undergraduate honours projects, with both students successfully advancing to master's programs.

Trained students in field data collection methods, statistical analysis using R, and scientific writing.

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**Conference Presentations**

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- July 2025 Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution Annual Conference - Sherbrooke, QC  
"Vocal and local: spatial structure and call variation in St. Lawrence belugas"  
**Aubin JA**, Mennill DJ, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Vergara V
- June 2024 Animal Behavior Society Annual Meeting - London, ON  
"Acoustic analysis of contact calls confirms social structure in St. Lawrence belugas"  
**Aubin JA**, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Mennill DJ, Vergara V
- May 2023 Beluga Symposium - Montreal, QC  
"Acoustic analysis of contact calls reveals the social structure of St. Lawrence belugas"  
**Aubin JA**, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Mennill DJ, Vergara V
- Aug. 2022 24th biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals Society - Tampa, FL  
"How to spy on a beluga: Assessing drone disturbance in free-living whales"  
**Aubin JA**, Mikus M-A, Michaud R, Mennill DJ, Vergara V
- Aug. 2019 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Meeting of the Canadian Society for Ecology & Evolution, the Entomological Society of Canada, and the Acadian Entomological Society - Fredericton, NB  
"Patterns and prospective drivers of allocare in St. Lawrence Estuary belugas"  
**Aubin JA**, Vander Wal E, Michaud R
- April 2019 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Biology Graduate Student Symposium, St. John's, NL  
"Why should I care? Patterns of allocare in St. Lawrence Estuary belugas"  
**Aubin JA**, Vander Wal E, Michaud R

- Oct. 2018 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Atlantic Society of Fisheries & Wildlife Biologists -  
Corner Brook, NL  
“Beluga babysitters: Evidence of costly allomaternal behaviour in an endangered  
social odontocete”  
**Aubin JA, Vander Wal E, Michaud R**
- May 2018 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Zoologists - St. John’s, NL  
“Evidence of allomaternal care in an endangered social odontocete”  
**Aubin JA, Vander Wal E, Michaud R**
- April 2018 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Biology Graduate Student Symposium - St. John’s, NL  
“Investigation of allomaternal care in the endangered St. Lawrence Estuary  
beluga population”  
**Aubin JA, Vander Wal E, Michaud R**

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## Science Communication

### Interviews

“How AI and machine learning led to ‘mind blowing’ progress in understanding animal communication” (01/2025)

Alan Yu, The Pulse

<https://why.org/segments/how-ai-led-to-breakthrough-in-decoding-animal-communication/>

“L’avancement des études sur le béluga” (05/2023)

Sophie-Andrée Blondin, Radio Canada

<https://ici.radio-canada.ca/ohdio/premiere/emissions/les-annees-lumiere/episodes/706590/rattrapage-dimanche-7-mai-2023>

“Fly with care” (04/2023)

Erica Wirth, Breeching Extinction Podcast

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/124-fly-with-care/id1480638693?i=1000610099689>

“Flying drones at low altitudes may harass belugas” (03/2023)

Joshua Rapp, The Wildlife Society

<https://wildlife.org/flying-drones-at-low-altitudes-may-harass-belugas/>

“How studying ‘babysitting’ in belugas can help protect an endangered population” (08/2018)

Evgeni Matveev, CBC

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/babysitting-belugas-for-conservation-1.4779013>

### Public talks

“Beluga societies: the social and cultural lives of the white whale” (07/2025)

Frontiers North Adventures – Churchill, MB

“Vocal communication and social structures of belugas” (07/2024)  
Frontiers North Adventures – Churchill, MB

“Community and dialects in St. Lawrence belugas” (02/2022)  
The Whale Sanctuary Project – Live webinar (05/2022)

“Les soins allomaternels chez les bélugas du St. Laurent” (08/2018)  
GREMM - Tadoussac, QC

“La recherche sur les bélugas de la Baie-Ste-Marguerite” (07/2018)  
GREMM – Tadoussac, QC

“Cetacean photoidentification in modern research and conservation” (07/2016)  
GREMM - Tadoussac, QC

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## Memberships & Affiliations

- Canadian Society for Ecology and Evolution (2019 - )
- Animal Behaviour Society (2024 - )

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## Competencies

- English and French (fully fluent)
- Bioacoustic methods (terrestrial and marine)
- Bioacoustics software (Raven Pro, Syrinx, R Studio)
- Photo-identification of cetaceans
- Computer programming (R Studio, Python)
- Database management (including over 50 TB of acoustic recordings)
- Statistical analyses (GLMM, SNA, AIC, BIC, PCA, etc.)
- Student mentorship and supervision
- Project management
- Science communication

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## Certifications and Licenses

- Firearms Possession and Acquisition License (PAL)  
Certified by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2025
- Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP)  
Certified by Transport Canada, 2022
- Small Domestic Vessel Basic Safety (SDV-BS)  
Certified by Transport Canada, 2022
- Restricted Operator Competency (ROC-M)  
Certified by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2022
- Snowmobile and All Terrain Vehicle Operator’s Course  
Certified by Canada Safety Council, 2019