

# Research Project for PhD Student

## Project Title:

Investigation of hookworm infection in the Australian sea lion, *Neophoca cinerea*

## Project Supervisor:

Dr Rachael Gray

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## One Sentence Project Summary: (single sentence for Google-style search results)

This project will investigate the prevalence and importance of hookworm infection in Australian sea lion populations and determine the role of hookworm in disease and subsequent mortality in Australian sea lion pups.

## Project Synopsis: (about 250 words max)

Little is known about the health and disease status of the Australian sea lion, *Neophoca cinerea*, and the contribution of disease to mortality in this species. Preliminary investigations indicate that hookworm infection is common in Australian sea lion pups and is likely to be an important cause of mortality in pups.

This projects aims to: investigate the prevalence and intensity of hookworm infection in pups at several Australian sea lion colonies in South Australia; establish the role of hookworm infection in pup mortality in this species; and determine the importance of hookworm and other pathogens in Australian sea lion populations.

**Key words:** Hookworm, *Uncinaria*, Australian sea lion, *Neophoca cinerea*, pinniped, veterinary pathology

## Other Information: (e.g. scholarships/funding available, etc.)

This project will involve veterinary pathology and parasitological investigations, necropsy and histopathology. Periods of field work to enable sample collection from Australian sea lions, including field work at remote sites, will be necessary during the course of the project.

The successful applicant will have an Honours 1 degree or equivalent. A degree in Veterinary Science registrable in Australia (NSW and South Australia) is preferred due to the nature of the project. However, applicants with Bachelor degrees in animal and veterinary biosciences, biological sciences or zoology are encouraged to apply. Applicants must have a keen interest in undertaking marine mammal research (applicants with previous marine mammal experience are highly sought) and in veterinary pathology and parasitology.

A scholarship (<http://agile2.ucc.usyd.edu.au/ro/opportunities/scholarships/280>) is available that will provide support for 3 years on a full-time basis (\$22,500 AUD per annum, tax exempt) subject to satisfactory progress, for this research project leading to a PhD. The award of this scholarship is conditional on The University of Sydney signing the Funding agreement for the grant.

Note: This scholarship with stipend does not cover any tuition fees payable by international students.

For additional information on this project, please contact Dr Rachael Gray. Applications should be sent directly to Dr Rachael Gray at the above address and must include a brief cover letter, an up-to-date curriculum vitae, a copy of the applicant's academic transcript, and the names and contact details of two referees.

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