

...PRESENTS:

MAX TARJAN

WHS SCIENTIST IN RESIDENCE, 2013-2014



Some stuff about me:

- Age: 25
- Where I grew up: Oldwick, New Jersey
- High School: Kent Place School
- Favorite subjects in high school: Biology, French
- College (undergraduate): Princeton University
- Some of my favorite things: Yoga, traveling, scuba diving
- Something weird about me: One summer in high school I performed on a triple trapeze in a circus!
- What I think or do when I get frustrated: I use physical activity to stay calm and focused. Jogging and yoga are great ways to help with frustration and also to reward myself when I've been working hard! If I need some time away from a frustrating situation, I take my dog on a walk.



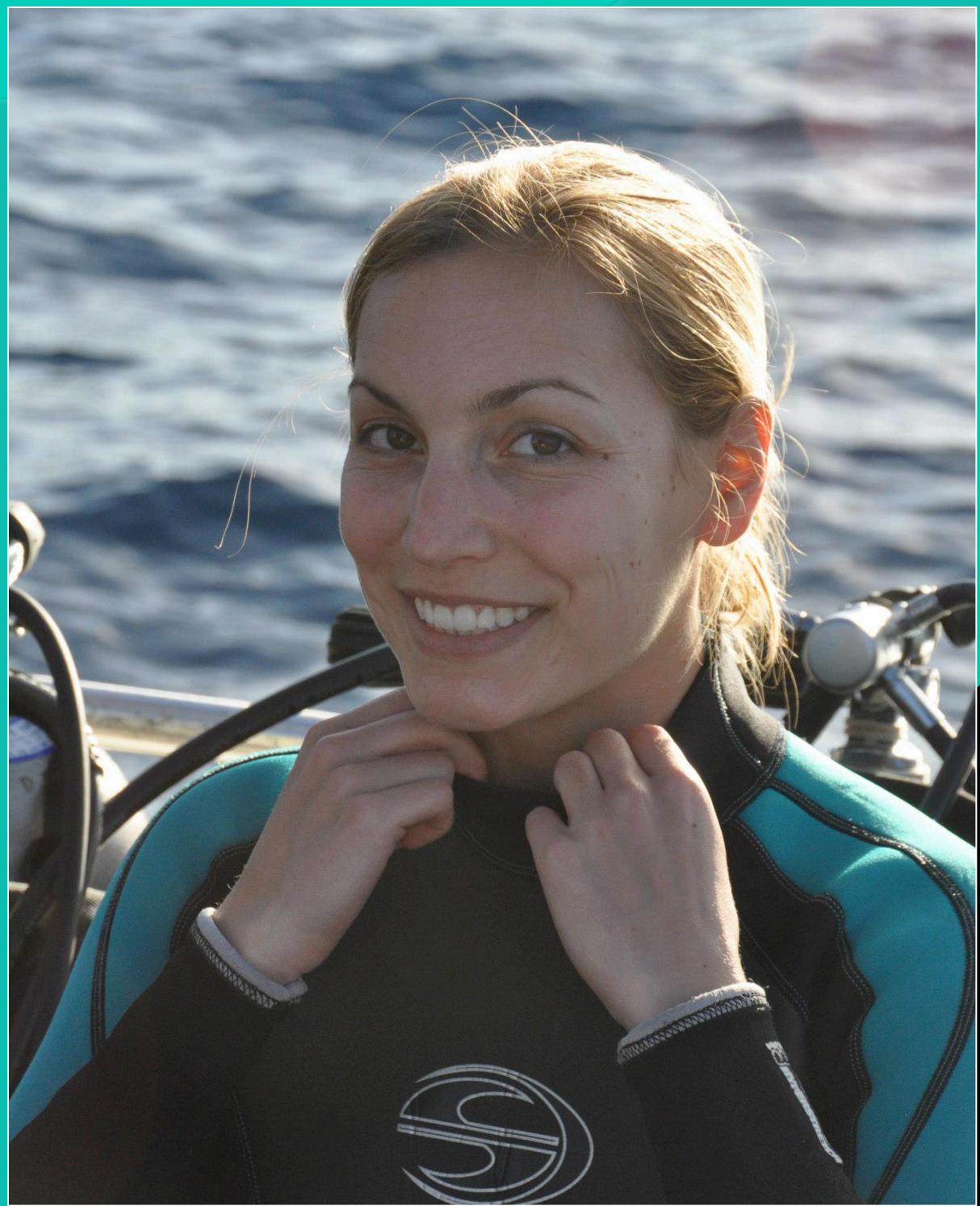
For graduate school, I conduct my fieldwork in Monterey, CA. I travel along the coast with a radio receiver and a telescope looking for sea otters. When I find sea otters with tags, I record their location, behavior, and collect environmental data.



I previously studied ecology and behavior in Kenya, Panama, and Indonesia.



Sea otters eat 1/4 of their body weight in food every day!



What I study

For many animals, the spatial distribution of resources—such as food and shelter—profoundly affects the social system of the population. In sea otters, males defend aquatic territories to attract females, but what resources are the males defending? Are females using invertebrate prey for food, kelp for resting, or shelter? Are there any attributes of the male himself that influence female mate choice?

To answer these questions, I track individual sea otters in the wild and I use genetic analyses to count the number of pups sired by each male. Answering these questions will allow me to identify the resources that are essential for reproduction in a threatened species.

My love for science began with a close connection to the outdoors and amazing teachers. I am excited to share science with the students at WHS, both inside and outside of the classroom!