Matthew A. Birk, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Biology
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Education	
2018	Ph.D. Marine Science. University of South Florida. College of Marine Science.
2013	B.Sc. Marine Biology (with University Honors). summa cum laude. <i>University of North Carolina Wilmington</i> . Department of Biology and Marine Biology.
	Professional Experience
2021-Present	Assistant Professor of Biology. Saint Francis University. Department of Biology.
2019-2021	NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow. Marine Biological Laboratory. Eugene Bell Center for Regenerative Biology and Tissue Engineering. Advised by Joshua J.C. Rosenthal.
2018-2019	Postdoctoral Scientist. Marine Biological Laboratory. Eugene Bell Center for Regenerative Biology and Tissue Engineering. Advised by Joshua J.C. Rosenthal.
2016-2018	NSF Graduate Research Fellow. <i>University of South Florida.</i> College of Marine Science. Advised by Brad A. Seibel.
2015-2016	NSF Graduate Research Fellow. University of Rhode Island. Department of Biological Sciences. Advised by Brad A. Seibel.
2013-2015	Graduate Research Assistant. University of Rhode Island. Department of Biological Sciences. Advised by Brad A. Seibel.
2011-2013	Undergraduate Research Assistant. University of North Carolina Wilmington. Department of Biology and Marine Biology. Advised by J. Wilson White.
2012	NOAA Hollings Scholar. NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center. Fisheries Ecology Division. Advised by John C. Field.
2011	NSF REU Student. Marine Biological Laboratory. NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates Program. Advised by Roger T. Hanlon.
2010-2011	Undergraduate Research Assistant. University of North Carolina Wilmington. De-

partment of Biology and Marine Biology. Advised by Sean C. Lema.

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Funding

Funding to date: \$508,628.

External funding

2023-2027	Kavli Exploration Award in Neurobiology and Changing Ecosystems. The Kavli Foundation. Effects of temperature and hypoxia on RNA editing in squid. \$1.7M total budget. \$133,320 SFU subaward budget.
2019-2022	$\textbf{Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology.}\ \textit{National Science Foundation.}\ \$207{,}000.$
2015-2018	Graduate Research Fellowship. National Science Foundation. \$138,000.
2017	Travel Grant. Society for Experimental Biology. \$185.
2014	Grant-in-Aid of Research. Sigma Xi. \$700.
2011-2013	Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. \$22,500

Institutional funding

2022	Faculty Grant. SFU School of STEAM. \$900.
2015	Enhancement of Graduate Research Award. URI Graduate School. \$1000.
2015	Student Travel Fund. URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences. \$150.
2015	Student Travel Fund. URI Department of Biological Sciences. \$150.
2014	Student Travel Fund. URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences. \$200.
2014	Student Travel Fund. URI Department of Biological Sciences. \$200.
2013	Enhancement of Graduate Research Award. URI Graduate School. \$1000.
2013	Undergraduate Travel Award. UNCW Center for the Support of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships. \$1000.
2011	Undergraduate Travel Award. UNCW Center for the Support of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships. \$1000.
2011	Research Supplies Grant. UNCW Center for the Support of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships. \$323.
2010	Undergraduate Travel Award. UNCW Center for the Support of Undergraduate Research and Fellowships. \$1000.

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Publications

12. Artigas P., Meyer D.J., Young V.C., Spontarelli K., Eastman J., Strandquist E., Rui H., Roux B., Birk M.A., Nakanishi H., Abe K., Gatto C. (2023). A Na pump with reduced stoichiometry is upregulated by brine shrimp in extreme salinities. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 120(52): e2313999120.

- 11. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Liscovitch-Brauer N., Dominguez M.J., McNeme S., Yue Y., Hoff J.D., Twersky I., Verhey K.J., Sutton R.B., Eisenberg E., Rosenthal J.J.C. (2023). *Temperature-dependent RNA editing in octopus extensively recodes the neural proteome*. **Cell**, 186(12): 2544-2555.
- Seibel B.A., <u>Birk M.A.</u> (2022). Unique thermal sensitivity imposes a cold-water energetic barrier for vertical migrators. Nature Climate Change, 12: 1052-1058.
- Seibel B.A., Andres A., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Burns A.L., Shaw C.T., Timpe A.W., Welsh C.J. (2021). Oxygen supply capacity breathes new life into critical oxygen partial pressure (P_{crit}). Journal of Experimental Biology, 224(8): jeb242210.
- 8. Geffeney S.L., Williams B.L., Rosenthal J.J.C., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Felkins J., Wisell C.M., Curry E.R., Hanifin C.T. (2019). Convergent evolution in a voltage-gated sodium channel underlies TTX-resistance in the greater blue-ringed octopus: Hapalochlaena lunulata. **Toxicon**, 170: 77-84.
- 7. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Mislan K.A.S., Wishner K.F., Seibel B.A. (2019). *Metabolic adaptations of the pelagic octopod*, *Japetella diaphana*, to oxygen minimum zones. **Deep-Sea Research Part I: Oceanographic Research Papers**, 148: 123-131.
- 6. Wishner K.F., Seibel B.A., Roman C., Deutsch C., Outram D., Shaw C.T., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Mislan K.A.S., Adams T.J., Moore D., Riley S. (2018). *Ocean deoxygenation and zooplankton: Very small oxygen differences matter.* **Science Advances**, 4: eaau5180.
- 5. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, McLean E.L., Seibel B.A. (2018). Ocean acidification does not limit squid metabolism via blood oxygen supply. **Journal of Experimental Biology**, 221(19): jeb187443.
- 4. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Dymowska A.K., Seibel B.A. (2018). Do squid breathe through their skin? **Journal of Experimental Biology**, 221(19): jeb185553.
- 3. Chubb C., Chiao C.-C., Ulmer K., Buresch K., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Hanlon R.T. (2018). Dark scene elements strongly influence cuttlefish camouflage responses in visually cluttered environments. **Vision Research**, 149: 86-101.
- 2. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Paight C., Seibel B.A. (2017). Observations of multiple pelagic egg masses from small-sized jumbo squid (Dosidicus gigas) in the Gulf of California. **Journal of Natural History**, 51(43-44): 2569-2584.
- 1. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, White J.W. (2014). Experimental determination of a prey patch from the predator's perspective. **Oecologia**, 174(3): 723-729.

Presentations

Invited presentations

2025 University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Molecular Biology Program Symposium.

2018 University of Rhode Island. Graduate School of Oceanography. Bio at Noon Seminar Series.

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Oral presentations

13. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Liscovitch-Brauer N., Eisenberg E., Sutton R.B., Yue Y., Verhey K.J., Rosenthal J.J.C. (2022). Temperature-sensitive RNA editing causes extensive protein recoding to compensate protein function. Cephalopod International Advisory Council Conference. Sesimbra, Portugal.

- 12. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Liscovitch-Brauer N., Eisenberg E., Rosenthal J.J.C. (2020). **Temperature-sensitive** RNA editing causes extensive protein recoding to compensate protein function. *Molluscan Forum*.
- 11. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Dymowska A.K., Seibel B.A. (2018). **Do squids breathe through their skin?** Cephalopod International Advisory Council Conference. Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA.
- 10. <u>Birk M.A.</u> (2018). **Ecophysiology of Oxygen Supply in Cephalopods.** Dissertation Defense. University of South Florida.
- 9. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, McLean E.L., Seibel B.A. (2018). Oxygen supply unaffected by ocean acidification in active squids (and probably most other marine animals too). Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Meeting. San Francisco, California, USA.
- 8. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Seibel B.A. (2018). **Squids do not breathe through their skin.** Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Meeting. San Francisco, California, USA.
- 7. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Seibel B.A. (2015). **Observations of multiple pelagic egg masses from small-sized** jumbo squid (*Dosidicus gigas*) in the Gulf of California. *Cephalopod International Advisory Council Conference*. Hakodate, Japan.
- 6. <u>Birk M.A.</u> (2013). How to choose your next meal: experimentally defining the spatial scale of a prey patch from the predator's perspective. *Undergraduate Honors Thesis Defense*. University of North Carolina Wilmington.
- 5. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, White J.W. (2013). **How to choose your next meal: determining the spatial scale of predatory foraging behavior in fishes.** Colonial Academic Alliance Undergraduate Research Conference. University of Delaware.
- 4. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Field J.C. (2012). **Population dynamics of the market squid, Doryteuthis opalescens, in the California Current System.** State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium. Duke University.
- 3. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Field J.C. (2012). **Population dynamics of the market squid**, *Doryteuthis opalescens*, in the California Current System. *Science and Education Symposium*. NOAA Office of Education.
- 2. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2011). **Cuttlefish camouflage:** using visual psychophysics approach with grayscale disk patterns to examine disruptive body patterning. State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium. East Carolina University.
- 1. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2011). **Changeable camouflage: How cuttlefish choose the right pattern.** *Undergraduate Research Symposium.* Marine Biological Laboratory.

Poster presentations

- 14. Voss J., Martin N.J., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Eidelman M., Dick B.*, Singer R., Hammarlund E.U., Eisenberg E., Rosenthal J.J.C. (2025). **RNA editing and environmental acclimation in the cephalopod nervous system**. *Neurobiology in Changing Environments Symposium*. Seattle, Washington, USA.
- 13. McNeme S., Bui A.A., Harsini F.M., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Rosenthal J.J.C., Sutton R.B. (2019). **ADAR-mediated mRNA recoding in C2 domains of synaptotagmin 1 in O. bimaculoides.** Texas Protein Folders & Function Meeting. Cleveland, Texas, USA.

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12. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Mislan K.A.S., Wishner K.F., Seibel B.A. (2018). **How do mesopelagic octopods** breathe in the OMZ? Cephalopod International Advisory Council Conference. Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA.

- 11. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, McLean E.L., Seibel B.A. (2018). **Squid oxygen supply is resilient to ocean acidification.** Cephalopod International Advisory Council Conference. Saint Petersburg, Florida, USA.
- 10. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Mislan K.A.S., Seibel B.A. (2018). **How do mesopelagic octopods breathe in the OMZ?** Ocean Sciences Meeting. Portland, Oregon, USA.
- 9. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, McLean E.L., Seibel B.A. (2017). **Combined effects of CO₂**, **temperature, and O₂** on squid metabolism. Society for Experimental Biology Annual Meeting. Gothenburg, Sweden.
- 8. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, McLean E.L., Seibel B.A. (2015). **Effects of increased CO₂ on squid metabolism and hypoxia tolerance.** Cephalopod International Advisory Council Symposium. Hakodate, Japan.
- 7. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, White J.W. (2013). **How to choose your next meal: determining the spatial scale of predatory foraging behavior in fishes.** *Undergraduate Research and Creativity Showcase*. University of North Carolina Wilmington.
- 6. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, White J.W. (2013). How to choose your next meal: determining the spatial scale of predatory foraging behavior in fishes. *Benthic Ecology Meeting*. Savannah, Georgia, USA.
- 5. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2012). **Cuttlefish camouflage:** using a psychophysics experiment with visual patterns to examine disruptive body patterning. *Undergraduate Research and Creativity Showcase*. University of North Carolina Wilmington.
- 4. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2012). **Cuttlefish camouflage:** using a psychophysics experiment with visual patterns to examine disruptive body patterning. *Colonial Academic Alliance Undergraduate Research Conference*. Old Dominion University.
- 3. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2012). **Cuttlefish camouflage:** using visual psychophysics approach with grayscale disk patterns to examine disruptive body patterning. *Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Meeting*. Charleston, South Carolina, USA.
- 2. <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Ulmer K.M., Chiao C.C., Chubb C., Siemann L., Hanlon R.T. (2011). **Effect on camouflage behavior of grayscale disk patterns in the visual environment of cuttlefish.** *Undergraduate Research Symposium*. Marine Biological Laboratory.
- 1. Hardy K.M., Follett C.R., <u>Birk M.A.</u>, Burnett L.E., Lema S.C. (2011). **HIF-1α** and **HIF-1β** gene transcription exhibits tissue-dependent responses to hypoxia and hypercapnic hypoxia in the **Atlantic blue crab**, *Callinectes sapidus*. Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Annual Meeting. Salt Lake City, Utah, USA.
- * Undergraduate Student

Teaching

- Environmental Animal Physiology (BIOL 345). Instructor of Record. Saint Francis University. 1 semester. Spring 2024.
- Marine Biology (BIOL 218). Instructor of Record. Saint Francis University. 4 semesters. Fall 2021-2024.

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• Oceanography (MS 223). Instructor of Record. Saint Francis University. 2 semesters. Spring 2022-2025.

- Research Diver Methods (MS 471). Instructor of Record. Saint Francis University. 2 semesters. Spring 2022-2024.
- Vertebrate Physiology Lab (BIOL 406L). Instructor of Record. Saint Francis University. 1 semester. Spring 2025.
- Introduction to Biology: Molecules, Cells, and Animal Physiology Lab (BIOL 111L). *Instructor of Record.* Saint Francis University. 8 semesters. Fall 2021 Spring 2025.
- First-year Seminar (CORE 113). Guest Lecturer. Saint Francis University. Fall 2021.
- Marine Aquaculture (OCE 4930). Teaching Assistant. University of South Florida. 3 semesters. Spring 2017 Spring 2018.
- General Animal Physiology Lab (BIO 201). Teaching Assistant. University of Rhode Island. 2 semesters. Fall 2013-2014.
- General Animal Physiology Lab (BIO 201). Lab Coordinator. University of Rhode Island. Fall 2014.
- Introduction to Marine Pollution (OCG 480). Guest Lecturer. University of Rhode Island. Spring 2016.
- Marine Environmental Physiology (BIO 345). Guest Lecturer. University of Rhode Island. Spring 2014.
- General Animal Physiology (BIO 201). Guest Lecturer. University of Rhode Island. Fall 2013.

Mentoring

- Brandon Dick. 2023-Present.
- Taylor Harris. 2024-Present.
- Mary Bukowski. 2025-Present.
- Holly Jones. 2023-2024. Current position: Masters of Science in Genome Bioinformatics program, University of Pittsburgh, USA.
- Bailey McDougall. Jellyfish bell shape influence on movement efficiency. 2022. Current position: Masters of Science in Marine Biology program, James Cook University, Australia.

Honors & Awards	
2025	Swatsworth Award Finalist. SFU Faculty Senate. (for excellence in teaching, research, and service).
2022	Francis the Builder Award. SFU Dean's Council. (for contributions to the Scuba Diving Program).
2020	Sackett Prize for Innovative Research. USF College of Marine Science.

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2019	"Paper of the Year" Award. Deep-Sea Biology Society.
2018	Runner-up Best Student Oral Presentation. SICB Division of Invertebrate Zoology.
2015	Runner-up Best Student Talk. Cephalopod International Advisory Council 2015 Symposium.
2013	Marine Biology Achievement Award. UNCW Department of Biology and Marine Biology. (graduating Marine Biology student with best overall academic record).
2013	Honors Project Research Poster Competition Award. UNCW Department of Biology and Marine Biology.
2012	${\bf Distinguished\ Undergraduate\ Research\ Scholar.\ } {\it University\ of\ North\ Carolina\ Wilmington.}$
2012	Leadership Excellence Award. University of North Carolina Wilmington.
2010	Herbert and Shirley Mintzes Memorial Award. UNCW Department of Biology and Marine Biology. (highest standing in departmental freshman course requirements).

Media Coverage	
2023	Octopuses tweak the RNA in their brains to adjust to warmer and cooler waters. National Public Radio (NPR)'s "All Things Considered". https://www.npr.org/2023/06/08/1181009210/octopuses-tweak-the-rna-in-their-brains-to-adjust-to-warmer-and-cooler-waters
2023	Octopuses edit their genetic code on the fly to adapt to changing temperatures Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)'s "Quirks and Quarks". https://www.cbc.ca/radio/quirks/quirks-quarks-jun-10-2023-1.6870231
2022	Warming oceans likely to shrink the viable habitat of many marine animals – but not all. ScienceDaily. https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2022/10/221018220428.htm
2021	Seeking an Octopus in the Wild. Alert Diver Magazine (Q3/Q4 2021). https://dan.org/alert-diver/article/seeking-an-octopus-in-the-wild

Research Cruises	
2017	Eastern Tropical North Pacific. R/V Sikuliaq. 28 days at sea.
2015	Gulf of California. R/V Oceanus. 32 days at sea.
2014	Northwest Atlantic. R/V Endeavor. 6 days at sea.
2012	California Current System. R/V Bell M . Shimada. 36 days at sea.

Software

R Packages

• measurements. Tools for Units of Measurement. http://cran.r-project.org/package=measurements. 91st percentile on CRAN. 2,589 downloads/month. 269,519 downloads to date.

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• birk. MA Birk's Functions. http://cran.r-project.org/package=birk. 85th percentile on CRAN. 1,109 downloads/month. 78,342 downloads to date.

• respirometry. Tools for Conducting and Analyzing Respirometry Experiments. http://cran.r-project. org/package=respirometry. 76th percentile on CRAN. 422 downloads/month. 47,600 downloads to date.

Service

Professional

2016-Present	Journal Reviewer. Aquaculture, Deep-Sea Research Part II, Frontiers in Physiology, Invertebrate Biology, Marine Biology, Marine Biology Research, Marine Ecology Progress Series, Physiological and Biochemical Zoology, PLOS ONE, Proceedings of the Royal Society B, The R Journal.
2022	Student Presentation Judge. CIAC 2022 Conference.
2019	Student Abstract Reviewer. SACNAS 2019 Annual Meeting.
2016	Judge. CIAC 2015 Best Paper Award.
2016	Instructor. RhodyRStats ggplot2 Workshop.

Department, College, & Institution	
2022-Present	Member, At-large. SFU Committee on Faculty Development.
2022-Present	Director. SFU Academic Diving Program.
2021-Present	Marine Biology Program Coordinator. SFU Biology.
2021-Present	Faculty Advisor. SFU Scuba Club.
2023	Member. Search Committee for Exercise Physiology Faculty Hire.
2020-2021	Co-founder. MBL Postdoctoral Association.
2018-2021	Postdoc Representative. MBL Diversity Advisory Committee.
2018-2019	Tutor. MBL English as a Second Language Conversational Tutoring Program.
2016	${\bf Panelist.}\ \it URI\ Graduate\ Professionalization\ Committee.\ Panel\ discussing\ how\ to\ apply\ for\ interdisciplinary\ graduate\ grants.$
2015	Panelist. MBL Research Experience for Undergraduates Seminar. Panel discussing how to maximize summer research experience.
2014	Panelist. URI College of the Environment and Life Sciences. Panel discussing how to apply to graduate school.
2009-2012	Volunteer. UNCW Marine Mammal Stranding Program.
2012	Panelist. UNCW Honors College. Panel discussing NOAA Hollings Scholarship Program.
2011	Invited Speaker. UNCW Board of Trustees. Invited to speak about undergraduate research at UNCW.
2011	Honors College Representative. UNCW Visitation Day.

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Community & Outreach

2017-Present	Scientist. Skype a Scientist. 15 classroom meetings to date.
2022	Expert Panelist. Science Friday's Cephalopod Movie Night - Pittsburgh.
2022	Panelist. Virtual Natural Science Panel - University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.
2021	Science Judge. Mashpee Middle-High School Science Fair.
2017	Science Mentor. USF Oceanography Camp for Girls.
2015-2016	Graduate Science Communications Intern. Metcalf Institute for Marine and Environmental Reporting.
2014-2016	Outreach Scientist. Narragansett Bay Classroom.
2014	Invited Speaker. The Goddard School.
2014	Science Judge. National Ocean Sciences Bowl.
2013	Dive Programs Instructor. UNCW MarineQuest.
2013	Invited Speaker. Myrtle Grove Christian School.

Certifications

- AAUS Scientific Diver (100 foot depth certification).
- NAUI Intro to Technical Diving (Instructors: Dave Caldwell & Heather Knowles).
- PADI Open Water Scuba Instructor.
- Relevant specialty scuba certifications:
 - PADI Search and recovery instructor.
 - PADI Deep instructor.
 - PADI Enriched air nitrox instructor (Max $40\% O_2$).
 - PADI Drysuit diver.
- DAN Instructor for:
 - Basic Life Support: CPR and First Aid (BLS).
 - Emergency Oxygen for Scuba Diving Injuries (EO₂).
 - Diving First Aid for Professional Divers (DFA Pro).
- PSI-PCI Visual Cylinder Inspector.

Professional Society Memberships

- Cephalopod International Advisory Council (CIAC).
- Society for Experimental Biology (SEB).
- Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB).
- The Oceanography Society (TOS).
- Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS).

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References

• Postdoctoral Advisor and Collaborator. Dr. Joshua J. C. Rosenthal. Senior Scientist, Eugene Bell Center, Marine Biological Laboratory. jrosenthal@mbl.edu.

• Ph.D. Advisor and Collaborator. Dr. Brad A. Seibel. Professor, College of Marine Science, University of South Florida. seibel@usf.edu.

Last updated: 17 April 2025