

Soham Mehta

sohampmehta1@gmail.com
Mumbai, India
www.sohammehtaphotography.com

Education

B.Sc. Honors in Wildlife and Fisheries Biology; Minor: Zoology

University of Vermont (UVM)- Burlington, United States (2020-2024)

Presidential Scholarship (\$80,000 for highest academic performance)

Honors Thesis: Space-use patterns of free-ranging dogs in central India under the supervision of [Dr. James Murdoch](#) and [Dr. Abi Tamim Vanak](#) (in progress).

Visiting Undergraduate student in the Faculty of Science (Biology)

University of St. Andrews, Scotland, United Kingdom (Spring 2023)

International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP)

Jamnabai Narsee International School (JNIS)- Mumbai, India (2018-2020)

‘High Achiever’: 42 of 45 points; 3rd Highest Ranking in JNIS

Leadership & Professional Appointments

President, The Wildlife Society Student Chapter (2023-present)

University of Vermont- Burlington, United States

- Organizing and facilitating the functioning of the society that aims to provide practical, networking and learning experiences to student members by presenting guest lectures, career panels, fieldwork collaborations, and volunteering opportunities.
- Collaborations with faculty, NGOs, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department.
- Raised ~\$8,000 for club related expenses, including funding 8 student members to attend the Wildlife Society’s 30th Annual Conference 2023.

President, Co-founder, UVM International Student Club (2021-2023, Student Advisor 2023-present)

University of Vermont- Burlington, United States

- Overseeing the functioning of club events, gatherings, and on-campus collaborations with identity groups and university administration to create an inclusive, supportive and engaging environment for non-American identifying students.
- Raised ~\$10,000 through fundraising and budget allocations.

IDEA Committee Member (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Action), Rubenstein School (2022-present)

University of Vermont- Burlington, United States

- Part of a group of faculty, staff, and students committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within Rubenstein School of Environment & Natural Resources (RSENr).
- Main tasks included creation of RSENr’s Inclusive Excellence Action Plan (IEAP), alongside members of the University Diversity Council and RSENr senior leadership team, and activating initiatives that align with the IEAP.
- Facilitated focus group engagement sessions for the undergraduate and international stakeholder groups.
- Represented RSENr at the UVM Board of Trustees- the Whole Committee October 2023 meeting alongside Dr. Mariano Rodriguez-Cabal.

Co-lead, International Working Group (2023-2024)

Sub-committee of the IDEA Committee created to work towards the ‘International Inclusion and Global Education’ goals of RSENr Inclusive Excellence Action Plan.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant, Rubenstein School (2022-present)

University of Vermont- Burlington, United States

- Provided support in grading, advising, and feedback to sophomore/junior level undergraduate students on course materials.

- Conducting and facilitating cumulative review sessions before examinations.
- Total number of students (3 terms- spring, fall 2022, fall 2023): ~ 570 undergraduate students.

Steward, Rubenstein School (2021-2022)

University of Vermont- Burlington, United States

- Worked alongside RSENR Student Services to support the student community via peer advising, community building events, and sustainability-related initiatives.

Scientific Research and Experiences

Research Intern, Human-Wildlife Interactions & Urban Ecology Programme (Summer 2023)

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)- India

- Assisted the Mumbai Leopard & Jackal Project Team by collecting data through camera traps in the Mumbai Metropolitan Area. Learned deployment and management of camera traps, managed data entry and conducted scat analysis.

Project Intern, Urban Owl Network India (Summer 2023)

Chatur Ullu Lab, India

- Managed online citizen-science groups and data for the Urban Owl Project by Debangini (PhD scholar) under the guidance of Dr. Pankaj Koparde (Founder, Chatur Ullu Lab). Other duties included building a citizen science database and network of citizens across 15 project cities.

Shark Coloration Project Data Volunteer, University of St. Andrews (Spring 2023)

Scotland, United Kingdom

- Collected and organized online data on 43 species of Carpet sharks (*Orectolobiformes*) for the comprehensive ‘Shark Coloration Project’ lead by Samuel Neirink, Adrianna Pisarczyk, and Dr. Graeme Ruxton.

COVID-19 Wildlife Surveillance Study Data Collection Volunteer, Wildlife & Fisheries Society (Fall 2022)

University of Vermont & Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife- Vermont, United States

- Volunteered to collect swab tests on deceased white-tailed deer in Vermont alongside VT Fish & Wildlife Dept. Biologists. Received hands-on experience to collect disease samples from wildlife with necessary protocols on collection, storage, and recording.
- Co-authored on peer-reviewed article: Despres, H.W., Mills, M.G., Schmidt, M.M. *et al.* Surveillance of Vermont wildlife in 2021–2022 reveals no detected SARS-CoV-2 viral RNA. *Sci Rep* **13**, 14683 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-39232-0>.”

Big-Cat & Wildlife Monitoring Research Intern, African Impact- Mara Naboisho Conservancy (Summer 2022)

Masai Mara, Kenya

- Created African leopard population identity kit: collecting and collating images for leopard individuals in the conservancy for long-term monitoring (multi-point identification approach).
- Monitored resident & nomadic African lions and cheetahs (Individual Identification, GPS, age, sex, behavior, location). Data uploaded to African Impact’s ACE Nature Database and forwarded to Kenyan Wildlife Trust’s *Mara Predator Conservation Program* (MPCP).
- Distance sampling of wild herbivores and other species using 8 transects across the conservancy. Research Study Aim: To understand the spatiotemporal dynamics of wild herbivores across the Mara Naboisho Conservancy.
- Other duties included- chance encounter recordings, physical conservancy work, biweekly lesson planning on the topics of ecology and culture exchange.

BIG 5 Wildlife Conservation Volunteer, African Impact (Summer 2017)

Greater Kruger Area, South Africa

- Learned the use of wildlife research technologies and methods like camera trap tagging; large mammal occupancy surveys; wildlife tracking. Assisted snare sweeping and invasive species removal in natural areas.

Publications & Features

Popular Press

BBC Earth- “Earth Capture” (Social and Digital Platforms- 2023)

Video: [Red-shanked douc langur in Vietnam](#)

The College Tour (TV Show)- *University of Vermont episode* (Amazon Prime, Hulu, Youtube- 2023)

[Student Talent Segment](#) Season 7 Episode 9

National Geographic India- Your Lens Contest 2022 (Television, Social, Digital Media platforms)

Photograph: [The Wrestling Pit](#)- Amboseli, Kenya.

Current Conservation Magazine – (2022)

Short Read & Illustration: ‘[Ecology of Health](#)’

Photographs: (1) Humans of Jawai, (2) Rock or a croc

University of Vermont: Headwaters Magazine Fall 2021 Issue

Headwaters Magazine Fall 2021 Issue- ‘The Story of Jawai: a photo journal by Soham Mehta’

Honors & Awards

University of Vermont

- *UVM Dean’s list* (2021-2023)
In the top 20% of the class in the Rubenstein School are placed on the Dean's List for that semester. Recognised on the Dean's List (Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Fall 2023).
 - *Dean’s Junior Book Award* (2022)
Recognition for academic achievement, contributions to student life, and potential to become a leader in natural resource stewardship efforts.
 - RSENR Earth Day Photo Contest Winner; Category: Sunsets (2022)
-

Skills

- R programming
Sample packages: ctm, adehabitatHR, adehabitatHS
- GIS (QGIS, ArcGIS, Python)
- Microsoft Office Suite
- Analytical skills: Home Range Analysis, Mark-recapture (big cats), Population modelling, Compositional Analysis
- Wildlife photography & Digital storytelling
- PADI Open Water Scuba Diver
- Field Skills: Distance Sampling, Mark-recapture, Camera Trapping, Electrofishing, Seining, Activity Budget

Languages

- Native proficiency: English, Gujarati, Hindi.
 - Foreign Language: Spanish
-

Related Coursework

- Conservation Biology
 - Sociobiology
 - Animal Behavior: A Quantitative Approach
 - Spatial Analysis with GIS
 - Wildlife Habitat & Population Measurement
 - Natural Resource Ecology & Assessment
 - Wildlife Disease Ecology
 - Race & Culture in Natural Resources
 - Fisheries Biology & Techniques
 - Mammalogy
 - Wildlife Management
 - Field Herpetology
-

References

Dr. James Murdoch (James.murdoch@uvm.edu)
Professor- Wildlife & Fisheries Biology, University of
Vermont, United States
Relationship: *Faculty & Thesis Advisor*

Ms. Emma Swift (Emma.swift@uvm.edu)
Director- Office of International Education,
University of Vermont, United States
Relationship: *Mentor & Student Organization Advisor*

Dr. Mariano Rodriguez-Cabal (Mariano.rodriguez-cabal@uvm.edu)
Research Assistant Professor- Natural Resources,
University of Vermont, United States
Relationship: *Employer & Mentor*