

## Multimodal mother-offspring recognition in the Australian sea lion (*Neophoca cinerea*)

**Date** 8<sup>th</sup> Jan (Fri.)

**Time** 16:00 (UTC+8)

**Venue** Zoom



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Recognition plays an important role in animal communication systems and individuals often employ different sensory modalities to enact this activity. However, there is a dearth of information about the relative importance of various sensory cues in this process. My PhD research investigated multimodal mother-offspring recognition in Australian sea lions (*Neophoca cinerea*). Mother-pup reunion is known to be multimodal process in sea lions, yet the underlying mechanisms of recognition, and the relative contributions of these cues to recognition remain unclear. Through a series of experimental manipulations in the field and laboratory chemical analyses, I explored whether given sensory cues encode identity information; if animals can accurately recognise each other based on these cues; and how acoustic, olfactory, and visual cues are used in a synergistic way to permit accurate mutual recognition in a mammalian species.

**All are welcome!**



### About speaker:

**Dr. Kaja Wierucka** is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Applied Behavioural Ecology and Conservation Lab at HKU. Her research focuses on animal behaviour and communication and she is particularly interested in how animals use and combine information from different sensory modalities and how this affects their behaviour. After completing her PhD at Macquarie University and Université Paris-Saclay, where she investigated mother-offspring recognition in Australian sea lions, Dr. Wierucka is now studying elephant acoustic and olfactory communication, as well as their interactions with humans.