

## Dr Ru Somaweera

Practice Lead for Ecology and Principal Scientist– Stantec  
Adjunct Associate Professor– Murdoch University  
National Geographic Explorer

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## Summary

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I am an evolutionary biologist/ herpetologist with a strong academic and research background on how species and their habitats confront challenges of global change, and designing sound management and conservation actions for their preservation. Over the last 17 years, I have led and managed large-scale projects for a range of clients including the mining industry, federal and state government departments, NGOs, Indigenous corporations and community groups in Australia and Asia. I have undertaken postgraduate and undergraduate teaching and project supervision at multiple institutes, and active involved in public awareness campaigns with multiple international organizations.

## 1 Education

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- 2016-2019 **Postdoctoral Fellowship** | CSIRO, Australia  
*Title:* Impact of weeds on freshwater crocodiles and riparian ecosystems at Fitzroy River, Western Australia.
- 2008-2012 **PhD** | The University of Sydney, Australia  
*Title:* Ecology and conservation of Australian freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*) at Lake Argyle, Western Australia.
- 2002-2006 **BSc (Hons) [First Class in Zoology]** | **University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka**  
*Title:* Communal egg-laying of the endemic Kandyan day-gecko (*Cnemaspis kandiana*) in rock caves at Gannoruwa forest reserve, Sri Lanka.

## 2 Employment history

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- 2022 – ongoing **Practice Lead – Ecology for Australia: Stantec**  
Delivering technical advice and solutions for clients based on latest research, best practice and relevant legislative and professional standards; mentoring and training early-career professionals; providing high-end technical reviews for reports and publications within Stantec and beyond.
- 2021 – ongoing **Principal Scientist: Stantec**  
Design and manage multiple projects at various scales, both in Australia and overseas; client liaison; management of multiple field teams; reporting and technical presentations.
- 2019 – 2021 **Research Scientist: CSIRO**  
Project design, project leadership, field data collection, data analysis interpretation, reporting and preparation of manuscripts for multiple projects across northern Australia.
- 2016 – 2019 **Postdoctoral Researcher: CSIRO**  
Study design, field data collection, modelling, data analysis, reporting and preparation of manuscripts for a National Environmental Science Program (NESP)-funded project in the Kimberley.
- 2016 **Unit Facilitator for Science Communication: Curtin University**  
Develop and conduct classroom activities to improve the capacity of Year 1 students (COMS1000) to effectively communicate scientific information and arguments to a range of audiences via multiple medias.
- 2016 **Teaching Assistant for Science Communication: University of Western Australia**  
Conduct classroom learning activities to improve the capacity of Year 1 students (SCOM1101/SCIE1103) to effectively and credibly communicate scientific information to a wide range of audiences.
- 2015 **Teaching Assistant for Animal Biology units: University of Western Australia**  
Preparing and conducting field and lab-based classes for Conservation Biology (Year 2) and Plant and Animal Biology (Year 3) courses at the Schools of Plant and Animal Biology.

- 2012 – 2015 **Senior Zoologist: Biologic Environmental Survey**  
Preparation and review of reports for the mining industry; data collection and analysis; management and undertaking of field surveys; client liaison; liaison with technical specialists and government stakeholders; development of survey proposals; assistance with the development of marketing material; research and development.
- 2011 – 2013 **Project Officer: WA Department of Parks and Wildlife**  
Training park rangers to initiate and continue a monitoring programme for the freshwater crocodiles at selected national parks in the Kimberley region.
- 2007 – 2011 **Lecturer : University of Peradeniya**  
Writing and delivering lectures; planning field trips and lab-based practicals and conducting examinations for multiple Year 2-4 units in vertebrate biology, taxonomy and field sampling at Department of Zoology.
- 2006 **Teaching Assistant : University of Peradeniya**  
Organising and conducting laboratory and field-based practical classes, preparing teaching material, and marking practical examinations for multiple Year 1-3 units in ethology, animal form and function, ecology, tropical ecosystems, comparative anatomy and animal physiology.

### 3 Publications

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#### Peer-reviewed publications, natural history notes and refereed book chapters

##### 2024

1. Bruce, T and 174 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** (in press) Large-scale and long-term wildlife research and monitoring using camera traps: a continental synthesis. *Biological Review*.
2. Putra, A., Naro, A., Sukmawati, S. and **Somaweera, R.** (in press) Twin nesting by king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*) in Bali, Indonesia. *Taprobanica*.
3. Brittain, K and 8 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** (in press) Unique Population or Unique Species? Genetic Insights into the Pygmy Freshwater Crocodiles of Northern Australia. *Conservation Genetics*.
4. Panggur, M., Somaweera, R. and Kark, S. (in review) Living with Komodo Dragons: navigating risks and benefits of coexistence. *Conservation Biology*.
5. Martín, G., Erinjery, J.J., Ediriweera, D., Goldstein, E., **Somaweera, R.**, de Silva, J., Laloo, D., Iwamura, T. and Murray, K. 2024. Effects of global change on snakebite envenoming incidence up to 2050: a modelling assessment. *The Lancet Planetary Health*. 2024; 8: e533–44.
6. **Somaweera, R.**, Putra, A. Sukuma Wati, S., et al. 2024. *Trimeresurus insularis* (White-lipped Island Pit Viper): Colour. *Herpetological Review* 54(3):501-502.
7. Aubert, C and 18 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2024. Estimating total length of partially submerged crocodylians from drone imagery. *Drones*. 8(3):115.

##### 2023

8. **Somaweera, R.**, Udyawer, V., de Fresnes, J., et al. 2023. Coordinated and communal hunting behaviours by Erabu sea krait *Laticauda semifaciata*. *Scientific Reports*. 13:21471.
9. Bradley, H. and 11 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2023. Conserving the Pilbara leaf-nosed bat: directions for future research and management. *Pacific Conservation Biology*. 30, PC23031.
10. **Somaweera, R.** and Rene de Roland, L-A. 2023. Crocs in the clouds: highest elevational record for a crocodylian. *IUCN Crocodile Specialist Group Journal*. 42(4):8-10.
11. Batabyal, A., Zambre, A., McLaren, T., Rankin, K.J., **Somaweera, R.**, Stuart-Fox, D. and Thaker, M. 2023. The extent of rapid colour change in male agamid lizards is unrelated to overall sexual dichromatism. *Ecology and Evolution*. 2023;13:e10293.
12. Silva, A., de Alwis, T., Wijesekara, S. and **Somaweera, R.** 2023. Minimising misidentification of common medically important snakes of Sri Lanka in the hospital setting. *Anuradhapura Medical Journal*. 17(2):50-57.
13. **Somaweera, R.**, Suyanto, A., Quah, R., Jensen, M. and Amarasinghe, T. 2023. *Trimeresurus insularis* (White-lipped Island Pit Viper): Terrestriality. *Herpetological Review* 54(1):145-146.
14. Goldstein, E., Erinjery, J., Martin, G., Kasturiratne, A., Ediriweera, D., **Somaweera, R.**, de Silva, H.J., Diggle, P., Laloo, D., Murray, K., & Iwamura, T. 2023. Climate change maladaptation for health: Agricultural practice against shifting seasonal rainfall affects snakebite risk for farmers in the tropics. *iScience*. 26 (2): 105946.

##### 2022

15. **Somaweera, R.** 2022. Crocodiles. In Smith, B., Waudby, H., Alberthsen, C. & Hampton, J. (Eds.) *Wildlife research in Australia: A practical guide*. CSIRO Publishing: Melbourne, Australia.
16. Speed, C.W., Wilson, N.G., **Somaweera, R.**, et al. 2022. Video surveys of sea snakes in the mesophotic zone shed light on trends in populations. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 9:921542. doi: 10.3389/fmars.2022.921542.
17. Aiyer, A., Shine, R., **Somaweera, R.** et al. 2022. Shifts in the foraging tactics of crocodiles following invasion of toxic prey. *Scientific Reports*. doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-03629-6.

18. Aiyer, A., Bell, T., Shine, R., **Somaweera, R.**, et al. 2022. Taking the bait: Developing a bait delivery system to target free-ranging crocodiles and varanid lizards with a novel conservation strategy. *Ecology and Evolution*. doi.org/10.1002/ece3.8933.

## 2021

19. Martín, G., Erinjery, J., Gumbs, R., Somaweera, R., et al. 2021. Integrating snake distribution, abundance and expert-derived behavioural traits predicts snakebite risk. *Journal of Applied Ecology*. https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.14081.
20. **Somaweera, R.**, Udyawer, V., Guinea, M., et al. 2021. Pinpointing drivers of extirpation in sea snakes: A synthesis of evidence from Ashmore reef. *Frontiers in Marine Science*. doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2021.658756.
21. **Somaweera, R.** and Somaweera, R. 2021. Nuclear–follower foraging behaviour between Western Australian common octopus and brown-spotted wrasse. *Marine and Freshwater Research*. doi.org/10.1071/MF21059.
22. **Somaweera, R.**, Hoff, O. and Lilley, R. 2021. *Gekko kuhli* (Kuhl's Flying Gecko): Indonesia. *Herpetological Review* 52(3): 576.
24. Lachlan, P., **Somaweera, R.**, Kaiser, S., et al. 2021. The impact of invasive toads (Bufonidae) on monitor lizards (Varanidae): an overview and prospectus. *Quarterly Review of Biology*. 96(2): 105-125.

## 2020

25. **Somaweera, R.**, Nifong, J., Rosenblatt, A., et al. 2020. The ecological importance of crocodylians: towards evidence-based justification for their conservation. *Biological Reviews* doi.org/10.1111/brv.12594.
26. Barr, J., **Somaweera, R.**, Godfrey, S.S., et al. 2020. When one tail isn't enough: Abnormal caudal regeneration in non-serpent Squamates and Rhynchocephalia and their potential ecological impacts. *Biological Review* doi: 10.1111/brv.12625.
27. **Somaweera, R.**, Yeoh, P.B., Jucker, T., et al. 2020. Historical context, current status and management priorities for introduced Asian house geckos at Ashmore Reef, north-western Australia. *Bioinvasion Records* 9(2):408-420.
28. Cao, R., **Somaweera, R.**, Brittain, K., et al. 2020 Genetic structure and diversity of Australian freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*) from the Kimberley, Western Australia. *Conservation Genetics* doi.org/10.1007/s10592-020-01259-5.
29. Udyawer, V., **Somaweera, R.**, Nitschke, C., et al. 2020 Prioritising search effort to locate previously unknown populations of endangered marine reptiles. *Global Ecology and Conservation* doi.org/10.1016/j.gecco.2020.e01013.
30. Muga, K., Robillard, A.J. and **Somaweera, R.** 2020. *Eretmochelys imbricata* (Hawksbill Sea Turtle): Predation. *Herpetological Review* 51(2):313.
31. Sramek, P. and **Somaweera, R.** 2020. *Limnonectes macrodon* from Bali, Indonesia. *Taprobanica* 9(2) 220-221.

## 2019

32. **Somaweera, R.**, Brien, M.L., Sonneman, T., Didham, R.K., and Webber, B.L. 2019. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence: knowledge shortfalls threaten the effective conservation of freshwater crocodiles. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 20: e00773.
33. Shine, R. and **Somaweera, R.** 2019. Last lizard standing: the enigmatic persistence of the Komodo dragon. *Global Ecology and Conservation* 18(2019):e00624.
34. Sieniawski, K. and **Somaweera, R.** 2019. *Varanus salvator* (Asian water monitor): deep diving. *Herpetological Review* 50(2):382-383.
35. Pyron, A.R. and **Somaweera, R.** 2019. Further notes on the Sri Lankan uropeltid snakes *Rhinophis saffragamus* (Kelaart, 1853) and *Uropeltis ruhunae* Deraniyagala, 1954. *Zootaxa* 4560(3):592-600.
36. Nordberg, E.J., Macdonald, S., Hoskins, A., **Somaweera, R.** and Perry, J. 2019. Can plastic save turtles?: Measuring the impacts of predators and the effectiveness of plastic meshing on marine turtle nests along the western Cape York Peninsula, Australia. *Biological Conservation* doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2019.108201.
37. Tingley, R. and 52 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2019. Geographic and taxonomic patterns of extinction risk in Australian squamates. *Biological Conservation* doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2019.108203.
38. Barr, J., Boisvert, C., **Somaweera, R.**, Trinajstic, K., and Bateman, P. 2019. Re-regeneration to reduce negative effects associated with tail loss in lizards. *Scientific Reports* 9:18717.

## 2018

39. **Somaweera, R.**, Platt, S., Brien, M., Manolis, C. and Webber, B. 2018. Direct and indirect interactions with vegetation shape crocodylian life history traits at multiple scales. *Freshwater Biology* DOI:10.1111/fwb.13.
40. Barr, J., **Somaweera, R.**, Godfrey, S.S., and Bateman, P.W. 2018. Increased tail length in the King's skink, *Egernia kingii* (Reptilia: Scincidae): an anti-predation tactic for juveniles? *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* DOI: 10.1093/biolinnean/bly196.
41. Udyawer, V. and 27 authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2018. Future directions in marine snake research and management. *Frontiers in Marine Science* DOI: 10.3389/fmars.2018.00399.
42. Gabadage, D., Surasinghe, T., De Silva, A., **Somaweera, R.**, Madawala, M. and Karunarathna, S. 2018. Zoological and ecological study of the Sri Lankan Keelback (*Balanophis ceylonensis*): with implications for conservation of a poorly known, endemic snake from Sri Lanka. *Vertebrate Zoology* 68(3):225-236.

43. **Somaweera, R.**, Lilley, R., Putra, A., et al. 2018. Recent additions to the herpetofauna diversity of the island of Bali, Indonesia. *Sauria* 40(1): 75-86.
44. **Somaweera, R.**, Rhind, D., Reynolds, S., et al. 2018. Observations of mammalian feeding by Australian freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*) in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. *Records of the West Australian Museum* 33(1): 103-107.
45. Barr, J., **Somaweera, R.** & Bateman, B. 2018. *Ctenotus fallens* (West coast ctenotus). Anomalous death through use of modelling clay for research. *Herpetological Review* 49(2): 327-328.

#### 2017

46. Morgan, D.L., **Somaweera, R.**, Gleiss, A.C. et al. 2017. An upstream migration fought with danger: freshwater sawfish fending off sharks and crocodiles. *Ecology* DOI: 10.1002/ecy.1737.
47. Karunarathna, S., Surasinghe, T., Madawala, M., **Somaweera, R.**, Amarasinghe, T. 2017. Ecological and behavioral traits of the Sri Lanka water monitor (*Varanus salvator*) in an urban landscape of Western Province in Sri Lanka. *Marine and Freshwater Research*. 68(12): 2242-2252.

#### 2016

48. Pyron, R. A., Ganesh, S., Sayyed, A., Sharma, V., Wallach, V. and **Somaweera, R.** 2016. A catalogue and systematic overview of the shield-tailed snakes (Serpentes: Uropeltidae). *Zoosystema* 38(4):453-506.
49. Auliya, M. and 36 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2016. Trade in live reptiles and its impact on reptile diversity: the European pet market as a case study. *Biological Conservation* 204:103-119

#### 2015

50. Whiting, M.J., Noble, D.W.A. and **Somaweera, R.** 2015. Sexual dimorphism in conspicuousness and ornamentation in enigmatic leaf-nosed lizard *Ceratophora tennentii* from Sri Lanka. *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*. 116:614-625.
51. **Somaweera, R.**, Pantoja, D.L. and Deepak, V. 2015. Forgotten records of *Chrysopelea taprobanica* Smith, 1943 (Squamata: Colubridae) from India. *Zootaxa*. 3947:597-600.
52. **Somaweera, R.**, Meegaskumbura, M., Bowatte, G. and Wijayathilaka, N. 2015. Conservation in a changing landscape: habitat occupancy of the Critically Endangered Tennent's Leaf-nosed Lizard (*Ceratophora tennentii*) in Sri Lanka. *Journal of Natural History*. 49(31-32):1961-1985.
53. van Rooijen, J., Vogel, G. and **Somaweera, R.** 2015. A revision of the taxonomy of the Australopapuan species of the colubrid genus *Dendrelaphis* (Serpentes: Colubridae). *Salamandra*. 51:33-56.
54. de Silva, A. and **Somaweera, R.** 2015. Were human babies used as bait in crocodile hunts in colonial Sri Lanka? *Journal of Threatened Taxa*. 7(1):6805-6809.
55. **Somaweera, R.** and Sanders, K. 2015. Guide to the Sea Snakes of the Kimberley Coast of Western Australia. Department of Parks and Wildlife, Perth.

#### 56. 2014

57. **Somaweera, R.**, Woods, D. and Sonneman, T. 2014. A note on the Australian freshwater crocodiles inhabiting Tunnel Creek cave. *Records of the West Australian Museum* 29:24-29.

#### 2013

58. **Somaweera, R.**, Shine, R., Webb, J., Dempster, T. and Letnic, M. 2013. Why does vulnerability to toxic invasive cane toads vary among populations of Australian freshwater crocodiles? *Animal Conservation* 16:86-96.
59. **Somaweera, R.**, Brien, M. and Shine, R. 2013. The role of predation in shaping the natural history of crocodilians: a review. *Herpetological Monographs* 27:23-51.
60. Pyron, R.A., Kandambi, D. Hendry, C.R., Pushpamal, V., Burbrink, F.T., and **Somaweera, R.** 2013. Genus-level molecular phylogeny of snakes reveals the origins of species richness in the Sri Lanka biodiversity hotspot. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 66:969-978.
61. Böhm, M. and 103 co-authors including **Somaweera, R.** 2013. The conservation status of the world's reptiles. *Biological Conservation* 157:372-385.
62. **Somaweera, R.** and Shine, R. 2013. Nest-site selection by crocodiles at a rocky site in the Australian tropics: making the best of a bad lot. *Austral Ecology* 38:313-325.
63. Maryan, B., **Somaweera, R.**, Lloyd, R., et al. 2013. Status of the Airlie Island Ctenotus, *Ctenotus angusticeps* (Lacertilia: Scincidae), with notes on its distribution, habitat and genetic variation. *West Australian Naturalist* 29:103-119.
64. **Somaweera, R.**, Webb, J. and Shine, R. 2013. Extreme monsoonal floods affect Australian freshwater crocodile hatchlings by degrading habitat quality. Pp 197-202 In *Proceedings of the 22nd working meeting of the IUCN-SSC Crocodile Specialist Group*. IUCN: Gland, Switzerland.
65. **Somaweera, R.** 2013. Book Review: Reptile Biodiversity- standard methods for inventory and monitoring. *Ceylon Journal of Science (Bio. Sc.)* 42:73-74.

#### 2012

66. **Somaweera, R.** and Shine, R. 2012. Australian freshwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*) transport their hatchlings to the water. *Journal of Herpetology* 46:407-411.

67. **Somaweera, R.**, Wijethilake, N. and Bowatte, G. 2012. Does the invasive shrub *Ulex europaeus* benefit an endemic Sri Lankan lizard? *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 7:219-226.

#### 2011

68. **Somaweera, R.**, Webb, J. and Shine, R. 2011. It's a dog-eat-croc world: dingo predation on the nests of freshwater crocodiles in tropical Australia. *Ecological Research* 26:957-967.
69. **Somaweera, R.**, Crossland, M.R. and Shine, R. 2011. Assessing the potential impact of invasive cane toads on a commercial freshwater fishery in tropical Australia. *Wildlife Research* 38:380-385.
70. **Somaweera, R.** and Shine, R. 2011. The (non) impact of invasive cane toads on freshwater crocodiles at Lake Argyle in tropical Australia. *Animal Conservation*. 15:152-163.
71. **Somaweera, R.**, Webb, J. and Shine, R. 2011. Determinants of habitat selection by hatchling crocodiles (*Crocodylus johnstoni*). *PLoS ONE* 6(12):e28533. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0028533.
72. **Somaweera, R.**, Webb, J., Brown, G.P. and Shine, R. 2011. Hatchling Australian freshwater crocodiles rapidly learn to avoid toxic invasive cane toads. *Behavior* 148:501-517.
73. **Somaweera, R.** 2011. A report of a probable unprovoked attack by an Australian freshwater crocodile at Lake Argyle in Western Australia. *Australian Zoologist* 35: 973-976.

#### 2008-2010

74. **Somaweera, R.**, Somaweera, N. and Shine, R. 2010. Frogs under friendly fire: how well can Australians distinguish native frogs from invasive cane toads? *Biological Conservation* 143:1477-1484.
75. **Somaweera, R.** and Somaweera, N. 2010. Serpents in Jars: Snake wine industry in Vietnam. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 2(11):1251-1260.
76. **Somaweera, R.** 2009. Observations on the reproductive ecology of the Kandyan Day Gecko *Cnemaspis kandiana* in Gannoruwa, Sri Lanka. *Journal of the National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka* 37:13-22.
77. Smith, E.N., Manamendra-Arachchi, K. and **Somaweera, R.** 2008. A new species of coralsnake of the genus *Calliophis* (Squamata: Elapidae) from the Central Province of Sri Lanka. *Zootaxa* 1847:19-33.
78. **Somaweera, R.** and Somaweera, N. 2009. An overview of Sri Lankan sea snakes with an annotated checklist and a field key. *Taprobanica* 1:43-57.
79. Somaweera, R. and Das, I. 2008. *Lepidodactylus lugubris* (Mourning Gecko) in Malaysia: Sarawak *Herpetological Review* 39:368.
80. Wickramasinghe, M. and **Somaweera, R.** 2008. Changes in the distribution ranges of the Sri Lankan *Hemidactylus* species. *Gekko* 5:44-60.

#### Books

1. **Somaweera, R.** and Drimmer, S. W. 2023. *The Ultimate Book of Reptiles*. National Geographic Kids. Washington DC. USA: 192 pp.
2. **Somaweera, R.**, Wijayasekara, S. and Bandara, S. 2023. *Sri Lankawe Sarpayin ('Snakes of Sri Lanka')*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Published by the authors. Colombo, Sri Lanka: 392 pp.
3. **Somaweera, R.** 2020. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Reptiles & Amphibians of Bali*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. John Beaufoy Publishing, UK: 176 pp.
4. **Somaweera, R.**, Azis, A., Resa, E., Panggur, M., Saverinus, D. and Muga, K. 2018. *Amphibians and Reptiles of Komodo National Park*. Aaranya Wildlife Odysseys and Komodo National Park Authority. Perth, Australia: 31 pp.
5. **Somaweera, R.** 2017. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Reptiles & Amphibians of Bali*. John Beaufoy Publishing, UK: 176 pp.
6. Pizzatto, L. and **Somaweera, R.** 2013. *Fogg Dam: How Scientists See Nature*. University of Sydney, e-book.
7. **Somaweera, R.** and Somaweera, N. 2009 *Lizards of Sri Lanka: A colour guide with field keys*. Chaimaira Publications, Germany: 304 pp.
8. **Somaweera, R.** 2006. *Sri Lankawe Sarpayin ('Snakes of Sri Lanka')*. Wildlife Heritage Trust of Sri Lanka: 297 pp.

#### Technical reports

Since March 2012, I have led or co-authored over 80 technical consultancy reports to industry clients (e.g. Chevron, BHP Billiton, FMG, RioTinto, Crystal Mining, Westralian Iron, EPIR Alliance, MRL, Talison etc), governments departments (e.g. Parks Australia, Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions), and national-scale programs (e.g. Northern Hub of the National Environmental Science Program). Some of the reports are available in the public domain, others remain confidential.

#### 4 Selected recent and upcoming presentations and invited talks

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- Somaweera, R.** 2026 (invited guest speaker). Recent advances in crocodylian ecological studies. Charotar Crocodile Count. Ahmedabad, India. January 2026.
- Somaweera, R.** 2025. Satellite telemetry for marine turtles. IUCN Bangladesh and Forest Department Bangladesh. Sundarbans, Bangladesh. January 2025.

- Somaweera, R.** 2025 (Abstract submitted). From Nomads to Navigators: New insights into reptile homing and relocation. Annual Conference of the Australian Society for Herpetologists, Coff Harbour, Australia. June 2025.
- Somaweera, R.** 2025 (Abstract submitted). Winds of Change: how offshore wind farms affect marine reptiles. Australian Offshore Wind Industry Forum, Melbourne, Australia. June 2025.
- Somaweera, R.** 2024. Social media content creation for scientists. International Science Council- Asia Pacific. Online. October 2024.
- Somaweera, R.** 2024. Exploring current environmental challenges: Expert insights. Murdoch University, Australia. August 2024.
- Somaweera, R.** 2024. Modern methods in telemetry of crocodylians. IUCN Bangladesh and Forest Department Bangladesh. Sundarbans, Bangladesh. January 2024.
- Somaweera, R.** 2023. Communal hunting behaviour among sea snakes. Australian Marine Sciences Association (WA) Snapchat. Perth, Australia. October 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2023. Taking animals to new heights: Using drones to study and manage wildlife. Biodiversity Conference 2023. Perth, Australia. August 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2023. Tell your story right: DOs, Don'ts and (FREE) tools in science communication for researchers. Biodiversity Conference 2023. Perth, Australia. August 2023.
- National Geographic
- Somaweera, R.** 2023. Managing work, passions, and family. National Geographic Summit 2023. Washington DC, USA. June 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2020. The world of reptiles (Invited online talk). National Geographic Classroom program. May 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2023. Advances in ecological field research: latest trends and future directions. University of Colombo Invited Seminar. Colombo, Sri Lanka. March 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2022. Stantec in the Sky: a better way for environmental assessment. Stantec Summit Edmonton, Canada. September 2022.
- Somaweera, R.** 2021. eDNA as an emerging tool for rapid and targeted species detection in aquatic habitats. Goldfields Environmental Management Group Conference. Kalgoorlie, Australia. May 2021.
- Somaweera, R.** and Webber, B. 2021. Shady dealings threatens a formidable predator. Resilient Landscapes Biodiversity Conference 2021. Perth, Australia. September 2023.
- Somaweera, R.** 2021. National Geographic Explorer Spotlight (event hosting and invited talk). National Geographic Asia. February 2021.

## 5 Higher degree student completions

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| 2024 – 2025 | Maria Panggur   MSc, University of Sydney<br><i>Navigating risks and benefits of human-Komodo dragon coexistence in Indonesia</i><br>(co-supervised with Prof Salit Kark)   |
| 2019 – 2020 | Abhilasha Aiyer   Honours, University of Sydney<br><i>Using conditioned taste aversion to protect wild freshwater crocodiles (<i>Crocodylus johnstoni</i>) from Cane toad (<i>Rhinella marina</i>) poisoning</i><br>(co-supervised with Dr Georgia Ward-Fear and Professor Richard Shine) |
| 2019 – 2020 | Glenn Maslen   Honours, University of Western Australia<br><i>Understanding and quantifying impacts of the invasive stinking passionflower on freshwater crocodiles at Lake Argyle</i><br>(co-supervised with Dr Bruce Webber and Prof Raphael Didham)                                    |
| 2017 – 2020 | James Barr   PhD, Curtin University.<br><i>A comparative investigation of the behavioural ecology of Kings Skinks (<i>Egernia kingie</i>) from sites with differing predation risks</i><br>(co-supervised with Drs Bill Bateman and Stephanie Godfrey)                                    |
| 2015 – 2016 | Tess McLaren   MSc, University of Melbourne<br><i>Evolution of colour change in Asian agamid lizards</i><br>(co-supervised with Dr Devi Stuart-Fox)   |
| 2015 – 2016 | James Barr   Honours, Murdoch University<br><i>Social interactions and networking among King Skinks at the Penguin Island</i><br>(co-supervised with Dr Stephanie Godfrey)  |

2011 – 2012 Francine James | Honours, University of Sydney  
*Implications of extreme flooding on nest site selection and oviposition of freshwater crocodiles in a lentic system*  
(co-supervised with Dr Mathew Crowther)

## 6 Professional memberships and contributions

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2019 – 2020 Scientific committee, 2020 World Congress of Herpetology, New Zealand  
2019 Organising and Scientific committee, 2019 ATBC Asia-Pacific Conference, Sri Lanka  
2018 – 2019 Section Editor, Herpetological Review  
2017 – Present Resource person, STEM Professionals in School program  
2015 Member, Maritime Archaeology Association of Western Australia  
2013 – 2015 Fellow, Linnean Society of London  
2013 – Present Member, IUCN/SSC Viper Specialist Group  
2013 Deputy Conference Director, World Crocodile Conference, Sri Lanka  
2011 – Present Member, IUCN/SSC Boa and Python Specialist Group  
2011 Member, Ecological Society of Australia  
2009 Member, The Australasian Society for the Study of Animal Behaviour  
2008 – Present Member, Australian Society of Herpetologists  
2005 – Present Regional Vice Chairman/ Member, IUCN/SSC Crocodile Specialists' Group  
2005 – Present Member, Conservation Breeding Specialist Group- South Asia Regional Network

## 7 Academic awards and appointments

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2024 – Present Adjunct Associate Professor, Murdoch University  
2017 – Present Adjunct Research Fellow, University of Western Australia  
2017 – 2019 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, CSIRO Land and Water  
2017 – 2020 Adjunct External Supervisor, Curtin University  
2014 – 2020 Adjunct Lecturer, Murdoch University  
2013 Visiting Scientist, CSIRO Land and Water  
2013 Adjunct Research Fellow, University of Western Australia.  
2013 Fellowship of the Linnean Society of London.  
2011 Finalist at 2011 Postgraduate Excellence Award, The University of Sydney.  
2010 Best oral presentation, Student Conference in Conservation Sciences, India.  
2008 Shine Top-Up Award, School of Biologic Sciences, University of Sydney.  
2007 Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (EIPRS), Australian Government.  
2007 International Postgraduate Award (IPA), University of Sydney.  
2007 Australian Development Award, Australian Government.  
2007 Endeavour Postgraduate Award, Dept. of Education, Science & Training, Australia.  
2007 Miriam Rothschild Bursary, Cambridge University, UK.  
2007 Prof Felix Amerasinghe Memorial Gold Medal for Excellence in Zoology, University of Peradeniya.  
2007 University Award for Academic Excellence, University of Peradeniya.

## 8 Technical certifications

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Certificate II in Maritime Operations (Coxswain II Near Coastal)  
Australian Remote Pilot Licence (RePL)  
ADAS Part 1 Restricted Scientific Scuba Diver (Level 1)  
PADI Rescue, Deep and Enriched Air Scuba Diver  
Marine Radio Operators' Certificate  
Senior First Aid Certification  
Oxygen Therapy Certification  
4-WD Off-road Driving Certification

## 9 Referees

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**Professor Rick Shine**

(Professor in Evolutionary Biology)  
Macquarie University

rick.shine@mq.edu.au

**Dr Bruce Webber**

(Principal Research Scientist)  
CSIRO

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**Dr Fiona Taukulis**

(Business Lead – WA)  
Stantec Australia

fiona.taukulis@stantec.com

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