

Curriculum Vitae

Martin Walter Seltmann

ORCID identifier: 0000-0001-6060-885X

E-Mail: martin.seltmann@utu.fi

Webpage: <https://martinweltseltmann.owlstown.net/>

Personal Data

Date of Birth: 2nd May 1982

Nationality: German

Education

Mar 2024	Title of docent (adjunct professor) in Behavioural Ecology (University of Turku)
Feb 2014	PhD degree (grade: studies: excellent, thesis: pass)
Apr 2009 – Jan 2014	PhD student at Åbo Akademi University , supervisor: Dr Markus Öst, title of PhD thesis: "Of milquetoasts and daredevils – Personalities in female eiders"
Sept 2008	MSc degree (grade: 1.5 /1-6 with 1 = excellent and 6 = unsatisfactory)
Aug 2007 – Apr 2008	Master thesis: "The impact of the abiotic environment and litter siblings on nest temperature and oxygen consumption of young European rabbits (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i> L.) of different ages"
Oct 2003 – Mar 2008	University of Bayreuth , Degree programme in Biology (Diploma/MSc degree)

Current position

Feb 2024 – Jan 2027 Senior Researcher, University of Turku (funded by European Research Council)

Research funding

Turku Urban Research Programme, 2025, 150 000 EUR
Turku University Foundation, 2022, 800 EUR
Sakari Alhopuro Foundation, 2021, 23 300 EUR
Turku University Foundation, 2021, 5 500 EUR
Sakari Alhopuro Foundation, 2020, 20 728 EUR
Oskar Öflund Stiftelse, 2015, 2 000 EUR
Societas pro Fauna et Flora Fennica, 2014, 3 000 EUR
Suomen Tiedeseura, 2014, 3 000 EUR
Åbo Akademi University, 2013, 4 200 EUR
Onni Talas Foundation, 2013, 9 200 Euro

Previous work Experience

Oct 2023 – Jan 2024	Researcher, University of Turku (unfunded)
Mar 2023 – Sep 2023	Researcher, Natural Resources Institute Finland LUKE
Jul 2019 – Jan 2023	Postdoctoral researcher, University of Turku (funded by European Research Council, Academy of Finland, Sakari Alhopuro Foundation and Natural Resources Institute Finland LUKE)
Jan 2019 – Jun 2019	Postdoctoral researcher, University of Turku (unfunded)
Oct 2015 – Dec 2018	Postdoctoral researcher, University of Turku (funded by the Kone Foundation and Academy of Finland)
Oct 2014 – Nov 2014	Visiting researcher (9 days) and invited speaker at the Université Paris 13, Laboratoire d'Ethologie Expérimentale and Comparée: Working on a scientific publication and giving a seminar presentation

Jun 2014 – Sep 2014	Postdoctoral researcher, Åbo Akademi University
Jan 2010 – Nov 2011	Three times (in total 5 months) visiting researcher at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, Fisheries Division: measuring corticosterone concentrations of serum and faeces samples of common eider females and ducklings
Jun 2007 – Sept 2007	Four times (in total 6 weeks) visiting researcher at the Research Institute of Wildlife Ecology in Vienna: measuring oxygen consumption of juvenile rabbits

Teaching experience and supervision

Teaching

Oct 2024	Teaching contribution in the course “Evolutionary ecology” (5 ECTS credits), Åbo Akademi University, 15 th Oct
Nov 2023	Teaching contribution in the course “Environment and Development” (2 ECTS credits), University of Turku, 9 th Nov
Sep – Dec 2022/23	Teaching contribution in the course “Presenting and publishing scientific data in biology” (4 ECTS credits), University of Turku
Dec 2021	Teaching contribution in the course “Animal personality” (1 ECTS credits), University of Helsinki, 3 rd Dec
Oct/Nov 2021/22/23/24	Teaching contribution in the course “Biological Research Introductions”, University of Turku, 28 th Oct, 24 th Nov, 16 th Nov, 12 th Nov
Oct 2018 – Mar 2020	Organising the seminar series “Seminars in Biology” at Turku University
Nov 2018	Teaching contribution in the course “Behavioural and evolutionary ecology” (5 ECTS credits), Åbo Akademi University, 19 th Nov
Feb 2016 – Mar 2016	Teaching “Behavioural and evolutionary ecology” (5 ECTS credits), Åbo Akademi University, 2 nd Feb – 22 nd Mar
Feb 2014 – Mar 2014	20h teaching contribution in the course “Behavioural and evolutionary ecology” (5 ECTS credits), Åbo Akademi University, 10 th Feb – 20 th Mar
Jan 2013 – Feb 2013	16h teaching contribution in the course “Biostatistics” (3 ECTS credits), Novia University of Applied Sciences, 8 th Jan – 28 th Feb

Supervision

Jan 2026 – Jul 2026	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Matis Devaux (University of Rennes / University of Turku). “ <i>How does the social environment influence oxytocin in Asian elephants?</i> ”
Jan 2026 – Jul 2026	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Vincent Louis-Joseph-Dogué (University of Poitiers / University of Turku). “ <i>Studying the link between maternal serum prolactin and calf development in Asian elephants</i> ”
Feb 2025 – Feb 2026	Bachelor thesis supervision: Kaisa Hanka (University of Turku). “ <i>Adaptation of the red fox (<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>) to the urban environment</i> ”
Jan 2025 – Aug 2025	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Matis Dinnewel (University of Strasbourg / University of Turku). “ <i>Social and environmental determinants of health and survival in Asian elephants</i> ”
Jan 2024 – Dec 2027	PhD thesis supervision: Mélissa Gagnière (University of Turku). “ <i>Towards sustainable coexistence of humans and urban wildlife: Human attitudes and carnivore behaviours in urban SW Finland</i> ”
Feb 2024 – Feb 2025	Bachelor thesis supervision: Elina Tainio (University of Turku). “ <i>Testing the olfactory memory of semi-captive Asian Elephants</i> ”
Jun 2023 – Oct 2023	Internship supervision: Victor Gomez (University of Turku/Université Sorbonne Paris Nord). “ <i>Early life effects on later life personality in Asian elephants from Myanmar</i> ”
Feb 2023 – Mar 2023	Internship supervision: Leander Biesenkamp (University of Bayreuth/ Åbo Akademi University). Analysing behavioural and ecological data of Asian elephants from Myanmar
Feb 2022 – Mar 2023	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Zorimar Vilella-Pacheco (University of Puerto Rico/University of Turku). “ <i>Investigating the link between personality and allomothering in working elephants from Myanmar</i> ”

Jan 2022 – Dec 2024	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Arend van Splunter (University of Bonn/University of Turku). “ <i>Investigating the link between personality and stress in working elephants from Myanmar</i> ”
Feb 2022 – Aug 2022	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Mélissa Gagnière (University of Turku/University of Dijon). “ <i>Effects from human-animal relationships and personality on behavioural responses in the Finnish sledging reindeer (Rangifer tarandus)</i> ”
Sep 2021 – Jun 2023	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Sanna-Maria Riikonen (University of Helsinki). “ <i>Investigating the personality of elephant handlers from Myanmar</i> ”
Apr 2020 – May 2020	Internship supervision: Shérine Feillet (University of Turku/University of Paris). “ <i>Factors affecting behavioural differences during a novel object test in Asian elephants</i> ”
Jan 2020 – May 2020	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Laura Lacomme (University of Turku/University of Lyon). “ <i>The association between parasite infection and hormone activity in asian elephants</i> ”
Jan 2020 – Aug 2020	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Laura Zanette (University of Turku/University of Marseille). “ <i>The influence of the social group structure on the parasitic infection of Asian elephant (Elephas maximus)</i> ”
Sep 2019 – Dec 2019	Internship supervision: Hnin Nandar (Myanma Timber Enterprise). Analysing serum cortisol concentrations using an enzyme-immuno assay
Oct 2019 – Oct 2022	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Aleksi Nieminen (University of Turku). “ <i>Differences in physical and physiological health measures between wild-caught and captive-born elephants</i> ”
Jan 2019 – Aug 2019	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Océane Liehrmann (University of Turku/Université Caen Normandie). “ <i>Elephant-Mahout working relationship and how it affects elephants’ responses to work orders</i> ”
Oct 2018 – Jun 2019	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Jonathan Webb (University of Sheffield). “ <i>Stress and coping behaviour in Asian elephants</i> ”
Nov 2018 – Apr 2019	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Matleena Tuomisto (University of Turku). “ <i>The effect of friendships on the health of the Asian elephant</i> ”
May 2010 – May 2013	M.Sc. thesis supervision: Marjo Aikko (Åbo Akademi University). “ <i>Measuring personality in newly-hatched Eider ducklings (Somateria mollissima): pitfalls and solutions</i> ”
May 2008 – Jun 2008	Supervision of students in introductory animal physiology courses at the University of Bayreuth

Other key academic merits

Memberships: The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB), The European Ornithologists’ Union, The Ethological Society Germany, Nordic OIKOS Finland, World Lagomorph Society

Referee for scientific journals: Acrocephalus, Animal Behaviour, Animal Behavior and Cognition, Animals, Annales Zoologici Fennici, Applied Animal Behavior Science, Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology, Behavioural Ecology, Behavioural Processes, Conservation Physiology, General and Comparative Endocrinology, Journal of Avian Biology, Journal of Comparative Psychology, Mammalian Biology, Ornis Fennica, Scientific Reports

Associate editor: Royal Society Open Science (2023-2026; so far handled 16 manuscripts)

Referee for grant proposals: Graduate Women in Science National Fellowship Program

Admin tasks: M.Sc. thesis evaluations, Member of PhD examination boards, Co-development group for “Science Belongs to Everyone” (University of Turku), Departmental public outreach group (University of Turku), Departmental Wellbeing Activities (University of Turku)

Linguistic skills

German (mother tongue), English (excellent skills), Finnish (basic skills)

Presentations (selection)

Elephant astrology? Birth season is linked to later life personality in Asian elephants
Finnish OIKOS meeting 2025, Jyväskylä, Finland (14th Mar 2025)

Are geese dining at their reserved table? Foraging habitat selection in barnacle geese staging in eastern Finland

Finnish OIKOS meeting 2023, Helsinki, Finland (14th Feb 2023)

Sex-specific links between the social landscape and faecal glucocorticoid metabolites in semi-captive Asian elephants

ASAB Winter virtual meeting 2020, online conference (3rd Dec 2020) (poster presentation)

Personality, friendship and welfare in semi-captive Asian elephants

2nd International Student Course in Behavioural Biology, Paris, France (19th Sep 2019) (invited keynote speaker, oral presentation)

Using personality data to improve the management and welfare of semi-captive Asian elephants
9th European Conference on Behavioural Biology, Liverpool, UK (11th Aug 2018) (invited oral presentation)

About personality in animals small and large: different approaches to study between-individual differences

Aura Symposium 2018, Turku, Finland (26th April 2018) (keynote speaker, oral presentation)

Personality variation in semi-captive Asian elephants of Myanmar

Behaviour 2017, 35th International Ethological Conference/2017 ASAB summer meeting, Estoril, Portugal (31st July 2017) (oral presentation)

Media and public outreach

Research featured in newspaper Turun Sanomat, "Kaupungistuneet ketut ovat rohkeita mutta eivät nokkelia" (25th Nov 2025)

Research featured in newspaper Turun Sanomat, "Tutkijat asensivat riistakameroita takapihille" (14th Aug 2024)

Article in newspaper Turun Sanomat, "Sata vuotta rusakoita Turussa" (5th Jan 2023)

Research featured in science magazine Tiede Luonto about my elephant research (issue 8/2022)

Facebook Live presentation, Elephant Professional Lectures, Golden Triangle Asian Elephant Foundation (24th Mar 2021)

Blogpost about my current research, Sakari Alhopuro Foundation webpage (4th Feb 2021)

Video interview, Turun yliopiston YouTube channel (1st Apr 2020)

Talk at the Turku International School (grades 1-6), Varissuo, Turku, Finland (28th Sep 2018)

Research featured in science magazine Tiede about personalities in elephants (10th May 2018)

Talk at the Turku International School (grades 1-6), Varissuo, Turku, Finland (29th Sep 2017)

Radio interview in Yle Svenska about personalities in common eiders (16th Jan 2014)

"Aronia Just nu" newspaper column in newspaper Västra Nyland (10th Aug 2011)