

# A SCIENTIST just like me



**Jemma Dias**  
**Animal Behaviour and**  
**Welfare Scientist**

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**Hi there! I am Jemma Dias – an animal behaviour and welfare scientist**



## **Where do I work?**

I work at Colchester Zoo. Before that I also worked as a zookeeper, looking after different animals from fish to penguins and sea lions.

## **What did I like doing when I was at school?**

I was always fascinated by animals and I spent all the time I could outside or at the zoo trying to learn more about them.

## **What do I like doing in my spare time?**

I love spending time outside in nature, watching animals, taking photos or just enjoying the fresh air.

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## What do I do as an animal behaviour and welfare scientist?



I observe animals to try and find out more about what they do (their behaviour) and look for patterns in this. I also use their behaviour to tell me more about their well-being (their welfare) and how we are looking after them.

## How does what I do make the world a better place?

When we know more about animals, we can make sure we are looking after them correctly in the zoo. This means that we have happier animals! Happier animals are able to have more babies which helps us to conserve their species.

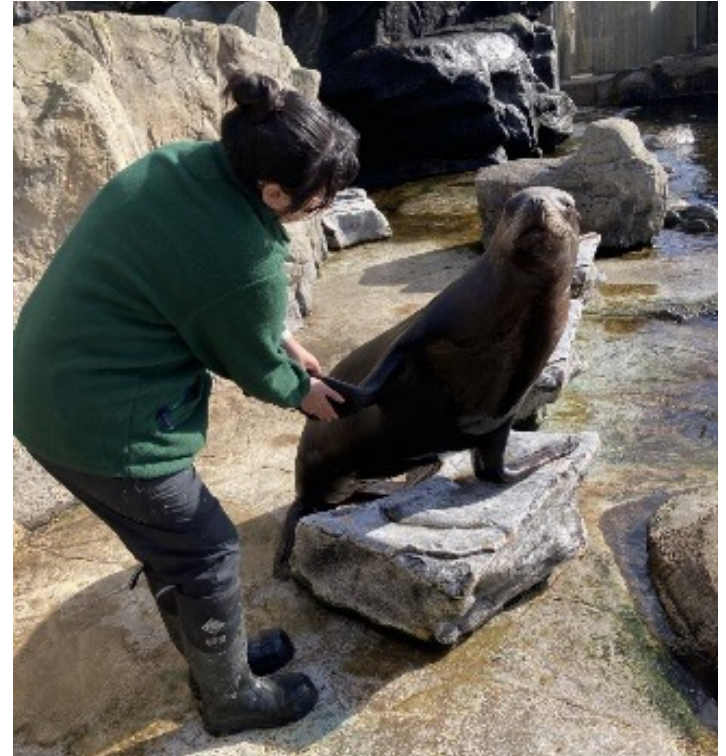
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## What I like about my job

I love knowing that my work helps zookeepers to give animals a better life. I have recently been studying a species of frog which is endangered. My work will help to conserve the frogs in zoos for years to come, so that we can stop them from becoming extinct.

## Challenges I have faced

People do not always understand the important work that we do in zoos. I am very passionate about looking after animals and I want everyone to learn that zoo scientists do incredible work to look after zoo animals as well as look after their entire species in the wild.

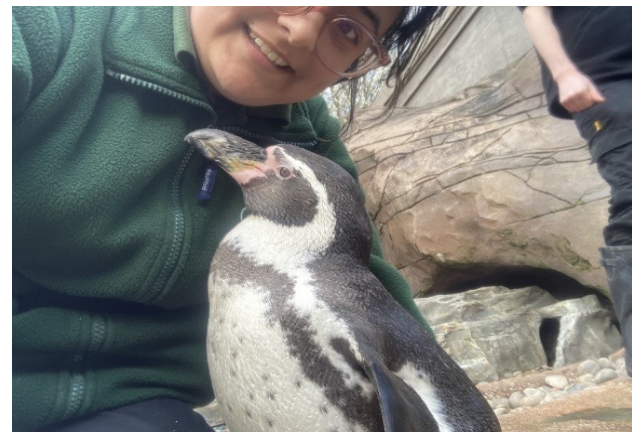




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If you want to be an animal behaviour and welfare scientist, you need:

- ✱ **to have a passion for animals** and to enjoy looking after them
- ✱ **to be curious** about the world around you and want to find answers to difficult questions
- ✱ **to enjoy getting messy** because looking after animals can be a very stinky job!



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## Discussion time

- ✱ Would you like to be an animal behaviour and welfare scientist like Jemma Dias?

**Why? Why not?**



- ✱ What skills and interests do you already have that would help you become an animal behaviour and welfare scientist?
- ✱ What new skills and knowledge would you need to develop?

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Jemma Dias is a STEM ambassador. Click [here](#) to access free STEM Ambassador support and resources.

## Free supporting resources for animal behaviour

Starters for Science – see 'Animal Camouflage'

Science Fun at Home – see 'Spider Safari'

Science for One – see 'Foil' (ages 5-7), 'Coat-hanger' (ages 9-11)

I bet you didn't know... articles use cutting-edge science research as a context for learning.

Teacher Guides can be used as classroom presentations. See:

- Some mammals have unusual backbones
- Stripes and concealment
- Evolution of life in cities
- About biodiversity and trophic cascades

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