

# I am a Geographer ...

## Stella Thomas

Field biologist, Tasmania Parks and Wildlife, Macquarie Island

*"In the end we will conserve only what we love.  
We will love only what we understand.  
We will understand only what we are taught."*

—Baba Dioum, 1968,  
Sengalese ecologist

My job is primarily being the 'eyes on the ground' on the remote sub-Antarctic Macquarie Island (affectionately known as Macca), monitoring the recovery of the flora and fauna – specifically the birdlife – since the eradication of pest species in 2014. Work is heavily field-based and flexible in regards to the wildlife calendar and the weather. There are always jobs to be done on the island in quieter periods, such as marine

debris clean up and trackwork. The great thing about being a geographer is you have a broad range of skills that can be applied to many different jobs. As I write (in April 2019), the animals are preparing for the cold months as some species return to the ocean to feed while others settle in for the winter. My priority over the next months will be to monitor the field cameras, collecting images of the Wandering Albatross chicks on their nests until they fledge in December. Summer is a busier period, managing tourist ship visits, biosecurity risks and the increased wildlife presence on the island.

I completed a Bachelor of Natural Environments and Wilderness Studies at the University of Tasmania with Majors in Geography and Plant Science. My Geography

