

# THOMAS KURT LAND

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## BIOGRAPHY

I am a zoologist, writer, and science researcher, having recently completed working on a cutting-edge CGI series at Silverback Films. I have a background in animal-behaviour, palaeontology, storytelling, expeditions, and CGI; worked on scripts for Sir David Attenborough and Morgan Freeman. I have planned, and worked, on large budget international and studio shoots for Silverback Films, and the BBC Natural History Unit.

I completed my MRes. in Evolutionary Biology at the University of Southampton and have since produced short films, given seminar's and lectures, and hosted/produced a 'Highly Commended' science podcast. I am a competent self shooter with an eye for a good angle for the shot, and for the story.

With my ambition to tell exciting, global stories, I was part of Silverback's development team. I aspire to actively participate in inclusive and authentic storytelling, currently working as a freelance developer I am in a funding period for a personal project focussing on non-traditional funding models; working with eco-investors and venture capital funds. I will be working with an influential First Nation group in British Columbia, who have agreed to work with me after a year of discussion, to tell their indigenous experience and stories.

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## KEY CREDITS

### ◆ Landmass Media | Freelance Developer (June 2025-Present)

Working with Partners in Ernst & Young, Māori Iwi, and First Nations communities in Vancouver island to develop several high impact film projects on an international level, currently in the funding stages.

### ◆ Silverback Films + Whitley Fund for Nature | Award Short-Film | Edit-Producer (February-May 2025)

**1 x 4 min;** Writer and Producer for Whitley Award Winner; Dr Yara Barros, in a film celebrating her successes in South Brazil, bringing the Jaguar back from extinction.

### ◆ Silverback Films | Development Researcher (April 2023-May 2025)

I worked through the entire pipeline from pitching innovative new ideas for Netflix and National Geographic; creating clean, creative, and eye-catching pitch decks, with stories, funding ideas, and market research.

### ◆ Silverback Films + Netflix | The Dinosaurs | Science Researcher (October 2022-May 2025)

**4 x 40min;** I was responsible for researching and creating engaging sequences for a landmark CGI dinosaur documentary narrated by Morgan Freeman, telling the story of 'the rise and fall of the dinosaurs'. I supported producers across the whole series, from sequence development, script writing, and advising on animal behaviour for our partners at Industrial Light & Magic. I built relationships between editorial & scientific consultants, archive acquisition, and constant fact checking on script and screen. I took a lead role in the sound design for the dinosaurs and environmental soundscapes for the series. I assisted international shoots set up to USA & South Africa, as well as UK studio shoots; with set design, and live animal handling.

### ◆ BBC Natural History Unit + AppleTV+ | Prehistoric Planet: Uncovered | Science Researcher (2021-2022)

**7 x 10 min;** I co-write and fact checked scripts, and conducted interviews with experts for the behind-the-scenes series. I organised shoots at the Natural History Museum (NHM) coordinating lead scientists, scripted the interview questions, and was an on-site researcher assisting the team for Sir David Attenborough's pieces-to-camera.

### ◆ BBC Natural History Unit + AppleTV+ | Prehistoric Planet (Series 1 & 2) | Science Researcher (2020-2022)

**10 x 45 min;** Reporting to Dr Darren Naish, I was a science researcher across series 1 & 2 both narrated by Sir David Attenborough; my focus was advising on animal behaviour, and forming working relationships between the BBC and leading palaeontologists across the globe. I helped storyboard sequences, writing my own sequence in the *Islands* episode, set up multiple international shoots (Formentera & Grand Cayman) during the pandemic, as well as helped identify key contemporary species. I communicated complex science to our animator partners at MPC Ltd through every stage of production.

### ◆ Pioneer Productions + National Geographic | In the Womb | Researcher Intern (February 2020)

**2 x 45 min;** A researcher helping with CGI, logistics, archive permissions, and factchecking.

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## SHORT FILMS

### **Solitary Bees | Writer / Producer / Presenter | (August 2020 - Student Film)**

A short documentary looking into the lives of a lesser known species of bee.

### **A Step into the Ocean | Writer / Producer / Presenter | (February 2020 - Student Film)**

An assessed short film on the evolution of the whale; With no budget I negotiated rarely granted pre-public access, and presented to camera, in the Hintze hall in the Natural History Museum in a high pressure, time limited slot.

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## RADIO EXPERIENCE

### **Darwin's Black Book | Writer / Co-Presenter/ Co-Producer / Editor | (2020-2023)**

'Highly Commended' podcast by the British Ecological Society. I was the co-creator and co-host for a podcast busting misconceptions in evolution and biology, in an entertaining but educational format for a broad audience. Series 1 saw over 1000 independent listeners.

### **Matryoshka Radio | Natural Planet Series 1 & 2 | Writer / Presenter | (2018)**

Researched, wrote, and presented 26 episodes of a commissioned Natural History radio programme for the London based Matryoshka Radio. This children's programme ran for 2 series.

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## AWARDS

### **Waterstones Regional Short Fiction Award | 3<sup>rd</sup> Place | (2025)**

### **Society for Experimental Biology Outreach Grant Award | Darwin's Black Book | (2022)**

### **British Ecological Society: Public Engagement Working Group Fund Award | Darwin's Black Book | (2020)**

### **University of Southampton: Dean's Award for Academic Excellence | (2020)**

### **Caterham School: Moncrieff-Jones Award for Services to Science | (2016)**

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## OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

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- ◆ **Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour | Workshop Lead** (April 2025)  
Rated as 'one of the best workshops in recent memory', with colleague Dr Tom Fletcher, I developed and led and full day workshop; 'From Science to Screen: The Context of Natural History Storytelling' for PhDs and academics at the ASAB annual conference. It covered all aspects of natural history filmmaking; including how to tell visual stories and connect with an audience.
  - ◆ **WildScreen Festival | Preselector Judge** (2022 / 2024)  
An award preselector judge for two consecutive festivals, reviewing tens of hours of footage for progression to the judges.
  - ◆ **Lizzie Daly's Earth Live Lessons | Darwin's Galapagos | Speaker** (2020)  
A lockdown speaker for Lizzie Daly's live online science speaker series, on the topic of Darwin's research in the Galapagos.
  - ◆ **Bath Geological Society | Speaker** (2020)
  - ◆ **Berkshire College of Agriculture | Speaker** (2020)
  - ◆ **Museum of Natural History, Oxford | Speaker** (2019)
  - ◆ **Wildlife Society, University of Southampton | President** (2018) & **Vice President** (2019)
  - ◆ **Biodiversity Hub for Education & Research, University of Southampton | Public Engagement Intern** (2018-2019)
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## EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

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**MRes. Evolutionary Biology | University of Southampton | Distinction with Dean's Award** (2019-2020)

Thesis: *On the analysis and reconstruction of the evolution of primate brain expansion focussing on ecological adaptations of neurology - specifically in the sensory regions of the brain.* (With Dr Stephen Montgomery, University of Bristol)

**BSc. Zoology | University of Southampton | 1<sup>st</sup> Class** (2016-2019)

Thesis: *Using micro-CT to recreate and investigate the structure of the braincase of new Baryonychine material from the Isle of Wight.*

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## SKILLS

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### Science Communication

- As an experienced researcher, I specialise in the quick, accurate, and deep curation of complex information for editorial.
- I have given lectures, podcast interviews, presented to camera in the Natural History Museum, and behind-the-scenes interview for an upcoming Netflix show, and hosted interviews with world famous scientists.

### Editorial

- In-depth, recent experience across producing, directing, and editing, working closely with producers across Blue-Chip natural history, in the field, in studios, and in the edit.
- Edit-producer for the Whitley Fund for Nature; and have produced a highly commended internationally regarded podcast.

### Script writing & Storytelling

- A strong non-fiction script writer, with an organic, collaborative approach to storytelling; with factchecking being a vital part of that process to allow the truth to tell a more authentic story.
- Good experience working with storyboard artists to layout sequence stories, and develop interesting ways to shoot sequences.
- I am a fiction author of short stories, getting podium place in a Waterstones writing competition; with a novel due for completion in 2026.
- I am developing my skills as an author to tell emotionally engaging stories, learning how to translate the rules of fictional character-led storytelling into natural history and factual documentary stories.

### Development

- Being involved with Silverback Films' development team for over 2 years, I have a thorough understanding and proficiency of the process and of what commissioners want. I come up with original, fascinating ideas, and build engaging pitches for heads of company and commissioners; especially in this new and hostile climate for natural history filmmaking.
- I am confident and can sell a story, approaching and forming relationships with potential contributors enabling further development.
- I am a problem solver; understanding how to get access to hard-to-reach locations, as well as creating connections for non-traditional funding solutions.

### Organisation & Logistics

- Experience setting up high-end foreign and domestic blue-chip shoots; included access, kit prep, accommodation, and travel.
- Thrives managing several projects in parallel; recently leading the sound design for a project, balanced with other responsibilities.
- I excel at making lasting relationships; with scientists, editors, composers, artists, and contributors. Recently, for example, I have formed good connections with the First Nations in British Columbia, the Māori, and NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab.
- I am a trained negotiator.

### Shooting & Location Work

- Experience filming and working on a variety of camera systems and lenses (primarily Sony FX3/6, Nikon ZR) in field and studio.
- Extensive experience working on dive shoots (Grand Cayman/ Formentera), expeditions (Belize/ Galapagos), studio shoots, & CGI heavy shoots.
- Excels at working under pressure in tough conditions, ensuring organisation, and moral, is high.

### Post Production

- Experienced with Adobe PremierePro/ Audition/ InDesign/ Lightroom; Canva; Avid Media Composer, DaVinci Resolve, Audacity.
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## INTERESTS

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- A voracious reader of a diversity of genres; from exploration, history, zoology, and science fiction. I am influenced by; David Attenborough's *Life on Air*, Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands*, and Lucy Cooke's *Unexpected Truth about Animals*.
  - In my spare time I focus on writing nature essays, and finishing writing a fictional novel.
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## REFERENCES (Contact available on request)

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**Dan Tapster** x8 Emmy-nominated exec producer.

**Amber Eames** Award winning director and producer.

**Dr Paul Stewart** Multiple Emmy & BAFTA winning cinematographer and producer. **Michael Pitts** x2 Emmy, and BAFTA winning DoP.