

# Curriculum vitae

Alexandra Anna Enrica van der Geer  
geeraae@gmail.com, alexandra.vandergeer@naturalis.nl

Homepage <http://users.uoa.gr/~geeraae>  
Twitter @IslandEvolution, <https://twitter.com/IslandEvolution>  
LinkedIn <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/alexandra-van-der-geer/2a/a98/676>  
Blog <http://avandergeer.blogspot.nl> (Island evolution and what's more)  
Facebook Public page "Evolution of Island Mammals"  
Orcid <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9588-4739>

## Personal data

Date / place of birth: 23/01/1963, Amsterdam  
Residence: Plasweg 20, 3768 AM Soest, the Netherlands  
Marital status: unmarried  
Children: 2 (ages 23 and 26)  
Nationality: Dutch  
Gender: Female

## Summary

I am a palaeontologist, specialised in aspects of evolution and biogeography of mammals on islands worldwide with emphasis on the Mediterranean and Southeast Asia. My Ph.D. is on adaptive radiation in extinct insular deer. Veterinary Medicine is my original background, hence my special interest in diet, ecology and morphology. I also hold a Ph.D. in Classical Sanskrit and am specialized in the depiction and role of animals through time. Currently, I am shifting focus to developmental aspects of vertebrate evolution in isolation.

## Academic training

Ph.D., 2014 Ph.D. Science (Palaeontology), Utrecht University, Utrecht, the Netherlands, public defence May 12<sup>th</sup> 2014. Topics: island evolution, island biogeography, taxonomy. Dissertation: *The impact of isolation: evolutionary processes in Hoptitomeryx*.  
Ph.D., 1998 Ph.D. Humanities (Indology), CNWS Research School, University of Leiden, the Netherlands. Topics: statistics, Chomsky, universal grammar. Dissertation: *The Bhasa Problem. A statistical research into its solution*.  
M.A., 1992 M.A. Humanities (Languages and Cultures of South Asia), University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. Concentrations: Sanskrit, art history, Hindi (cum laude). Master thesis: *Het Bhasa Probleem. Een nieuw onderzoek naar het auteurschap*.  
M.Sc., 1987 M.Sc. Veterinary Medicine, University of Utrecht, the Netherlands.  
V.W.O., 1981 Undivided V.W.O., Eemland College, Amersfoort, the Netherlands. Exams in Physics, Biology, Mathematics, Chemistry, English, Dutch, and German.

## Postgraduate courses

2014, May 3D Geometric Morphometrics – Fourth edition" at Transmitting Science, Els Hostalets de Pierola, Barcelona, Spain, May 20–24. Instructor: Dr. Melissa Tallman (Grand Valley State University, USA)  
2014, May *Studying ontogeny at different levels using geometric morphometrics* at Transmitting Science, Els Hostalets de Pierola, Barcelona, Spain, May 26–28. Instructor: Dr. Kieran McNulty (University of Minnesota, USA)

## Research and teaching interests

Mammalian palaeobiology; island biogeography; extinctions; comparative morphology; mammalian systematics and phylogeny; ethnobiology; geomorphology

## Job history

- 2016– Guest Researcher (0.8 fte), Department of Geology, Faculty of Geoenvironment, National University of Athens, Greece. Subject: island biogeography.
- 2016– Research Associate (0.2 fte), Character Evolution Group, Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, the Netherlands. Subjects: evolution of island mammals, evo-devo of axial skeleton.
- 2015 okt–2016 Metadata Analyst, University Library, University of Leiden, Leiden, the Netherlands. I assign LCC codes (Library of Congress catalogue system) to the Indology books.
- 2013–2015 Associate Researcher, Museum of Palaeontology and Geology (National University of Athens, Greece). I participate in the EU-funded research project *Isolario* as a full-time postdoc researcher in both palaeobiology and ethnozoology. The theme of the project was island biodiversity and cultural evolution with emphasis on Greece, Madagascar and the Southeast Asia during the past 800,000 years.
- 2012 Ph. D. student, Department of Geology, Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, the Netherlands. Subject: evolution and systematics of the insular cervoid *Hoplitomeryx* (Late Miocene, southern Italy).
- 2010–2011 Guest Researcher, Department of Geology, Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, the Netherlands. Subjects: evolution and extinction of island mammals.
- 2009 Teacher, Department of Museum Studies, National University of Athens, Greece. Subject: design and evaluation of exhibitions for the natural sciences (part-time).
- 2005–2009 Associate Researcher, Museum of Palaeontology and Geology (National University of Athens, Greece). I participated in research projects, resulting in various scientific papers and two monographs on island mammals. Apart from doing research, I contributed to collection accessibility (see below).
- 2003–2004 Postdoctoral research *Animals in Stone*, IAS Research Institute, University of Leiden, the Netherlands. My research encompassed the depiction of mammals in South Asian stone sculpture through time, including the role of mammals in South Asian societies and early domestication. The results of this research culminated in a textbook, published by E.J. Brill in 2010. See also <http://dutchstudies-satsea.nl/auteur/63/AlexandraSandraAnnaEnricavander-Geer.html>
- 1999–2002 Scientific Assistant, Kern Institute, Faculty of Humanities, University of Leiden, the Netherlands. I participated in the development of a database for archaeological and scientific photographs, and created several thousands of records. See <http://www.hum.leidenuniv.nl/kern/bijzondere-collecties/fotocollectie.html>
- 1999 Scientific Documentalist, Documentation Centre South Asia, University of Leiden, the Netherlands. My responsibilities included tracing and organizing news items (magazines, TV, radio) on South Asia, answering enquiries of visitors and advise in new acquisitions.
- 1998 Scientific Engineer, Polderland Language and Speech Technology, the Netherlands. My contribution consisted of the development of comprehensive linguistic rules for the grammar checker Dutch (MS Word) in close collaboration with the software developers and Microsoft (Dublin, Ireland).
- 1996–1997 Teacher, India Institute, Amsterdam. Subject: Sanskrit for beginners (part-time).

- 1993–1997 Research Assistant, CNWS Research School, University of Leiden, the Netherlands. My main task was to do research in the area of the proposed Ph. D. thesis. Courses followed with success included scientific writing, scientific English, presentation of results and training in the use of the SPSS statistical package.
- 1992–2000 Owner of sole proprietorship Talen Instituut Console (formerly Adviesbureau Console), publishing company. Focus was on travel and language guides.
- 1992 Library Assistant, University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. My responsibilities included cataloguing the Jan Gonda collection in Cardbox software and assisting in the distribution of this collection to various institutes throughout Europe.

## Collections and Museums

- 2009–2012 Natural History Research Centre (Vrisa, Lesvos, Greece; planned opening was 2012). I developed texts for the permanent exhibition and the discovery centre. Due to the financial crisis, this project is temporarily put on hold.
- 2006–2007 Digitization of the Natural History Collection of Vrisa: *Vatera Two Million Years Ago*. I supervised the project, wrote content for the website and created records for the database, and had the database adapted to international standards (Darwin Core). See <http://vrisa.geol.uoa.gr>
- 2006 Web portal and educational DVD for the Museums of the National University of Athens, Greece. I wrote the English texts for the Museum of Palaeontology and Geology, and supervised the educational DVD for the same museum. See <http://arch-museum.uoa.gr/paleontology>
- 2002–2003 New permanent exhibition for the Museum of Palaeontology and Geology of the University of Athens (in part realised). My contribution was to develop a scientifically sound method to reconstruct an extinct insular deer and bringing this into practice.
- 1999–2002 Photographic Project Kern Institute Leiden – making the 10,000 historical prints digitally accessible. Topic: art and archaeology of South and Southeast Asia. Project manager G. Theuns-de Boer. My contribution was to co-develop the information system (Skoepo of NIWI) and create records for the database.

## Science communication

- 2016 “Evolutie van het paard”. Excursion for students veterinary medicine (Utrecht University) under guidance of Dr Th. van Haften. Expo Naturalis Leiden, June 24<sup>th</sup>.
- 2016 Science Talk: “Evolutie op eilanden”. Informal talk for museum visitors. LiveScience Naturalis, Leiden, June 19<sup>th</sup> (with Daniëlle Meuleman)
- 2014 Guided tour in the palaeontological collections for amateur palaeontologists (WPZ) and geologists (WTKG). Subjects: (1) fossil sharks of the Netherlands, (2) insular mammals. Collections, Naturalis, Leiden, December 13<sup>th</sup>.
- 2014 “Evolutie van het paard”. Excursion for students of veterinary medicine (Utrecht University) under guidance of Dr C. Bijleveld. Expo Naturalis Leiden, June 27<sup>th</sup>.
- 2014 “Waarom zijn eilanddieren anders”. Spot light presentation about island evolution to museum visitors. LiveScience Naturalis, Leiden, April 27<sup>th</sup> (with Els Bernaerts)
- 2014 “Drieluik van eilandstudies: verleden, heden en toekomst”. Public lecture at Het Natuurhistorisch, Rotterdam, March 29<sup>th</sup>, on the history of island studies.
- 2013 “Aanpassen: de strijd om het bestaan voor zoogdieren op eilanden”. Public lecture at Naturalis, December 8<sup>th</sup>, on adaptation and the struggle for survival on islands.
- 2013 “Bestaan lilliputters en reuzen?”. Public lesson for children (8–12 yrs) for the Dutch Museum Jeugd Universiteit. Auditorium Naturalis, Leiden, September 8<sup>th</sup>.

- 2013 "Moleculaire evolutie van hemoglobine". Excursion for students of veterinary medicine (Utrecht University) under guidance of Dr T. van Haeften. Expo Naturalis Leiden, June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- 2013 Spot light. Informal explanation about my work as guest researcher to museum visitors. LiveScience Naturalis, Leiden, April 28<sup>th</sup> (with Daniëlle Meuleman)
- 2012 Science Talk: "Evolutie op eilanden". Informal talk for museum visitors. LiveScience Naturalis, Leiden, April 29<sup>th</sup> (with Jody Mijts) and July 1<sup>st</sup> (with Teun Baarspul)
- 2012 "Moleculaire evolutie van hemoglobine". Excursion for students of veterinary medicine (Utrecht University) under guidance of Dr C. Bijleveld. Expo Naturalis and library, Leiden, June 22<sup>th</sup>.
- 2012 "De evolutie van het paard". Excursion for students of veterinary medicine (Utrecht University) under guidance of Dr C. Bijleveld. Expo Naturalis and Library, Leiden, September 6<sup>th</sup>.
- 2006 "Digging into the Past". Lesson given at the Summer School Professional Development Program, Postgraduate Course of Museum Studies, Geological and Palaeontological Heritage: Retrieval, Conservation, Management and Display. Vrissa, Lesvos, August 21<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>.
- 1998 "De reuzen, dwergen en rariteiten van de Gargano". Public lecture presented at Natuurmuseum Rotterdam for the Dutch Werkgroep Pleistocene Zoogdieren.

### Awarded grants

- 2016, Dec **Synthesys** - Developmental constraints in the mammalian vertebral column (BE-TAF-6522). Travel grant to Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium.
- 2015, Dec **Synthesys** - Developmental constraints in the mammalian vertebral column (DE-TAF-5865). Travel grant to Naturkunde Museum, Berlin, Germany.
- 2003-2004 **Animals in Stone** - Indian fauna sculptured through time. Koninklijke Academie van Wetenschappen (Jan Gonda Fonds), Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Budget € 88,000.
- 2000, June **Miocene deer** - Evolution of the five-horned island deer *Hoplitomeryx* (Miocene, Italy). American Museum Collection Study Grant (Kalbfleisch Fund). Budget \$ 2,000.

### Project participation

- 2012-2015 **Isolario** - Island biodiversity and cultural evolution: examples from the Eastern Mediterranean, Madagascar, Mauritius and Philippines during the past 800,000 years (MIS 375910, KA:70/3/11669), website: <http://excellence.minedu.gov.gr/thales/en/thalesprojects/375910>. Funded by the European Union (ESF) and Greek national funds through the Operational Program "Education and Lifelong Learning" of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF)-Research Funding Program THALIS-UOA. Duration: 3 years. Total budget: € 600,000. PI H. Drinia. My participation: 2,5 years fulltime, research and fieldwork.
- 2013-present **First Mariners Expeditions** - the reconstruction of palaeolithic voyages with a simple raft constructed with local material and stone tools. Kythera to Crete with a simple raft. Directed by Bob Hobman. Voyages: Kythera to Crete (2013-2014), Roti (Timor) to Australia (2016-). My contribution: to ensure that the palaeontological content and claims are scientifically sound.
- 2012-14 **Of Mice and Mammoths** - toward a general theory of body size across space and time (NSF award nr 1028470). PI's M. Lomolino, D. Sax, M.R.Palombo. My contribution: gathering and analysing data and writing scientific contributions.

### Honors and recognition

- 2017 Invited participant, workshop *First Contact: Impact of Pleistocene hominins on island ecosystems*, planned end of April 2017, at the Australian National University, Canberra, Australia, organised by J. Louys and S. O'Connor.
- 2014 Invited speaker, scientific colloquium, Paläontologisches Institut und Museum, Universität Zürich, Switzerland, December 3 on "The impact of isolation: evidence from the past".
- 2014 Invited participant to the workshop *Investigating past vegetation changes and herbivore dynamics on Crete: an interdisciplinary perspective*, November 5–7, at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute, Chania, Crete, organised by the University of Fribourg, Switzerland.
- 2013 Keynote speaker at the Asia Wing Workshop (*Human and cultural diversification in Asian environmental landscapes*, part 1) at the American Museum of Natural History, September 20th. Participants: D. Harvey, L. Kendall, R. MacPhee, M. Novacek, S. Olsen, V.C. Pigott, A. Sachedina, and me. The planned total reorganization of the Hall of Asian Mammals will include ethnozoology of Asia (the interface between culture and nature), and I was invited to talk on this subject in the light of the renovation.
- 2011 Invited participant to the NESCent Catalysis Meeting on "The Role of Earth Surface Processes in the Evolution of Mammalian Tooth Shape", April 25–30, at the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center, Duke University Durham, North Carolina. Organizers: R. Madden, M. Kohn, C. Stromberg. Funding agent NESCent. See also [https://www.nescent.org/wg\\_hypsodonty/Main\\_Page](https://www.nescent.org/wg_hypsodonty/Main_Page)
- 2009 "Perché Sardegna, perché Grotta Corbeddu?" (Why Sardinia, why Corbeddu Cave?) Invited speaker at *Convegno La Grotta Corbeddu: Le nostre origine: popolamenti umani ed evoluzione delle faune pleistoceniche nella valle di Lanaitto*. Oliena, 7–8 Novembre 2009.
- 2000 "Eilandherkauwers en de evolutie van parallele structuren". Guest lecture presented at the Faculty for Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht.

## Graduate students

- 2014 Giuli Fotinou (University of Patras, Greece), dental features of the late Pleistocene insular deer *Candiacervus*. Principal supervisors are George Iliopoulos and Hara Drinia.
- 2013–2014 Unggul Wibowo (Centre for Archaeological Studies, University of Wollongong), skeletal adaptations of a Pleistocene insular elephant (*Stegodon sondaari*, Flores). Principal supervisor is G. van den Bergh (University of Wollongong, Australia)
- 2013 Jesse Hennekam (research intern, NBC Naturalis), dental characteristics of a Miocene insular deer (*Hoplitomeryx*, Italy). Co-supervisor with L. van den Hoek Ostende (Naturalis, Leiden) and W. Wessels (University of Utrecht).

## Member of organizing committees

- 2012 *Man among the Beasts*. Mini-symposium in honour of Dr John de Vos, Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, Octobre 1, 2012.
- 2011 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the European Association of Vertebrate Palaeontologist, 14–19 June, Herakleion, Crete, Greece.
- 1999 1st International Workshop Vatera, the Late Plio/Pleistocene extinction and evolution in the Palearctic. The Vatera site, 29 September–2 Octobre, Polichnitos, Lesvos, Greece

## Memberships

- Society of Biogeography  
 Society of Vertebrate Paleontology  
 Werkgroep Pleistocene Zoogdieren (honorary member)

Vrienden van Instituut Kern (honorary member)

### Extra-curricular activities

- 2016–present Contributor to the digital Dutch encyclopaedia ENSIE ([www.ensie.nl](http://www.ensie.nl)) (c. 9 articles)
- 2007–2010 Wikipedia articles (c. 500 edits), user: Avandergeer.
- 2003–2009 Editor in chief and graphic designer of *Cranium*, journal of the Dutch Work Group Pleistocene Mammals.
- 2002–present Editor and graphic designer of the *VVIK Newsletter*, University of Leiden.
- 1999–2005 Member of the board of the Vrienden van Instituut Kern, University of Leiden.
- 1999–2002 Graphic designer of *Cranium*, see above.

### Reviewer for:

- 2016 *Frontiers of Biogeography, Journal of Mammalogy*
- 2015 *PeerJ, Quaternary Science Reviews, Cainozoic Research, Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology, Journal of Mammalian Evolution*
- 2014 *PLoS One, Geological Journal, Journal of Biogeography, Evolutionary Biology BMC, Comptes Rendus Palevol, Quaternary International*
- 2013 *Journal of Mammalogy, Journal of Biogeography, Quaternary International; Comptes Rendus Palevol, International Journal of Speleology, Paläontologische Zeitschrift; Integrative Zoology*
- 2012 *Palaios; Royal Society Proceedings B, Journal of the Geological Society, Evolution, Rivista Italiana di Paleontologia e Stratigrafia*
- 2011 *Royal Society Proceedings, Bolletino della Società di Palaeontologia Italiana*
- 2010 *Journal of Systematic Palaeontology, Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology, Geobios*
- 2008 *Integrative Zoology, Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*
- 2007 *Zoological Journal of the Linnaean Society*

### Reviewed grant proposals

- 2016 National Geographic Society
- 2016 Sepkoski Grants of the Paleontological Society
- 2015 European Research Council (ERC), Starting Grants panel
- 2015 The Leakey Foundation
- 2012 The Israel Science Foundation