

Ninad Jadhav

📍 Cambridge, MA, USA ✉ njadhav@g.harvard.edu 🌐 ORCID in nhjadhav

Education

Harvard University <i>Ph.D. in Computer Science</i> , School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Thesis title: “Wireless signal directionality sensing on the edge for multi-robot systems” Thesis committee: Prof. Stephanie Gil, Prof. Robert J Wood, Prof. Swarun Kumar.	Cambridge, MA, USA Expected – Spring 2025
Arizona State University <i>M.S. in Computer Science</i> , Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering	Tempe, AZ, USA, 2019
SRM Institute of Science and Technology <i>B.Tech. in Computer Science and Engineering</i>	Chennai, TN, India, 2014

Research Experience

Harvard University <i>Ph.D researcher in Computer Science</i> , School of Engineering and Applied Sciences Advisor: Prof. Stephanie Gil	Cambridge, MA 2020 – present
Project CETI <i>Developing autonomous robot systems for sperm whale monitoring.</i> Advisor: Prof. Stephanie Gil	Dominica 2023 – present
Arizona State University <i>Graduate Researcher in Computer Science</i> Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering Advisor: Prof. Stephanie Gil	Tempe, AZ 2019 – 2020

Publications

Refereed journal publications

- [J1] **N. Jadhav**, Meghna Behari, R.J. Wood, and S. Gil, “WiSER-X: Wireless Signals-based Efficient Decentralized Multi-Robot Exploration without Explicit Information Exchange”, *In preparation*, Preprint available here: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2412.19876>.
- [J2] **N. Jadhav***, S. Bhattacharya*, D. Vogt, Y. Aluma, P. Tonessen, A. Prabhakara, S. Kumar, S. Gero, R.J. Wood, and S. Gil, “Reinforcement learning-based framework for whale rendezvous via autonomous sensing robots”, *Science robotics*, 9 95, eadn7299, 2024.
- [J3] A. Maalouf, **N. Jadhav**, K. Jatavallabhula, M. Chahine, D. Vogt, R.J. Wood, A. Torralba, and D. Rus, “Follow Anything: Open-Set Detection, Tracking, and Following in Real-Time”, *IEEE Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)*, 9, 3283-3290, 2023.
- [J4] **N. Jadhav***, W. Wang*, D. Zhang, O. Khatib, S. Kumar, and S. Gil, “A wireless signal-based sensing framework for robotics”, *The International Journal of Robotics Research (IJRR)*, 41, 955 - 992, 2022.

Refereed conference papers

- [C1] **N. Jadhav***, S. Bhattacharya*, H. Izhar, K. Li, R.J. Wood, and S. Gil, “Real-time Remote Tracking and Autonomous Planning for Whale Rendezvous using Robots”, *International Symposium of Experimental Robotics (ISER)*, 2025 (under review).

- [C2] M. Chahine*, W. Yang*, A. Maalouf, J. Siriska, **N. Jadhav**, D. Vogt, S. Gil, R. J. Wood, and D. Rus, “Decentralized Vision-Based Autonomous Aerial Wildlife Monitoring”, *International Symposium of Experimental Robotics (ISER)*, 2025 (under review).
- [C3] S. Bhattacharya*, **N. Jadhav***, H. Izhar, K. Li, K. George, R.J. Wood, and S. Gil, “Real-Time Sperm Whale Rendezvous Using an Autonomous Drone and In Situ Sensing”, *Robotics Science and Systems (RSS)*, 2025 (under review).
- [C4] B. Dijkstra, **N. Jadhav**, A. Sloom, M. Marcantoni, B. Jayawardhana, S. Gil, and B. Haghighat, “WiFi-CSI Sensing and Bearing Estimation in Multi-Robot Systems: An Open-Source Simulation Framework.”, *40th Anniversary of the IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA@40)*, 2024. Available: <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2410.01398>.
- [C5] **N. Jadhav**, W. Wang, D. Zhang, S. Kumar, and S. Gil, “Toolbox Release: A WiFi-Based Relative Bearing Framework for Robotics”, *IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS)*, 13714-13721, 2022.
- [C6] M. Cavorsi, **N. Jadhav**, D. Saldaña, and S. Gil, S “Adaptive Malicious Robot Detection in Dynamic Topologies”, *IEEE 61st Conference on Decision and Control (CDC)*, 2236-2243, 2022.
- [C7] S. Krishnan, Z. Wan, K. Bhardwaj, **N. Jadhav**, A. Faust and V.J. Reddi, “Roofline Model for UAVs: A Bottleneck Analysis Tool for Onboard Compute Characterization of Autonomous Unmanned Aerial Vehicles”, *2022 IEEE International Symposium on Performance Analysis of Systems and Software (ISPASS)*, 162-174, 2022.
- [C8] W. Wang, **N. Jadhav**, P.A. Vohs, N. Hughes, M. Mazumder, and S. Gil, “Active Rendezvous for Multi-Robot Pose Graph Optimization using Sensing over Wi-Fi”, *International Symposium of Robotics Research (ISRR)*, 832-849, 2019.

Teaching

Harvard University	Cambridge, MA
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Multi-Robot Systems: Control, Communication, and Security	Spring 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarded the Certificate of Distinction in Teaching for the Spring 2022 semester by Harvard’s Office of Undergraduate Education; featured in Harvard Magazine. Integrated “WiFi-as-a-sensor” for signal directionality estimation into the coursework, enabling students to utilize it in their final projects. Co-designed and co-developed three mini-workshops to teach students the basics of robot control and sensing using ROS with LoCoBot and Turtlebot ground robot platforms equipped with LiDAR, RGBD Camera, and Wifi-as-a-Sensor. Designed and evaluated a search-and-rescue-themed final project for the class, guiding multiple student teams toward successful deployment on robot platforms. 	
Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Introduction to Artificial Intelligence	Spring 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gained experience teaching both in-person and online formats. 	
Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Coordination and Control of Multi-Robot Systems	Fall 2019
Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ
<i>Course-work grader</i> , Introduction to Artificial Intelligence	Spring 2019

Research Mentoring

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA

Undergraduate and Graduate mentor

2023 – present

- Meghna Behari (Harvard UG)
- Steven Cho (Harvard UG -> ETH Zurich MSc.)
- Carla Paillardon (ETH Zurich MSc., visiting student at Harvard)

Peer Reviewing

- Robotics and Automation Letters (RA-L)
- IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA)
- IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS)
- Autonomous Robots (AuRo)

Press Articles

- Harvard SEAS News
“New methods for whale tracking and rendezvous using autonomous robots.”
- EurekaAlert
“New methods for whale tracking and rendezvous using autonomous robots”.
- Popular Science
“New method for finding sperm whales kind of works like a rideshare app”.
- The Robot Report
“Project CETI uses AI and robotics to track down sperm whales.”
- Heise
“Tracking von Walen: KI soll Forschern zu mehr Rendezvous verhelfen”.

Research Overview

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA

Ph.D researcher in Computer Science, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences

2020 – present

- Developed real-time WiFi-based signal directionality estimation capability for robots using onboard sensors and computing platforms such as Raspberry Pi and UP Square board as well as offboard computation in Matlab and C++.
- Development and theoretical analysis of algorithms to enable wireless signal directionality estimation by leveraging arbitrary 3D motion of a drone. Analyzed the impact of positional measurement errors from visual-inertial odometry on directionality estimation.
- Designed and developed a battery-powered waterproof drone payload featuring algorithms for real-time onboard very high frequency signal directionality estimation using software-defined radio; conducted field tests in the Caribbean Sea with beacons for marine wildlife tracking.
- Developed algorithms for efficient distributed multi-robot exploration of unknown environments under severe communication bandwidth constraints, utilizing heterogeneous sensing modalities such as LiDAR, Ultra-Wide Band, and WiFi.
- Gained extensive hands-on experience with building quadcopters, Pixhawk drone flight controllers, open-source firmware (PX4 and ArduPilot), MAVSDK, and interfacing with motion capture systems (Optitrack and Vicon) and drone peripherals such as first-person-view (FPV) required for autonomous deployment at sea.
- Deployed ROS-based SLAM and exploration algorithms on various customized ground robot platforms, including Turtlebot, ROSbot, LoCoBot, iRobot Create, and Leo Rover.

Project CETI

Developing autonomous robot systems for sperm whale monitoring.

Dominica
2023 – present

- Gained experience in the design, development, and deployment of autonomous quadcopters with sensing payloads for tracking and autonomous tagging of sperm whales in the Caribbean Sea.
- Conducted four science expeditions in Dominica, each spanning approximately 3 weeks, involving 10 hours per day on a catamaran. Co-led two expeditions, managing day-to-day task planning and coordination with Project CETI's marine operations team.
- Gained experience in setting up and deploying autonomous drones, sensors to detect very high-frequency radio beacons, and underwater acoustic hydrophones at sea from a catamaran for real-time rendezvous with sperm whales during their surfacing periods.
- Collaborated with a multi-disciplinary team consisting of marine biologists and roboticists towards developing novel solutions that leverage autonomous robots for scaling biological data collection and visual observations of sperm whales.

Arizona State University

Graduate Researcher in Computer Science Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering

Tempe, AZ
2019 – 2020

- Advisor: Prof. Stephanie Gil
- Developed an active rendezvous approach using WiFi-based signal directionality sensing to minimize pose estimation errors during distributed mapping with a team of robots.

Arizona State University

M.S. in Computer Science, Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering

Tempe, AZ
2017 – 2019

- Developed a localization system using WiFi beacons for mobile ground robots under the supervision of Prof. Stephanie Gil.

References

Prof. Stephanie Gil

Assistant Professor of Computer Science

School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA
sgil@seas.harvard.edu

Prof. Robert J. Wood

Harry Lewis and Marlyn McGrath Professor of Engineering and Applied Sciences

School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA
rjwood@eecs.harvard.edu

Prof. Swarun Kumar

Sathaye Family Foundation Professor

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
swarun@cmu.edu

Prof. Shane Gero

Scientist in Residence; Adjunct Research Professor

Department of Biology
Carleton University, Ottawa, ON, Canada
shane@thespermwhaleproject.org