Grant Awards


Janice McDonnell “2015 Maitland Summer Institute for the New Jersey Science Teachers Association” NSF $22,122

John Wilkin “Exploring how global climate change will affect the water quality of the New York City Harbor Estuary” Cornell University $27,868

Malin Pinsky “Genetic monitoring to improve fish stock assessments” NJSG $73,118

Oscar Schofield “Polar Interdisciplinary Coordinated Education (ICE)” NSF $929,919

Javier Zavala Garay “Stability Analysis of the Western Boundary Currents in the Tropical Indian Ocean” Theiss Research $14,731

Grace Saba “Physiological ecology and habitat suitability: combining experiments and surveys to inform stock assessability” NOAA $50,147


Fisheries and oceanography colleagues from throughout the Mid-Atlantic came together to close out the month of October at a science meeting in Cape May, NJ. The event, coordinated by Daphne Munroe and Josh Kohut, was a joint annual meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, and Mid-Atlantic Bight Physical Oceanography and Meteorology (MABPOM). The joint meeting, affectionately called POM-Fish by some attendees, provided an opportunity to highlight cross-disciplinary research that couples the physics of the natural system with biology and ecology. The Cape May Convention Hall provided an ideal backdrop, with breaking waves on Cape May beach out every window, that inspired much networking on exciting research. A phenomenal lineup of talks spanning three days of the program included a keynote session in which John Manderson (NOAA), Matt Oliver (UDel) and Steve McMullin (VirginiaTech) spoke to the group about the future of collaborative marine science in our region. Their bottom line advice – it’s all about communication and collaboration! The talks and poster session showcased a wealth of student research from Rutgers DMCS and beyond, including a poster by Francesca Roselli who was awarded best poster presentation for her poster on oyster toadfish. The meeting closed with an afternoon field trip to tour the Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory’s Aquaculture Innovation Center (AIC) where tour-goers got to see the capacity of this impressive facility.

Thanks to Daphne Munroe and Josh Kohut for Organizing a Great Successful “Fishy” Ocean Meeting in Cape May
Congratulations to Orly Levitan who has been promoted to Assistant Research Professor

Orly started her undergraduate studies in Israel initially pursuing biomedical research, until she fell in love with photosynthesis and the environment and started an Ms.C. graduate program focusing on plant and environmental research, and took a strong turn towards biological oceanography. Soon after, during her PhD, she took part in an Israeli-German collaboration, looking at the effect of human perturbations on photosynthesis and nitrogen fixation in marine autotrophs. In fall of 2010, she started her post doc at Rutgers where she expanded her research interests to include understanding of how carbon and nitrogen are controlled in algae, specifically, diatoms. Her current working hypothesis is that retrograde signal transduction pathways play a major role in the redirection of carbon intermediates in diatoms. We are stoked she is part of our academic family!

Team Bidle Heads to Sea For Large NASA project

Kay Bidle’s group is participating in a large NASA-funded North Atlantic Aerosols and Marine Ecosystems Study (NAAMES) project (http://naames.larc.nasa.gov/science.html). NAAMES is an interdisciplinary investigation resolving key processes controlling marine ecosystems and aerosols that are essential to our understanding of Earth system function and future change. His team’s role is to try to assess the impact of viruses on eukaryotic phytoplankton mortality using our various biomolecular markers—a challenging task given the microbial diversity in the ocean. His group is also working with atmospheric scientists to investigate the presence and diversity of viruses in aerosols and their possible role as cloud condensation nuclei. The first of four 1-month cruises is currently happening (6-Nov-1-Dec 2015) aboard the R/V Atlantis. Christien Laber (PhD student, pictured below) is anchoring this cruise, so we wish him a safe and productive time at sea.

Graduate Student Nicole Couto leads initial team into the Antarctic for the 2015/2016 field season.

A large portion of the Long Term Ecological Research program is focused on understanding how the warming and melting along the West Antarctic Peninsula is altering the coastal ecosystems. One big part of that effort is a six month field season at Palmer Station. Scientists at Palmer station have been sampling local waters for the
last 24 years. This year PhD candidate Nicole Couto along with current undergraduate student Ashley Gonalves and recent Rutgers graduate Chelsea Farishon are anchoring the first leg of the field season. Their initial efforts have had to respond to heavy ice, and so they joined researchers from Columbia University to devise some sea ice experiments. Also in the last week, Nicole’s subsurface mooring was successfully deployed with great assistance from the Universities of Hawaii and Alaska.

Monica Bricelj awarded a teaching and research faculty scholarship from the Fulbright Commission in Mexico

Congratulations to Monica Bricelj, Research Professor at HSRL, who was awarded a teaching and research faculty scholarship from the Fulbright Commission in Mexico (COMEXUS), hosted at the Instituto de Investigaciones Oceanológicas, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (IIO/UABC), Ensenada, Baja California, for a 9-month period (Aug. 2015 to April 2016). During her stay, she will be teaching an intensive graduate course on the “Impacts of Harmful Algae on Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems” in Spanish, a first course on the subject taught anywhere outside of Europe. She is also conducting research on two high-value bivalve mollusc species in Baja California, Mexico: the lion’s paw scallop, *Nodidetes subnudosus* (in photo to the right), and the Pacific geoduck, *Panopea spp*. Aquaculture of the former species has not yet been mastered and the harvest of wild stocks is limited, and the latter species is affected by harvesting bans (both in the US and Mexico) that affect exports to China, due to the incidence of blooms of toxic algae, producers of paralytic shellfish poisons, that have spread on the west coast. Baja California is a region where aquaculture is rapidly expanding.

Documenting the changing climate’s impact on New Jersey fish.

Science Magazine published a special issue highlighting the effects that climate change has on the oceans. An article by Marianne Lavelle examines how climate change is creating problems for fisheries by causing valuable fish stocks to move in response to a warming ocean. The article features Rutgers scientist Ken Able, Director of the Rutgers University Marine Field Station. Ken has been keeping a watchful eye on the Jersey Shore and beyond. What started out as a simple monitoring program of the summer flounder has now turned into a valuable library of climate change, documenting the northward migration of species as the waters off the East coast are warming. Also featured in the article is Rutgers scientist Malin Pinsky, Assistant Professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution & Natural Resources and a rising star among marine ecologists. Instead of combing through Jersey Shore’s fish spawning grounds, Malin and colleagues stayed high and dry combing through 40 years worth of census data. And they have come to the same conclusion: many fish species are getting hot and bothered, and they are on the move.
New Publications


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