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DEPARTMENT OF MARINE SCIENCES

Biannual newsletter <https://marinesciences.uconn.edu/newsletters/>

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Message from the Department Head

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Department of Marine Sciences' newsletter. This bi-annual publication will serve to inform current members of the department, alumni and friends of our recent activities, and highlight important events and achievements.

Members of our department seek excellence in cross-disciplinary research and education in the patterns and processes of coastal and global oceans. Through exploration and education, we strive to foster an integrated understanding of the marine environment, focusing on biological oceanography, marine biology & chemistry, meteorology, and physical oceanography.

J. Evan Ward
Professor & Head



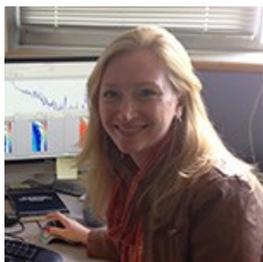
New Department Head

After years of committed leadership as the Department Head, Dr. Jim Edson has accepted a position as a Senior Scientist at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. "I have truly enjoyed my time at UConn and all the friends and colleagues I've had the pleasure of working with in our Department," he said.

Dr. J. Evan Ward has been selected to serve as the new Head of the Marine Sciences Department. Evan has extensive experience working with faculty, staff, and students at UConn and has a prolific body of research focusing on marine environmental physiology of invertebrates.

New Faculty

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Samantha Siedlecki and Dr. Catherine Matassa to the Department.



Dr. Siedlecki (left) is a biogeochemical oceanographer who studies the processes that influence carbon cycling in the coastal zone.

Dr. Matassa (right) is a benthic ecologist interested in species interactions and how they shape community dynamics and ecosystem function.



RV Connecticut Expansion



The *RV Connecticut* was revamped last year to increase its capabilities. Construction crews cut the ship in half and inserted a 14-foot extension to lengthen the ship from 76 feet to 90 feet. The vessel can now support 18 scientists and crew members for cruises up to 14 days. The expansion also doubled the laboratory space on board. While the vessel has successfully been used for research and the deployment of bouys and underwater research vehicles for many years, the modifications greatly enhance its capabilities for scientific research. The modifications also provide even more opportunities for hands-on experiences to students.

Avery Point 50th Anniversary Celebrations

On October 13th, the William Fitzgerald Symposium celebrated 50 years of research on mercury cycling and honored the legacy of Distinguished Professor Bill Fitzgerald. An international group of researchers provided an update on the status of mercury cycling research, from Arctic lakes to the open ocean.

The Avery Point campus celebrated its 50th anniversary on October 15th, 2017. Students, staff, faculty, and community members gathered for a festival that showcased the beauty and diverse resources of Avery Point. Scientists from the Marine Sciences department demonstrated their research using remotely operated vehicles, gliders, research vessels, and other technologies. Faculty seminars covered an array of topics from remote sensing to coldwater corals. Visitors toured the Rankin Laboratory, enjoyed live music and theater performances, and enjoyed boat rides with Project Oceanography and the Avery Point Sailing Club. Dr. James Kremer, Professor Emeritus of Marine Sciences, presented on the origin and evolution of the Marine Sciences undergraduate major since its inception in 1999. The celebrations highlighted Avery Point's legacy as a historic site and a unique institution of higher education and research.



Pre-College Summer Program

The Marine Sciences department will host its first class of high-school juniors and seniors as part of UConn's [Pre-College Summer Program](#). Dr. Claudia Koerting, Research Associate and Undergraduate Program Coordinator at Avery Point, is organizing the week-long session on Marine Biology and Oceanography. Students will experience college lectures as well as hands-on field and laboratory research, integrating biology, chemistry, physics and math to study the marine environment. The group will learn basic marine science concepts and laboratory exercises at Storrs, followed by trips to the coast to conduct measurements in Long Island Sound, visit the

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Pre-College Summer Program (continued)

research laboratories at Avery Point, and learn about marine conservation at the Mystic Aquarium. “I hope that the students will benefit both from the living experience as well as the learning experience in a university environment,” Claudia said.



National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (NSF-REU)

The Marine Sciences department and Mystic Aquarium have been awarded a three year [NSF-REU](#) that involves 10 weeks of research for undergraduates from around the nation. We welcomed the first cohort of students last summer. The students were exposed to cutting edge marine research at UConn Avery Point and trained in professional development and teamwork at the Mystic Aquarium.

Partners of Marine Sciences

Marine Sciences is beginning a new initiative that will better inform alumni, government and non-government organizations, and the public about the educational and research activities of the Department. This initiative will also help to build collaborations and partnerships among the above groups and our faculty and students. To become a Partner of Marine Sciences, please visit our website and sign up. <https://marinesciences.uconn.edu/partners-of-marine-sciences/>



Grants and Awards

- Professor **Evan Ward**, Research Professor **Sandra Shumway**, and Assistant Professor **Kevin Brown** were awarded \$257,531 from the [NOAA Marine Debris Program](#) to study the uptake of microplastics by oysters.
- Professor **Robert Mason** and Assistant Research Professor **Zofia Baumann** have been granted \$200,000 from the [Hudson River Foundation](#) to study the effects of human and climate disturbance on mercury levels in marine organisms.
- Assistant Professor **Kelly Lombardo** received a 2017 NSF CAREER award for her proposal “CAREER: The Response of Coastal Squall Line Dynamics to Climate Change.”
- PhD students in Professor **Hans Dam’s** research group **Matthew Sasaki** and **James deMayo** received awards for best student oral presentation and outstanding poster, respectively, at the 13th International Conference on Copepoda, held in San Pedro, CA in July .
- Graduate student **Tyler Griffin** entered the Oceanography program with a UConn Outstanding Scholars Program Fellowship award. He will be working toward a doctoral degree with Professor **Evan Ward**.
- Marine Sciences undergraduates **Jessica Hinkley & Sarah McCart** received a summer undergraduate research fellowship (SURF) to work on pioneering a carbon dioxide time series in Long Island Sound with Professor **Penny Vlahos** and analyzing deep-sea cores in paleoceanography with Professor **David Lund** respectively.