

GENERATIONS

Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences

SUMMER 2021
ISSUE 2



Generations is a biannual newsletter designed to connect the past, present, and future generations of our program while celebrating our accomplishments and our impact in fisheries, wildlife, and conservation sciences.



Oregon State
University



Message from the Department Head

Greetings, FWCS Family!

Yes, our family has a new name! After years of discussion with faculty, staff, students, alumni, colleagues, donors, and many leaders on campus, we have officially changed our department and undergraduate degree names to Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences (FWCS – or “fwix”, as we are starting to say here!). It is a change in title but not in our research, teaching, and outreach focus – indeed, since our founding in 1935 we have always been about conserving our fisheries and wildlife resources, be it for sustained harvest, enjoyment, stewardship, or ecosystem function (see the 1938?? cartoon, right, from the “Ding Darling Club”!). Adding “Conservation” to our title reflects a broader view of our work and follows many similar changes among fisheries and wildlife programs across the country. We are uniquely “Conservation Sciences” to embrace the social science aspects of our field and the integration of many scientific disciplines that is needed to develop solutions to natural resource challenges.

This is our first name change in 57 years. It is an opportunity to define ourselves more broadly, but also more clearly. Over the next year, faculty, staff and students will work together on a strategic plan that emphasizes our strengths and identifies needs and new directions, including the need to make our fields more inclusive. Our curriculum will be reviewed in light of our majority online student population, university budget model, and upcoming revisions to general education requirements for OSU and other public universities in Oregon.

In other news, we are looking forward to getting back to in-person work, thanks to the vaccines. Fingers crossed that there will be a vaccine soon for kids under 12, so they will be safer, too! We are following state and university guidelines in our preparations for fall term. My policy is to be as flexible as possible, recognizing the range of concerns and adjusting as needed to help everyone feel safe and happy to be back at work. I am looking forward to seeing staff and students in our halls once more, and planning our spring Reunion! All the best to you and yours, Selina

Front cover: Western spotted skunk released from trap near the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest. Western spotted skunks have been radio-collared to help researchers understand their spatial ecology. *Credit: Marie Tosa*

A Note from the Editor

With this issue of “Generations”, we wish a fond farewell to “News and Views”, which served as the title for our alumni communication’s newsletter for decades. While the name served us well, it was time for a change, not unlike the change needed in our departmental name. With this name change, we hope to make the link more explicitly between the past, present, and future generations of students and professionals in our department, and the content of Generations will reflect that intent. For example, in this issue we have a story about the history of our Departmental name, and the authors of that story span eight decades with our program. We also introduce several new faculty who will inspire and train a new generation of students, and there is a story contributed by a current undergraduate student who lives in Washington and is pursuing her degree entirely online. Our online degree and certificate programs, which did not even exist 15 years ago, are now the largest elements of our student body. We are always interested in hearing from our alums and if you have any suggestions for stories in Generations or any other comments to offer about how we communicate with alumni in general, please drop me a line. -- Bruce Dugger, Professor and Associate Department Head.



The History of Our Department Name

by Stan Gregory, Ivan Arismendi, and Scott Mitchell, with input from Jim Hall,
Howard Horton, Bob Jarvis, and Andy Landforce



Changing our name to the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences is more inclusive of our science today and builds on our legacy of conservation science since our beginning in 1935. Our new name will enhance our ability to recruit and retain diverse faculty and students to lead in research, education, and outreach for years to come. - Ivan Arismendi



Names matter. Names represent how we view ourselves, become part of our identity, and in time create a legacy. For those reasons, name changes are some of the most controversial and contentious processes in universities and society in general. In May 2021, we changed our name to the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences. For 57 years, our students have taken pride in graduating from the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, being part of its history, and associating their professional identity with their time in our department. So why would we change a name that has meant so much to thousands of graduates from our department? But that question raises two even more fundamental questions—what were the names of our department and why did they change?

THE BEGINNING

Our first name was the Department of Fish, Game, and Fur Animal Management when the department was established in 1935. Between two World Wars, it was a time of change. Oregon Agricultural College's name was changed to Oregon State Agricultural College (OAC) in 1927 and to Oregon State College (OSC) in 1937. In 1936, one year after its creation, the department simplified its name to the Department of Fish and Game Management. OSC selected Dr. R.E. Dimick, an aquatic ecologist in the Entomology Department, to head the new department. Almost 100 students enrolled in the program the first year and the first class graduated in 1938. In 1935-36, the first curriculum of the new department included six courses:

Course	Credits	Instructor
FG 251 Fish and Game Conservation	2	Dimick
FG 261 Preservation and Management of Game Species	3	Dimick
FG 351,2,3 Fish and Game Management	3/term	Dimick
AI 507 Seminar	1	Dimick

J.N. "Ding" Darling, a newspaper journalist and cartoonist in Iowa, who became nationally famous for his articles and cartoons on politics and conservation, personally funded the first cooperative wildlife research unit at Iowa State College. President Franklin Roosevelt appointed Darling to be the Director of the Bureau of Biological Survey, which became the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As Director, Darling lobbied Congress to form national cooperative wildlife research units, and the Oregon Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit became the second of nine established in 1936. The availability of funds for wildlife conservation research obviously motivated OAC to create a department and apply for one of the new research units. Originally, the research units received \$6,000 from state conservation agencies, \$6,000 in in-kind services from host universities, and \$3,000 from ammunition companies. Arthur Einarsen served as the first leader of the Cooperative Research Unit in our Department and retired after 23 years in 1959. One of the most popular new clubs at OSC in 1935 with over 100 members was the Ding Darling Club, which was the first conservation club in a university in the U.S. It eventually became our Fin and Antler Club, then the Fish and Wildlife Club, and now is a student chapter of both The Wildlife Society and the American Fisheries Society.

Today, the name of Fish and Game Management might seem to reflect more of a "hook and bullet" perspective rather than conservation science, but it is important to consider the academic and social setting of the mid-1930s. The department was created during a period of revolutionary change in conservation and public perceptions of natural resources in the United States. A fervor for conservation swept the country in the wake of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl eras as the need for agricultural production and natural resources to feed a hungry nation became more intense. Aldo Leopold's landmark textbook *Game Management* was published in 1933 and made game management a driving force in conservation movements and a transformative name for new academic departments. In his book, Leopold defined wildlife management as "the art of making land produce sustained annual crops of wild game for recreational use."

Thus, the name of our department represented the cutting edge of ecology and natural resource management. At the same time, Leopold was developing concepts of wilderness and helping to found the Wilderness Society in 1935. Both scientists and the public increasingly became aware of the need to balance the use and protection of nature and ecosystems, a term first used by Arthur Tansley in 1935. Our department was born on the leading edge of a sea change in conservation science that shapes our teaching and research today.

THE 1960'S

Following economic and population growth after World War II, universities expanded their teaching, research, and extension programs. In 1961, OSC changed its name to Oregon State University (OSU) to reflect its broader academic mission and growing enrollment and faculty. The 1960s were another era of major changes in conservation and environmental science. Rachel Carson, a biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, published *Silent Spring* in 1962 and awakened the world to the widespread effects of pesticides and other toxic substances in the environment. After being led by Prof. Dimick for 38 years, the department selected Tom Scott as the second Department Head in 1963. Dr. Scott had

directed wildlife research for the Illinois Natural History Survey and led the Iowa Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit before coming to OSU. He also was the President of The Wildlife Society, editor of the *Journal of Wildlife Management*, and Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Scott and faculty leaders were concerned that the College of Agriculture and OSU appreciated our department's enrollments but did not acknowledge its academic contributions to research and teaching.

Changes in department leadership also create opportunities for new perspectives and ideas that were disregarded previously. Prof Dimick was known for being supportive, kind, and nurturing. According to Howard Horton, the faculty used to joke that if someone needed a kick in the pants, Prof would take his shoe off first. Hiring Tom Scott gave our department the opening we needed with University administrators to change our name to highlight our academic strengths and appeal to a broader audience of undergraduate and graduate students. In 1964, our name became the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, broadening the scope of the program beyond the more narrow perspective of fish and game management in the 1960s.



From the archives: Hiram Li, Jim Hall, and Roy Beaty and with other faculty and students. This photo was taken a departmental gathering at the Forestry Club cabin in McDonald-Dunn Forest just up the road from Peavy Arboretum before you get to Cronemiller Lake. Roughly 15 years ago and earlier, the College of Forestry would rent or check out the cabin for functions. We had retreats, picnics, and the famous Roadkill BBQs, in which faculty and students would bring food from their experiments and research. We had lots of rainbow trout, venison, tuna, salmon, ling cod, rockfish, beaver, nutria, and wahoo.



OSU FWCS undergraduate student Nadia Leal operates a theodolite, a surveyor's tool, used by the GEMM Lab to track gray whale movement and behavior in Port Orford, OR. *Photo credit: GEMM Lab*

THE NEW NAME

Under the leadership of five Department Heads (Thomas Scott, 1963-1973; Richard Tubb, 1975-1993; Erik Fritzell, 1994-2001; Dan Edge, 2001-2015; Selina Heppell, 2016-present) and two Interim Department Heads (Charles Warren, 1973-1975; Larry Curtis, 1993-1994), the curriculum and research program have become larger and more diverse. The curriculum now offers 70 undergraduate courses and 32 graduate courses. In addition to our traditional courses that have been offered for decades, our faculty provide courses in emerging new areas of conservation, such as endangered species, environmental contaminant, conservation genetics, biodiversity conservation, invasive species, ecological restoration, ecosystem services, marine conservation biology, psychology of environmental decisions, structured decision analysis, urban ecology, citizen science, and many others.

Our students, faculty, and department leaders often have called for a name change to reflect the diversity of our students and faculty and the teaching and research program that has evolved over the 57 years as the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. However, name changes are contentious and the department cannot simply change its name without the approval of the University and other departments. We attempted to change our name several times, but the efforts dissipated under the objections that arose both outside and within the department.

The need for a name that better reflected our students and faculty intensified with the evolution of the online courses and degree programs to complement our on-campus program, development of a truly global research program, and students and faculty that were more diverse.

In 2021, after several years of effort by Selina Heppell, Bruce Dugger, our faculty, and student leaders, the University approved our request to change our name to the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences. But what difference does a name make? What does the name of the department mean to students beginning their careers? How does the name influence the teaching and research of our faculty? Will the reasons for changing our name be lost again in coming years as we continue to evolve and address the ecological and environmental challenges of the future?



Nisqually Refuge biologist Ryan Munes conducts vegetation surveys with FWCS students and Washington Conservation Corps members.

PERSPECTIVES OF FACULTY

Our faculty recommended the new department name to better reflect the diversity of our students and faculty and set us on a path to address current and future challenges that fisheries, wildlife, and conservation sciences will face over the next few decades. Faculty provide students with knowledge and experiences to confront and find solutions for relevant emerging issues, including human population growth and global environmental change. Our faculty and students are developing essential tools to inform future decisions about climate adaptation. The current era of both big data and new technologies, including instrumentation, genetics, and modeling, requires our students to have data analytics skills and cultivate a culture of evidence-based decision making.

Simultaneously, complex and often contradictory public attitudes on local and global issues in natural resources challenge us to recognize the importance of human dimensions and transdisciplinary research and management. As early innovators in online learning, we have an opportunity to position our department as a global leader in education in fisheries, wildlife, and conservation sciences. Yet, we must improve existing systemic problems related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our department, university, and discipline. Complex social systems and resource needs continue to drive overexploitation and degradation of ecosystems, which require our graduates to have a wider variety of backgrounds, skills, and experiences rooted in a truly diverse workforce.

We understand that these challenges will require much more than a simple change in our department's name, but names shape expectations, perceptions, and opportunities. Changing our name to the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences is more inclusive of our science today and builds on our legacy of conservation science since our beginning in 1935. Our new name will enhance our ability to recruit and retain diverse faculty and students to lead in research, education, and outreach for years to come.



Scott Heppell working on the Reef Environmental Education Foundation Grouper Moon Project reef.org/programs/grouper-moon-project

PERSPECTIVES OF STUDENTS

Department students have been generally supportive of the name change and were some of the folks that originally advocated for the change. Graduate students have stated that the new name is more inclusive of the breadth of research in the department. For example, social dimensions of fisheries, wildlife and conservation are a relatively new and important facet of research in our department. The name change has made a profound impact on students who approach wildlife research from a social dimension's perspective. As one student stated: "As a social scientist, it has really felt like a joke having to choose "fish or wildlife." The new name begins to capture the diversity of research happening in the department and it's certainly made my research feel a bit less like I don't fit in here."

The name change will also make an impact on future careers of students as some students incorporate both fish and wildlife in their research, so emphasizing one or the other was not reflective of how they plan to present themselves as professionals and as scientists. One student stated, "As someone who doesn't restrict themselves to work solely with fishes or just with wildlife, the name change is meaningful to me ... having the term "conservation sciences" as a part of the department's name makes me feel included. It properly represents what I'm passionate about."

Given the reactions of students currently enrolled in graduate programs in our department, the name change likely will attract a broader range of students and represents a positive step forward in making the department more inclusive academically.



VIEW Fellow Jose Torres searches for bighorn sheep in the Mojave Desert with the Epps Lab.

A scenic view of a university campus. In the foreground, a large, mature tree with thick branches and green leaves stands on the left. A black lamppost with a white globe is positioned next to it. A path lined with vibrant pink flowers leads into the distance. The background shows more trees and a building under a clear blue sky.

**COME
OREGON
THE STATE**

VISIT ON IN PRING

Save the Date for our 87th Reunion &
Name Change Celebration

WEEKEND OF MAY 20-22, 2022

- » Attend classes
- » Tour our research facilities
- » Attend presentations and panels
- » Catch up with old friends and meet new people at our social events
- » Explore Oregon ecosystems and see where we work outside of the lab
- » With more adventures to be added!

Sign up to be the first to know when
registration opens:

fwcs.oregonstate.edu/fwcs/87th-reunion

Is there something you would like to see added to the
event agenda? Share your ideas with us and we'll see
what we can do! fw.alumni@oregonstate.edu

Welcome the Class of 2021, our newest FWCS alumni

Undergraduate Program

Aimee M. Aguilar
Reid D. Ashley
Deborah M. Ayers
Emily Baar
Steven W. Baker
Colton M. Beisley
Katrina R. Bowns
Clint R. Broyles
Shannon L. Carmichael
Aaron R. Cathcart
Shelby D. Childers
Andrew Chione
Chelsea Clark
Rachael L. Conard
Breanna Couey
Nathan Cranata
Jonna R. Curtiss
Mikaeli E. Dirling
Delaney A. Donnelly
Hayden Doyel
Cameron Egan
Lauren K. Eshom
Madeleine C. Foley
Kinsey Funk

Sabrina Gadbois
Derek A. Garcia
Emily F. Gates
Drake A. Gilbert
Kara A. Gill
Brad A. Gohr
Laurel H. Goodin
Sydney M. Grimm
Philip Gunther
Savanna Gustafson
Aemilia Hamel
Jamie Hansen
Jamie N. Harrison
Caelan Harshaw
Layla Hazani
Bobbi L. Hinkle
Aaron Jackson
Catherine W. Johnson
Tamar L. Kavaldjian-Liskey
Daniel S. Kirby
Jason P. Levy
Karl P. Loftis
Koby J. Long
Ashley Lopez

Melissa E. Manganaro
Ameyalli I. Manon-Ferguson
Zuri D. Maxwell
Micheal D. McCartney
Kaitlyn R. McClenny
Brittany N. Miranda
Rayanne Mock
Christa Moulden
Jill E. Munger
James Neeley
Annalisa N. Peer
Acacia L. Pepper
Gabriela C. Petty
Bridget E. Phillips
Alexandra Popoff
Joshua T. Pullen
James H. Rand
Jacob C. Randall
Danielle Ransier
Angelica N. Reimold
Myles Remde
Caley Richards
Bailey R. Rill
Azita A. Roshani

Jacob A. Roth
Nomi Y. Samuel
Michelle Sapp
Joshua Schatz
Kathleen H. Shepherd
Samantha Silverstein
Kaicee T. Smith
Matthew L. Spinney
Lauren Spjut
Lilian J. Stahlnecker
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow
Kerstin Sweeney
Taylor W. Thompson
Carry L. Tran
Hope K. Vince
Kaylee Waigand
Jack D. Warmolts
Emma K. Westlind
Mahima I. White
John M. Wolff
Aimee K. Wood
Lindsay M. Yoder
Anthony J. Zambito



In the lab or in the field our undergraduate students are getting hands on experience in fisheries, wildlife, and conservation sciences.

Graduate Degree Program

Fisheries Science

Linsey Arnold, Ph.D.
Megan Brady, M.S.
Thaddaeus Buser, Ph.D.
Kenya Bynes, M.S.
Patrick Carilli, M.S.
Nicholas Halbeck, Ph.D.
Samara Haver, Ph.D.
Lisa Hildebrand, M.S.*
Alexander Jensen, Ph.D.
Katherine Lasdin, M.S.
Kelsey Lotz, M.S.
Travis Neal, M.S.
Keala Pelekai, M.S.
Stan Piotrowski, M.S.
Victoria Quennessen, M.S.*

Wildlife Science

Jillian Cosgrove, M.S.
Jackie Delie, M.S.
Leila Giovannoni, M.S.
Christopher Malachowski, Ph.D.
Aimee Massey, Ph.D.
Ashlee Mikkelsen, M.S.
Jennifer Nelson, M.S.
Joel Ruprecht, Ph.D.
Vanessa Schroeder, M.S.

Professional Science Masters

Angela Bowers
Whitney Crittenden
Kirstin Demezas
David German
Karen Gregory
Ashley Lockwood
Glenn (Guy) Metzler
Anna Neumann
Robert (Wes) Prebeck

Graduate Certificate Program

Wildlife Management

Jason Allison
Colleen Andrews
Travis Beeler
Micah Bingaman
Danielle Blackfield
Beth Brandt
Lillian Casey
Anthony Ciocco
Savannah Daughtry
Kristina Dudus
Kelsey Everett
Kristin Fratella
Talisa Garcia
Marie Gaylord
Stephen Gergeni
Sarah Guitart
Lilybeth Gutierrez
Cheyenne Heuberger
Deborah Hill
Meredith Holm
Kelli Hoover
Nancy Huffman
Emily Jencso

Zoe Johnson
Amanda Kart
Kathryn Keeton
Skye Kreisler
Morgan Lewis
Melissa Mackelvie
Amanda Merz
Mauro Napoletano
Laura Nesse
Morgan O'Rourke-Liggett
Samuel Payne
Emily Rohrlach
Billie Jean Rude
Natalie Rugg
Geoffrey Saltarelli
Andrew Schaak
Caitlin Scott
Haley Stewart-Reynolds
Madeline Williams
Sarah Williams
Michaelyn Woodie
Leigh Young
Shaun Ziegler

Fisheries Management

Ryan Bernstein
Christopher Botzenhart
Emily Burke
Kathleen Clark
Kristopher Clark
Kevin Connell
Andrew Forauer
Melissa Head
Thomas Holland
Ian Hudson
Mikayla Kelly
Stephanie King
Danielle MacPhee
Tessa Meyer
Conor O'Kane

Tiffany Petersen
Joshua Porter
Shane Ransbury
Jacob Rasmussen
Kyle Rosendale
Andrew Rothenberger
Ryan Schaefer
Rebecca Schwartz
Shayleh Shamrock
Elizabeth Thackaberry
Ryan Schaefer
Rebecca Schwartz
Shayleh Shamrock
Elizabeth Thackaberry




MEET MELANIE DAVIS

I am the new Assistant Unit Leader for the Oregon Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit. I moved to Corvallis in February 2021 with my husband and one-year-old. When I'm not stuck at my desk, I enjoy hiking, backpacking, camping, rock climbing, mountaineering, and skiing with my husband and friends. I've backpacked over 5,000 miles of trails in the United States, Canada, and Europe, including thru-hikes on the Pacific Crest Trail and Appalachian Trail. During shoulder season, I spend most of my time cooking, knitting, trying to resurrect my languishing art skills, and, more recently, chasing a toddler around the house.

My research expertise spans multiple ecological disciplines including aquatic, landscape, community, restoration, and quantitative ecology. I am primarily interested in how natural disasters and anthropogenic disturbances impact aquatic communities and sensitive fish populations. Despite my current expertise in fisheries and aquatic sciences, I have worked with a variety of ecosystems and species. I was first inspired to pursue research as an undergraduate at Miami University (Ohio, not Florida), where I spent three years working with Dr. Michelle Boone studying aquatic toxicology and the effects of pesticides on larval amphibians. After that, I switched gears entirely to track ungulate social interactions using novel telemetry devices with Dr. Tom Hobbs at Colorado State University. Since then, I have worked in various positions to study non-consumptive effects of predators on prey, the impacts of invasive bullfrogs on native amphibian and fish species, and mitigation strategies to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions. Prior to my current position at OSU, I worked for seven years with the U.S. Geological Survey, Western Ecological Research Center in Olympia and Seattle, Washington, where I was a project coordinator and biologist while concurrently pursuing my PhD at the University of Washington with Dr. Dave Beauchamp.

My experiences as a USGS scientist examining the effects of estuarine restoration on salmon and migratory waterfowl have laid the foundation for my current research program. I'm looking forward to mentoring the next generation of scientists while building relationships with state and federal agencies and other OSU faculty as a Unit scientist.

Email: melanie.davis@oregonstate.edu
Office phone: 541-737-1961



From the archives: students processing trout on the Deschutes River, early 1990's

THEN & NOW

FWCS students working with ODFW to identify and take samples from fish at an Oregon field site in 2019. Some of the technology has changed, but the process remains similar. These side by side photos demonstrate the history of technique alongside the evolution of data collection.

PUGET SOUND TO MONTEREY BAY: SEEKING SEA OTTERS



By Kathryn Herold-Daniels, FWCS Ecampus student

I live on Vashon Island in Puget Sound, Washington, with my wife and our tiny dog in a tiny house in the forest. In the summer of 2016, I attended an event sponsored by our local nature center that featured research projects by high school students and presentations by resident retirees who had long careers in conservation. The director of the nature center gave a presentation on the effects of shoreline armoring on sand-spawning forage fish. At that point, I was hooked! I started volunteering for the forage fish project and over time, my role expanded to other areas, and I became a paid employee of the nature center as a research assistant. I gained a much better sense of what fieldwork entailed, how exciting science communication is with a curious audience, and how transferable many of these skills are even when the focal species or habitat changes. The work inspired me so much that I wanted to learn everything I could about marine biology, ecology, and conservation. Growing up, I didn't have anyone in my family who went to college - certainly no one in my circle as an adult had any interest in the sciences - so I really had no one to ask about careers with animals. Although I wanted to be like Jane Goodall when I was a kid, I didn't really know what she did other than that she lived with chimpanzees. As I

got older, I thought the only career a person could have with animals was as a zookeeper or a veterinarian and I wasn't interested in either of those. Nor was I interested in issuing hunting or fishing licenses, which is what I thought "fish and wildlife" amounted to. Imagine my surprise when I found Oregon State's Ecampus and their Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences degree program! I looked through the classes that were offered and nearly all of them sounded amazing. I also researched the jobs that a Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences degree would prepare me for, and I realized it was exactly what I was looking for. I was ecstatic; not only could I finally go back to school and finish my undergraduate degree, but I could do it from my living room while studying subjects that truly inspired me, something that my previous and somewhat random collection of college courses never did. Marine mammals are wholly fascinating to me; there is so much we don't know! I love the process of asking questions, doing the research, and presenting the results.

When I was looking for an intensive internship, I wanted it to have a research component with a marine mammal focus. I applied for a six-month Sea Otter Research and Conservation internship with Monterey Bay Aquarium. My wife and I talked about what we could do financially if I did get the internship. Because the Monterey area is so

expensive, I would need to bring the more reliable of our two vehicles and continue to take my online classes. All the struggles would be worth it was an opportunity of a lifetime and the experience would be invaluable. After a couple interviews, I found out I got the position. I was so excited!

The Sea Otter Research and Conservation team was made up of four paid employees, two interns, and a small army of volunteers who rotated through the days of the week. We covered an approximately 22-mile (35 km) stretch from Monterey Bay down to Point Lobos. A typical workday began by picking up a catadioptric scope and tripod, a telemetry radio and antenna, an iPod to record sightings, and a backpack with various necessities like a compass, anemometer, and a parking pass. Working in pairs, my colleagues and I would set out for a day of tracking wild, tagged otters along the coastline. Some of the otters we observed were collected as abandoned pups or injured adults, rehabilitated at the aquarium, tagged, and released. Others were tagged as part of ecological research projects in collaboration with United States Geological Survey and University of California, Santa Cruz. The tag is small and positioned between either the first and second toes or the fourth and fifth toes, on either or both flippers. This positioning, in combination with unique tag colors, help to identify individuals so they can be tracked over time with their locations and other information recorded. Some otters had radios surgically embedded in their abdomens during the tagging event, but the batteries die eventually so not all otters with tags have a working radio.

My favorite days began in the inner Monterey harbor. There was a resident otter the team affectionately named Tewks after one of their long-term volunteers, who had passed away. Tewks had a new pup we were keeping an eye on to make sure it was nursing successfully and gaining weight, but we also monitored the area for human disturbance. The area is popular with paddleboarders and kayakers, and as we are all aware, there is nothing cuter than a fluffy new otter baby. After covering this area and recording any resights of tagged otters and new pups, we would head south down Cannery Row towards the Aquarium, stopping at lookouts along the way.

Not all observations were of moms and pups lazily floating between boat docks, or resting in kelp beds in the calm, inner bay with it's great viewing conditions. Some days we would start at Point Lobos and hike with our heavy equipment out to the furthest points along the trails to look for otters while fielding questions from curious passersby. There are a lot of kelp beds amongst the rocky outcroppings for an otter to hang out in. It would take a while to visually search for otters with flippers tags, and several passes of the antennae and radio to hear their signals. --

To finish reading this story visit our student stories page: fwcs.oregonstate.edu/fwcs/student-stories



FROM THE OREGON COAST



By Lisa T Ballance, Professor Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Sciences, Director Marine Mammal Institute

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to introduce myself to the alumni of our Department as Professor and Director of Oregon State University's Marine Mammal Institute (OSU's MMI). I joined OSU and MMI almost 2 years ago, in mid-October, but by the time my husband and I had sold our former house and moved our belongings to our new home in Newport, Covid had shut the world down (including last summer's "Generations"). So, as we all begin to venture back into the broader world in person after 16 months, I still feel very new to Oregon. But I have been deeply immersed in OSU and MMI during that time (through my trusty laptop and the connectivity of the internet) and I am excited to tell you about who we are and what we have been up to.

First, a brief introduction to myself – I come from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – a science arm of the Federal government), where I have been a marine ecologist for the past 30 years and director of the Marine Mammal and Turtle Research Division in La Jolla, California, for the past 12. Prior to that, I was the chief scientist for NOAA's Eastern Tropical Pacific Dolphin and Ecosystem Assessment Surveys, which (among other things) provided the scientific basis for the "Dolphin Safe"

label found on tuna cans in supermarkets all over this country. I am a classically trained marine ecologist and conservation biologist with expertise in marine mammals and seabirds. I have conducted research around the world, including the tropical Pacific and Indian Oceans, Antarctica, the Bering Sea, and Cambodia's Mekong River (yes, there is a dolphin there). I have published over 100 papers on cetacean and seabird ecology; given invited scientific presentations at scientific conferences, universities, public lectures, and congressional briefings; been awarded research funding from a wide variety of sources including National Science Foundation, US Navy, and World Wildlife Fund; advised doctorate students and taught courses as a professor at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography; and am a recipient of the Department of Commerce Bronze and Silver Medals, NOAA Fisheries' Supervisor of the Year, and cover feature of the Association for Women in Science. You can read more about my background at mmi.oregonstate.edu/people/lisa-t-ballance

And now, the Marine Mammal Institute. Our overarching mission is to integrate research, education, and outreach to advance our knowledge of marine mammals, train the next generation of professionals, and engage with stakeholders to ensure that these animals and their ecosystems are always healthy.

We are experts in the ecology, behavior, movements and migration, taxonomy, and conservation of whales, dolphins, and porpoises. We use drones, underwater hydrophones, animal-borne tags, and molecular tools. We work from our laboratories, shore-based stations, and small and large research vessels here in Oregon, in the California Current marine ecosystem, and around the world. You can find much more detail on our website pages at mmi.oregonstate.edu

It is an exciting time for MMI! We are growing! Looking back to the start of 2020, and forward to fall term this coming year, we have hired three new tenure-track professors, established MMI Affiliates and brought eight new additional Principal Investigators into the Institute, and welcomed five new post-doctorates and eight new graduate students. Our research vessel Pacific Storm is thriving! After a full year of shipyard work to update many of her capabilities, and another year of patiently waiting for Covid to moderate, she has been at sea for most of the spring and summer, and is fully booked well into the fall, supporting marine mammal, seabird, and physical, biological, and geological marine science. We are busy in the field and our labs (despite Covid restrictions)! Among many activities, we are continuing our research on the local population of gray whales that feeds offshore of Newport during the summer, responding to stranded marine mammals all along the Oregon coast, studying blue whales and Maui's dolphins in New Zealand,

remotely presenting our research results at meetings around the world, and continuing to serve on advisory bodies and working groups focused on marine mammal science and conservation from local to global scales.

And as COVID restrictions recede and OSU reopens, we are moving into our new offices and laboratories in the Gladys Valley Marine Studies Building here at the Hatfield Marine Science Center! Our new professional home is much more than a building. It is an impressive feat of engineering, full of the latest technology, and architecturally designed to enhance collaboration, both formal and informal. This will be the first time that all MMI will be co-located together in one beautiful space from our previously disparate locations across the entirety of Hatfield. And OSU's Marine Studies Initiative is providing new opportunities to educate students and enhance our research and its impact. We intend to build on this by developing a new graduate certificate in marine mammals. The need for research on marine mammals, particularly science-based solutions to management and conservation problems, has never been greater. MMI has always been known for its outstanding science. We are poised to become even stronger. Please come and visit.

Our future is bright.



NEWS & REMINDERS

- » Sign up for reunion updates beav.es/J4X
- » View the new Ichthyology Collection webpage ichthyology.oregonstate.edu
- » Fall BBQ in Corvallis October 8, 2022 5:30pm at Thompson Shelter Avery Park
- » View past seminars recordings and upcoming talks fwcs.oregonstate.edu/fwcs-seminars

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE

- » Make a donation beav.es/Zma
- » Get involved with student organizations and clubs
- » Volunteer to give a seminar or host a workshop
- » Email fw.alumni@oregonstate.edu to learn more

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