



# Southern California Marine Institute

Summer 2015  
Newsletter

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## Message from the Director

*By Daniel Pondella II Ph.D.*

As I sat at my laptop to write this letter, I realized that I have now been director for three years, which seems a bit crazy because I feel like I just started. But time marches on and so has SCMI. The institute is as busy as ever, there is literally no room on our docks and we have plans to fill all of the wetlabs in the building. The research dive program is going gangbusters. We need to thank our DSO Jim Cvitanovich for his exceptional work developing the program. These are just some of our many improvements that are transforming SCMI. Our work with AltaSea has dramatically increased the interest in our consortium. As such we are forming new partnerships and reinvigorating our current membership. We predicted this would happen and it is. As an example, SCMI recently partnered with the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) on their new \$15 million pathways grant. The community colleges have been using our facilities for decades and this relationship continues to grow. Our progress is in part due to our dynamic partnership with AltaSea, but more importantly, this is a particularly exciting time for the marine sciences, and we have positioned ourselves for these upcoming challenges.

## AltaSea Update

*By: Emily Meese*

AltaSea is still well underway of designing and planning the state-of-the-art research facility for marine sciences. On February 11th 2015 AltaSea hosted "A Day at AltaSea", which introduced the public to the future plans of the world class marine research facility. The event was attended by community members and included a dedication of the newly named "Leonard Aube Way" road leading to AltaSea. The word of this new facility has been spreading, including to Dr. Sylvia Earle who has pioneered the path for women in marine sciences and began Mission Blue, which aims at restoring the "blue heart of the planet". In September, the OSI Board of Governors will host a workshop with faculty from the consortium universities to streamline ideas and prepare for the opportunities ahead. All of us here at SCMI are getting more excited each day about what our new home will offer. More information regarding AltaSea can be found on their website: <http://www.altasea.org/>.

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## Important Dates

### Fall CSU Marine Biology Semester on Catalina

August 24th - December 11th, 2015

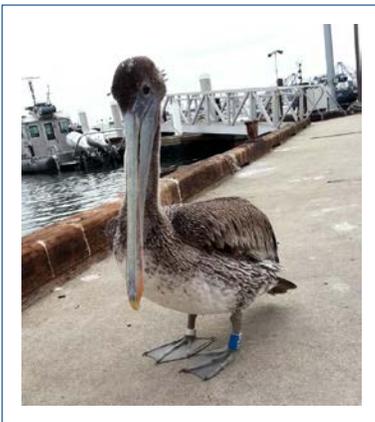
### OSI AltaSea Workshop

September 18th, 2015

## LACCD Awarded Grant to Build Careers

By: Emily Meese

The Los Angeles Community College District, the nation's largest serving one-quarter million students a year, has received a \$15 million grant to put towards programs that train students for jobs in high demand fields. People of the district believe that our businesses depend on a workforce that has education and skills beyond the classroom, and this grant allows students to get the training they may one day need to be that strong force. So what does this mean for SCMI? We get to be one of the facilities these students from 36 different cities get to use to build their resume and learn a wide range of skills such as how to do a plankton tow, how to care for fish, and what a day on a research vessel entails. We are all very excited for this opportunity to educate these students because we know they have a lot of potential to share with the Los Angeles community and we are lucky to be a part of this powerful program.



## Who Is That Bird Outside the Door?

By: Erin Crowley

You always have to be on your toes here at SCMI, because if you aren't paying attention when you walk out the back door, you may encounter an unexpected guest! Meet Petunia, the resident pelican here at SCMI. Definitely not your normal dog or cat, but she surely has the personality to keep up with the best of them. Petunia is a female, brown pelican. These birds can be found up and down both coasts. Based on her current coloration, and partially her attitude, she is still considered immature. So next time you stop by SCMI, keep an eye out and say hello!

## LA County Science Fair & Cabrillo Earth Day

By: Emily Meese

Spring is an exciting time for SCMI's outreach program because we get to participate in two of our favorite events, the LA County Science Fair and Cabrillo Earth Day. At the LA County Science Fair, we got to share our love for marine animals and research with some very smart elementary students! Adriana judged some of the competition and we hope to see some of these young scientists at SCMI in the future because they had incredible ideas for research at such a young age.

Cabrillo's Earth Day was also a huge success! We came in full force with our 350 gallon touch tank and information for guests of all ages. We absolutely love seeing the kids get excited about touching the animals such as round stingrays, keyhole limpets, and even a sea mouse! The kids also enjoy hearing about all the different research activities that come through SCMI and their motivation for the ocean and animals grows each year we participate. Who knows, maybe we will see these kids in the future when they are marine-science majors!



Kids love the preserved specimens!



The touch tank was a huge hit!

## SCMI's Newest Residents

By: Erin Crowley

If you have been at SCMI lately, you may have noticed we have quite a few critters swimming around in our tanks. There are some invertebrates including a spider crab, lobster, and all the shrimp and hermit crabs you could want. In addition there are now twenty-two sand and kelp bass now at SCMI! Next time you're here, take a look at these bass and watch them all swim to the surface to look right back at you. There are also a few sculpin and round stingrays. This summer, our goal is to create a platform of steps up to the big tanks for younger kids to be able to observe their behavior and get our touch tank up and running. So next time you're here, be sure to find some time to take a look into the tanks.



## Spring is for Yellowfin Season

By: Emily Meese

This spring was extremely busy for our beloved Yellowfin! Since the beginning of January, the Yellowfin has embarked on over 60 different cruises totaling over 350 vessel hours. These trips include the AAUS Dive Course, class laboratory field trips, as well as professional and graduate research. The most popular reason for a Yellowfin cruise is usually the otter trawls, however we also conduct many other oceanographic and marine sampling techniques such as biological dredges, secchi disks, plankton collections, and many others. No Yellowfin cruise is ever the same, and we love when the students say how much they enjoyed their time out on the water and learned so many different things about our local marine life and habitat. If you are interested in booking a Yellowfin trip, please fill out our cruise form online at <http://www.scmi.net/scmiosi-forms/> and send to [scmi@csulb.edu](mailto:scmi@csulb.edu). We hope to see you out on the water soon!



## Discovery Lecture Series

SCMI has partnered with AltaSea and the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium for the Discovery Lecture Series. The lectures will be given by SCMI's member university faculty at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in the John M. Olguin Auditorium. These lectures not only provide an opportunity to learn more about local marine research, but to also network with many scientists to see what opportunities are available. There is an exciting and educational line up of lectures for 2015, so mark your calendars and we will see you there!

<http://www.altasea.org/discovery-lectures.html>

### DISCOVERY LECTURE SERIES

*Presented by AltaSea & Cabrillo Marine Aquarium*

#### Discovery Lecture Series Dates

August 7, 2015: Kelly Stromberg, Catalina Sea Ranch

October 2, 2015: Dr. Danielle Zacherl of CSU Fullerton

December 4, 2015: Dr. Steve Gaines of UC Santa Barbara



## 2015 CSU Marine Biology Semester

By: Emily Meese

Every fall, the CSU Marine Biology Semester on Catalina Island is a great success. The fall 2015 semester applications have been processed and it looks like we have a great group of eager students! The students come back from this semester with incredible memories, preparation for a marine science career, and research experience that can be hard to find as a student. The fall 2015 semester will feature faculty from CSU Long Beach and UC Berkeley, and students will get hands-on experience unlike the classroom in Marine Ichthyology, Ecology of Marine Communities, and Phycology at Catalina Island. One of the most challenging components of the semester is having the students create their own research project and analyze data as true scientists. At the end, they will present their research in a mini-symposia that always brings in a crowd. For future semesters, please check out our website for updated application information or feel free to contact us at [osi.catalina@gmail.com](mailto:osi.catalina@gmail.com) or (310) 519-3172.



## OSI AAUS Research Dive Certification Program

By: Emily Meese



Blue water diving in the channel



Diving always brings smiles!

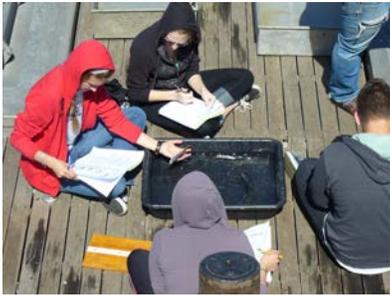
Every year, the Ocean Studies Institute holds an AAUS Research Dive Certification program taught by our dive safety officer, Jim Cvitanovich. Jim has been diving since 1971 and loves entertaining students with his stories and adventures from the many jobs he has been involved with in the past. Jim leads his students through 14 dives which include boat dives, deep water dive, blue water dive, night dive, an aquarium dive, and an overnight trip to Catalina island where their rescue diver skills are put to the test. Students gain valuable technical, scientific diving experience from this class, as well as the ability to further their research by incorporating diving for a variety of projects. We just concluded our summer class which was one of our biggest classes yet at a total of 18 students from 8 different universities! The students learned so much and are now confident, scientific divers, ready to take on research in a new way. Stay tuned to hear about the Winter Dive Course set for January 2016, and congratulations to the summer dive class for all their hard work!



Information about both of these courses can be found at the SCMI website under the Catalina Semester and Research Diving icons!



## SCMI Volunteer Internship Program



Interns will also learn about the local species we see often

With SCMI's seawater filtration system live and running SCMI is looking for students interested in marine science and husbandry to intern. Our volunteer internship program is designed to introduce high school and college level students to marine science careers. Interns will learn basic operations at SCMI including supporting our Aquarist and Vessel Engineers. We are looking for students interested in marine science, marine biology, vessel engineering and animal husbandry. Students must be at least 16 years old. The start of the new school year is a great time to get involved! For more information and application details contact Adriana Stowell at [adriana.bell@csulb.edu](mailto:adriana.bell@csulb.edu) (310) 519-3172 ext.

## SCMI Staff Highlight

By: Erin Crowley

Meet Brian Tufts, the man of many hats.

Brian began working at SCMI in 1996 as an intern, where his days mainly consisted of cleaning up the aquariums for 8 hours a day. With all that work, he was able to restore the tanks to the quality that they are today. He interned for a year and a half until he was officially hired. Brian graduated with his bachelor's degree in Biology with a minor in Geology from Cal State Fullerton. Now, Brian is a man of many hats, so a normal day at work isn't anywhere near a normal routine. Some tasks you might see Brian doing are preparing the Miss Christi, working the crane, adjusting the saltwater system, or operating the forklift. But with all of the jobs he does, Brian's favorite part of his job was building the closed salt water system. He had never built anything of this size (25,000 gal), but he really enjoyed the process of designing the system and getting everything to work correctly. He compared it to building a very large puzzle. So it is safe to say, that with all Brian does here at SCMI, things wouldn't run the same without him.



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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Southern-California-Marine-Institute/288351464597980>