

tidepool

FALL 2025

Editor-in-Chief: Méliane Deshaies
Cover Photo: Kyle Warman

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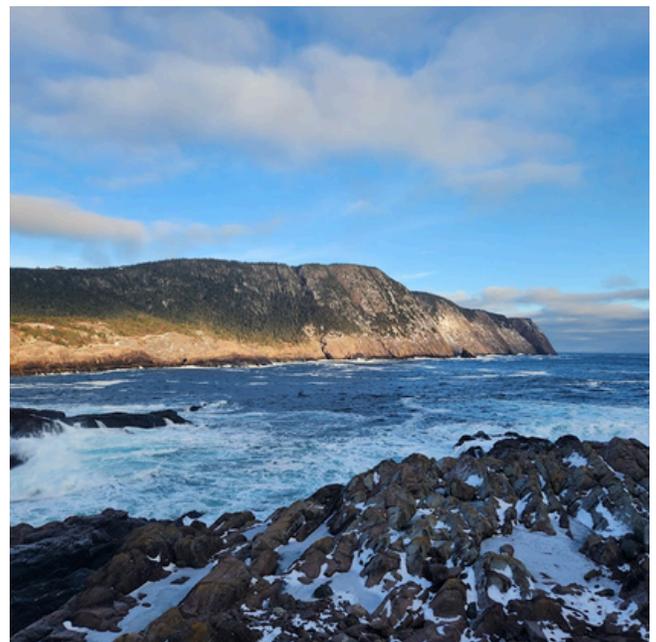
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Thank you for reading this new edition of Tidepool! With the continued support from members within the department, the current newsletter contains all sorts of exciting updates from our community.

As always, our goal is to increase transparency, communication and help build a stronger sense of community in the Department of Ocean Sciences / Ocean Sciences Centre (OSC).

If there are any recommendations for future issues of Tidepool or you would like to become involved on the editorial team, please email the OSGSA at osgsa@mun.ca



Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Kurt Gamperl



By Sathees Douglas



In this issue of Tidepool, we shine the spotlight on Dr. Kurt Gamperl, a leading researcher in fish physiology and aquaculture at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Dr. Gamperl's lab explores the intricate relationships between environmental conditions and fish physiology, with a focus on improving aquaculture practices and understanding climate change impacts on marine species. Dr. Gamperl's lab delves into two key research themes: how environmental factors such as temperature, oxygen, and pressure affect fish physiology, and how aquaculture conditions can be optimized for finfish species. Recently, his research has expanded to tropical species through the establishment of the Tropical Marine Ecophysiology Lab (TMEP-Lab) in The Bahamas, where studies on Nassau grouper, snapper, and sardines are underway.

His team is tackling pressing questions such as the impact of cold temperatures on Atlantic salmon, the temperature tolerance of tropical fish, and how climate change influences fish survival. His research provides crucial insights for aquaculture sustainability and fisheries management by examining heart function, metabolism, and environmental stressors. With aquaculture now supplying over half of the world's seafood, Dr. Gamperl's research is instrumental in enhancing fish health and production efficiency. His studies on hypoxia and temperature stress have uncovered critical physiological responses, influenced conservation strategies, and informed industry practices. Notably, recent findings on the high oxygen consumption of tropical sardines have significant implications for predicting climate-related impacts on marine ecosystems.



Dr. Gamperl collaborates with esteemed in-house researchers like Drs. Matt Rise, Javier Santander, Chris Parrish, and Mr. Danny Boyce. Additionally, collaboration extends to industries such as Cooke Aquaculture, Star-Oddi Inc. and international academic organizations like Cape Eleuthera Institute, along with universities across North America. His dedication has earned him the most prestigious University Research Professor designation, while his students, such as Emma Porter, have received top honors this year such as the Dr. Joe Brown Award in Aquatic Ecology and Aquaculture for their contributions to aquatic research.

For aspiring scientists, Dr. Gamperl emphasizes passion, perseverance, and embracing challenges. He advises students to take ownership of their research, step outside their comfort zones, and strive to become experts in their field. Through his groundbreaking work, Dr. Gamperl continues to advance our understanding of fish physiology, aquaculture sustainability, and the resilience of marine life in a changing world.

More information can be found at <https://www.mun.ca/osc/dr-kurt-gamperl/>
Best wishes, Dr. Kurt Gamperl (kgamperl@mun.ca)

Dr. Pat Gagnon

A word from the Department Head

Hi everyone,

Here's the next edition of our very own Tidepool! In this issue you will learn all sorts of good things about some of our new community members, field work, and outreach activities, to name a few. The diversity and quality of our accomplishments not only speak volumes to our commitment to carry out quality ocean education and research, but to our collective resilience and immense creativity in these challenging times. We have so many excellent reasons to be proud of who we are, what we do, and how we do it. Let's continue to show it to the world!

This year we have seen some nice additions to our unit, including an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee. With representation from all DOS/OSC constituencies, this committee will be working towards further nurturing a culture of respect and inclusion where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Our Vision Committee is also working diligently towards "freshening up our look", while increasing our presence and visibility on main campus. Our administration will continue to work hard on helping preserve our unique identity, supporting each of you the to the best of its ability.

Stay tuned!
Pat Gagnon



Transportation between OSC and MUN



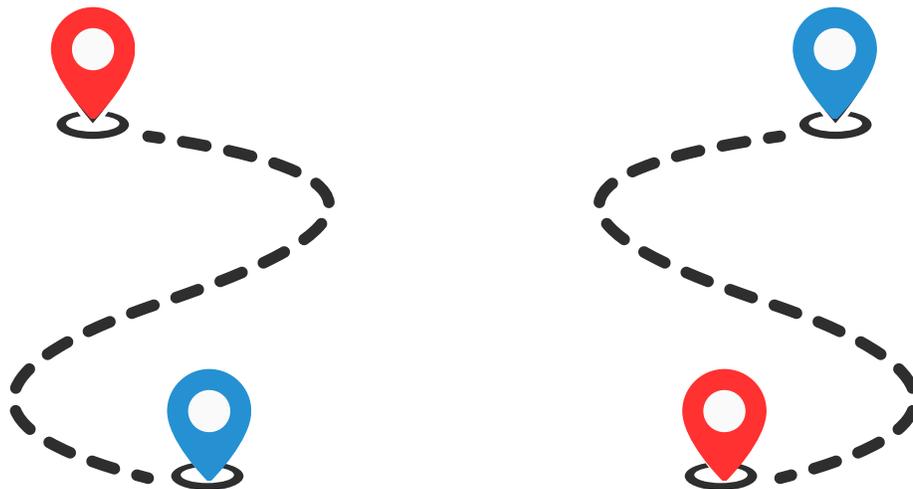
As of September 1st 2023, the shuttle between Main Campus in St. John's and the OSC has been removed from service. A taxi service will now ensure transport between the two campuses for all OSC students requiring it.

To use the taxi service, students need to book by Thursday 4 pm the week before. Last minute changes can be done a day in advance, before noon.

Contact ostransport@mun.ca for bookings.

Consult www.mun.ca/osc/transportation-/ for more information.

Schedule



From Main Campus to OSC:
8:30 am / 1:15 pm

From OSC to Main Campus:
1 pm / 4:45 pm

Public Education Update



The Public Education program had a great summer!

As usual, a touch tank was set outside of the OSC for the public to interact with from June to August. Interpreters were present to animate and educate the public on the marine life around Newfoundland.

Additionally, here are some events that the Public Education program has participated to in the last few months:

-  **May 8th**
Touch tank for the East Coast Music Awards (ECMAS) festival at the Mary Browns Center
-  **May 10th**
Touch tank for the Science Rendezvous at the CSF Atrium (Under the Whale)
-  **June 7th**
Touch tank for the World's Ocean Day at the Marine Institute
-  **July 26th**
Touch tank for Science on the Street in Downtown Pedestrian Mall

If you would like to get invested with the various activities of the program, contact Christine Vickers! (cvickers@mun.ca)

More information can be found on the OSC Public Education Program website and on their socials.



Ocean Sciences,
Memorial University



@munocean



www.mun.ca/osc

Welcome!

Che Nicholls



to New Arrivals Grad Students

Hi! My name is Che. I am originally from Saint Kitts and Nevis but grew up in the Washington DC area. I am pursuing a PhD in marine biology under the supervision of Iain McGaw, focusing on the ecology and evolutionary dynamics of the Bahamian black land crab in South Eleuthera, The Bahamas. My research explores colour variation in the crabs, habitat changes driven by climate change and land degradation, and the impact of the local land crab fishery on their population dynamics, foraging behavior, and spatial ecology.

Prior to starting at MUN I worked for a year at the Cape Eleuthera Institute in South Eleuthera, The Bahamas where I gained experience in stone crab fisheries, stone crab physiology, and shark and stingray conservation research. I hold a Master of Science degree in Quantitative Methods in Biodiversity, Conservation, and Epidemiology from the University of Glasgow and a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Dalhousie University. In my free time, you can find me playing football (or "soccer") and cricket, training for half-marathons, playing guitar, scuba diving, and watching nature documentaries — especially those featuring marine mammals.

Shannan Brun-Dabbagh



Hi I'm Shanan, I'm French but got the chance to move around a couple of countries my whole childhood ! I did my undergrad at the University of Québec in Rimouski studying marine biology and I am now doing my MSc with Uta Passow studying the biodegradation of crude oil in the Great Lakes. I'm very eager to be working near the ocean and marine life !

Welcome!

Lyn Hobday



to New Arrivals

Hi! I'm Lyn, originally from Osaka, Japan. After completing my undergraduate degree in Environmental Science in Victoria, B.C., I worked in Japan as a microbiology research assistant, focusing on extremophiles from natural hot springs and the deep sea - fieldwork is my passion <3. I will be working on my master's thesis under the supervision of Dr. Chris Parrish and Dr. Uta Passow, studying lipids in sinking particles and contributing to the Transforming Climate Action project. In my free time, I enjoy photography and crochet. I'm excited to explore what Atlantic Canada has to offer!

Pauline Rollat



I grew up in Sète (France) with the Mediterranean Sea as my backyard, and later moved to Canada where the St. Lawrence River and Atlantic Ocean became my new playgrounds. I studied Environmental Biology with a specialization in Wildlife Biology at McGill University and am now excited to be joining Paul Snelgrove's lab for my master's, working on a project investigating carbon reduction through algal deposition on the ocean floor. When I am not in the lab, you can usually find me hiking the coastal trails around St. John's, crocheting, or curled up with a good book.

Krista Strader



I grew up in a rural community along the St. Lawrence River in Ontario. I attended Carleton University in Ottawa for my Undergrad where I mainly studied freshwater ecosystems but had the opportunity to partake in a marine biology field course that introduced me to ocean science. I am joining Paul Snelgrove's lab, co-supervised by Robert Gregory. My project will involve eelgrass verification and fish ecology. Outside of school, I enjoy hiking and getting outside with my dog.

Welcome!

Sam Burgess



Payton Allen



to New Arrivals

Hello! My name is Sam, and I am starting my graduate studies here as part of the McGaw Lab. I grew up in west Michigan, USA, and completed my undergraduate degree at the University of Maine. I have always had a fascination with marine invertebrates, and my research here will be studying new lobster baits and attempting to identify a bait which works well, is cost-effective, and attracts few green crabs. We will also be looking at lobster-crab interactions in general. Outside of school, I do a lot of backpacking and outdoor sports year round, and am an Event Planner for the Graduate Outdoor Society.

Hey! My name is Payton Allen and I'm from Calgary, Alberta. I completed a year of undergrad at St. Mary's University before deciding I had to be near an ocean if I was serious about Marine Biology.

So I drove across Canada in 2021 and moved here to complete my degree at MUN. Now I have joined the OSC and Dr. Gagnon's lab for my Master's.

I will be investigating the interactions between flatfish and rhodolith beds, including bioturbation, sedimentation, and habitat use.

Some of this research requires scientific diving which is very exciting, and something I have always wanted to do! Thanks for reading and I look forward to meeting more people around the OSC!

Welcome!

Uswa Ahmad



Emma Charlebois



Chloe Baker



to New Arrivals

Hi, my name is Uswa, and I am a fourth year Biology honours student in the Mercier Lab. My project focuses on the reproduction and the diet of an understudied species of sea cucumber. During my undergrad, I have had the opportunity to work as a MUCEP in the Mercier Lab, as well as with DFO and AAFC! During my free time you can usually find me kayaking, hiking or reading a good book.

Hello! My name is Emma, and I am from Ottawa, Ontario. I completed my BSc (Honours) in Biology at Queen's University. I developed a love for research during a two-week Marine Biology field course in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, where I studied the covering behaviour of green sea urchins. I am now a MSc student in Dr. Snelgrove's lab, and my project will focus on carbon cycling in sea floor environments. In my spare time, I enjoy reading, drawing, and hopefully exploring the best hiking locations that Newfoundland has to offer!

Hello! My name is Chloe Baker and I am from Halifax, Nova Scotia. This year I will be working on my honours thesis with Dr. Ian Fleming and Dr. Chris Parrish where I will analyze and compare the lipid contents in young-of-year Atlantic Salmon and Brown Trout. This past summer, I worked in the JBARB monitoring water conditions for the aquaculture species, and I assisted a Master's student with their fieldwork electrofishing in streams around the Avalon Peninsula. Additionally, I have worked at the Petty Harbour Mini Aquarium as an Aquarist. I am very excited to get more involved at the OSC this year and complete my first real research project!

Welcome!

Megan Scott



Mia Kocela



to New Arrivals

Hi everyone! My name is Megan (Megs) Scott (they/them). I am in the Mercier lab, and I'll be studying the impact conservation tools on the conservation of sea cucumbers. I'm originally from Channel- Port aux Basques. I did my first degree at Grenfell Campus, completing a BSc in General Science, minoring in biology, chemistry and math. After completing that, I moved to St. John's to complete a BEd (intermediate/secondary), and while doing that I volunteered in the Mercier lab. Between that experience and working at an aquarium, my passion for marine biology was sparked again, as it was my childhood dream. Outside of school, you can find me beachcombing, organizing community events, or taking photos with my camera!

Hello, my name is Mia, and I'm originally from Saskatchewan. I completed my B.Sc. in marine biology at MUN, and I conducted my honours project under Dr. Uta Passow, researching the effects of microplastic concentration on the growth, aggregation, and sinking velocity of a diatom species. I will continue my research in Dr. Passow's lab for my M.Sc., where I will investigate the effects of microplastics on the environment and their impact on marine snow. A fun fact about myself is that I was a springboard diver for 9 years and have been coaching in the sport for 5 years now.

Welcome!

Guzal Riskulova



to New Arrivals

Growing up in Montreal, I was always passionate about marine biology, a spark ignited by the many marine movies and documentaries I watched as a kid. I developed a very keen interest for the deep sea during my teenage years which has led me to complete my BSc (Honours) in Water Environments & Ecosystems, specializing in biology, at McGill University. I've always wanted to move to the coast, which was confirmed by my field course at the Huntsman Marine Science Center in Saint Andrews, NB, and also explains why I'm now happily studying the process of carbon processes at the bottom of the sea floor under Dr. Paul Snelgrove lab for my marine biology Master's degree at Memorial University. In my free time, I am also very passionate about reading/journaling, running/swimming/diving, cooking/baking, and binge watching any and all movies/tv shows! I couldn't be any happier here in Saint John's, and I'm looking forward to all the new experiences and knowledge yet to be acquired here in Newfoundland & Labrador.

Welcome!

Joséphine Pierrat



Verena Kalter



to New Arrivals Post-Docs

I am a postdoctoral fellow at the Mercier lab at the Ocean Sciences Center from 2024/10 to 2026/10.

I did my undergrad with a major of marine ecology at the Côte d'Azur University (Nice, South of France). Then, I moved to Reunion Island where I did my grad and PhD. My research focused on the ecology of tropical sea cucumbers, mainly their spatial and temporal distribution within the coral reefs of Reunion Island. From there, I was convinced that sea cucumbers were one of the coolest species to study!

I recently moved from one island to another and joined the Mercier lab to continue my work on sea cucumber ecology and biology. I have the great privilege of working on sea cucumbers in the Canadian Arctic, in close relation with Indigenous communities. During my postdoc I work in collaboration with Oceans North, which supports marine conservation in partnership with Indigenous and coastal communities. I am part of the IUCN Commission for the Conservation of Species.

Besides science, I love hiking and discovering new places, so I would be happy to join you on a hike!

My project aims to assess the capacity of bacteria to degrade oil in the Great Lakes, and consists of a field and a laboratory component. Knowledge about the impacts of oil spills in freshwater systems is still scarce and cleanup and remediation methods available in the ocean do not work well in freshwater - or are not permitted. This highlights the need to better understand the potential for natural biodegradation of oil.

Welcome!

Gustavo Guavin



to New Arrivals

Gustavo is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Ocean Science Center, Memorial University, supervised by Dr. Christopher Parrish and Dr. Maxime Geoffroy. His research applies multiple biomarkers to trace the origin and storage of nutrients in Arctic marine ecosystems. Through this approach, he investigates carbon and lipid transfer within pelagic food webs across diverse Arctic Ocean environments as part of the Transforming Climate Action Project. His broader research interests focus on how climate change, particularly reductions in sea-ice concentration, may alter the transfer of essential lipids, the diets and trophic ecology of consumers, and the functioning of polar ocean food webs.

Originally from Colombia, Gustavo is a marine biologist with an international academic background. He earned a Master's degree in Tropical Marine Science in Brazil and a PhD in Oceanography at Université Laval, Québec. Most recently, he completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Marine Institute of Memorial University, where he studied the role of northern shrimp as a key forage species in the Canadian Sub-Arctic.

Welcome to all new students & researchers who have joined the Department of Ocean Sciences this semester! The Ocean Science Graduate Student Association (OSGSA) is a graduate student society responsible for organizing events to foster connections and community in our department. Follow us on Facebook (MUN Ocean Sciences Graduate Student Association), Instagram (@munosgsa) and with our Departmental Newsletter for future events!



EVENTS



September 23rd
Welcome BBQ at the OSC

October (TBD)

Welcome Bar Crawl with MI and BGSA



October (TBD)
Halloween Party

November 14th

OSC Conference 1st Edition



December (TBD)
Christmas Party

Keep an eye out on
our socials to learn
more about the
upcoming events!



Seminars in Fall 2025

OCTOBER

18th Brooklyn Bolstad (MSc. student OSC)
25th Dr. Tyler Eddie (Research scientist and professor MI)

NOVEMBER

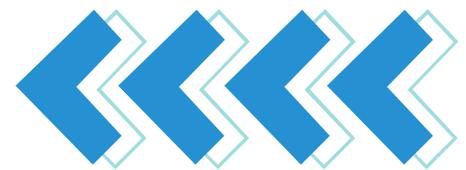
2nd Dr. Javier Santander (Research scientist and professor OSC)
9th Dr. Tony Kess (Research scientist DFO)
16th Dr. Anne Beemelmans (Research scientist ULaval)
30th Dr. Jaime P Soto Neira (Postdoctoral fellow OSC)



DECEMBER

6th Dr. Kurt Gamperl (Research scientist and professor OSC)
13th Dr. Frederic Cyr (Research scientist MI)
20th Dr. Verena Kalter (Postdoctoral fellow OSC)

Assembly General Meeting



Do you want to join the OSGSA? Or simply be more involved with your student community and the Department of Ocean Sciences? The OSGSA is holding their Assembly General Meeting on September 29th, where **elections will be held to create the 2025-2026** student association!

Interested? Reach out to our President **Hallie Arno** (hearno@mun.ca), or simply join us for the Assembly (no official application necessary)

OSGSA Executive Members 2025



Chairperson -
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hearno@mun.ca



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fdurnford@mun.ca

Student Associations and Clubs



The Biology Graduate Student Association

The BGSA and the OSGSA work closely together to improve student experience between our departments. Events and career development activities are frequently organized between our two groups.

Contact: @munbgsa



The Marine Institute Graduate Student Association

MIGS is the student association for graduate students at the Marine Institute campus. Similarly to BGSA, MIGS works closely with OSGSA to organize events, and particularly seminars.

Contact: migs@mi.mun.ca



The Ocean Sciences Undergraduate Student Association

Since undergrad students are involved with the Ocean Sciences Center, either as MUCEPS or as part of their classes, OceanUS and OSGSA regularly team up to ensure undergrads experiences great opportunities at the OSC.

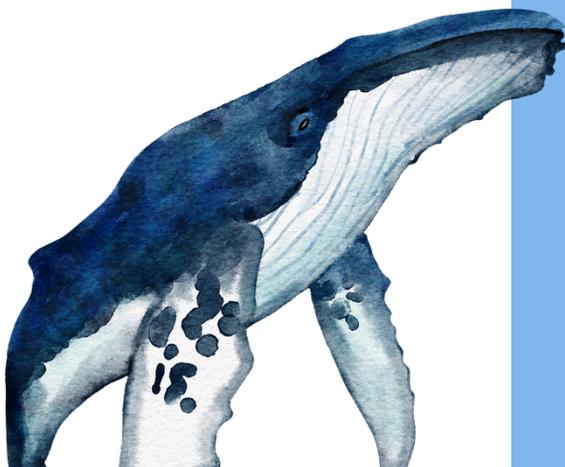
Contact: oceanus@mun.ca



The Student Dive Club NL

The student Dive club is back in action this year! After multiple great activities over this summer, expect more events related to diving this coming fall! Both divers and snorkelers welcomed. Follow their socials to stay in the loop!

Contact: studentdivenl@gmail.com
@studentdive_nl



Check out MUN website for all other student club, societies and associations:
<https://munsu.ca/directory>

Active Committees at the OSC



EDI-AR Committee

The Equity , Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Committee is a newly instated committee striving to make the OSC a more inclusive environment for everyone. Any input or ideas are welcomed by the community!

Person of contact: Kes Morton
Email: kes.morton@gmail.com



GSU

The Taxi committee is made of both students and administrative members who work toward maintaining the taxi service for students between main campus and OSC.

Person of contact: Aqsa Maqsood
Email: amaqsood@mun.ca



Vision Committee

The Vision committee is oriented toward increasing visibility of the Ocean Sciences Department and Ocean Sciences Center both within MUN and internationally. This committee also serves to think of future direction and prospects for the Department.

Person of contact: Dr. Iain McGaw
Email: ijmcgaw@mun.ca



Faculty News

Dr. David Schneider in New Zealand



This last March, Dr. Schneider was invited to teach two Statistical Science workshops at the University of Auckland and at the University of Waikato.

The first workshop was held at the University of Waikato's Tauranga campus, on the Bay of Plenty. Dr. Schneider was invited by one of his former PhD student, Dr. Joanne Ellis, now associate Professor at the University of Waikato.

“This approach is way less work and far more informative than random or haphazard spatial allocation of experimental units.” - Dr. Schneider

The second workshop was held at the Leigh Marine Lab at the University of Auckland. The invitation came from Dr. Simon Thrush, former Director of Leigh Marine Lab. They have worked together in the past on monitoring pollutant fluxes through the Manukau estuary, with results published in a special issue of the *Journal of experimental Biology and Marine Biology and Ecology* in 1997: The Ecology of Soft Bottom Habitats: Matching Spatial Patterns with Dynamic Processes. The approach used in this monitoring project was developed by Dr. Schneider in his Ph.D thesis, where experimental treatments are placed in blocks according to a density-scape of biomass dominant bivalves.



Both workshops were of great success! During this trip, Dr. Schneider and his wife also bicycled the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail, from the Alps to the Ocean Trail on the south island of New Zealand in only 6 days! (See picture on left)

Thank you Dr. Schneider for sharing your experience.

Fieldwork by the OSC

Offshore work

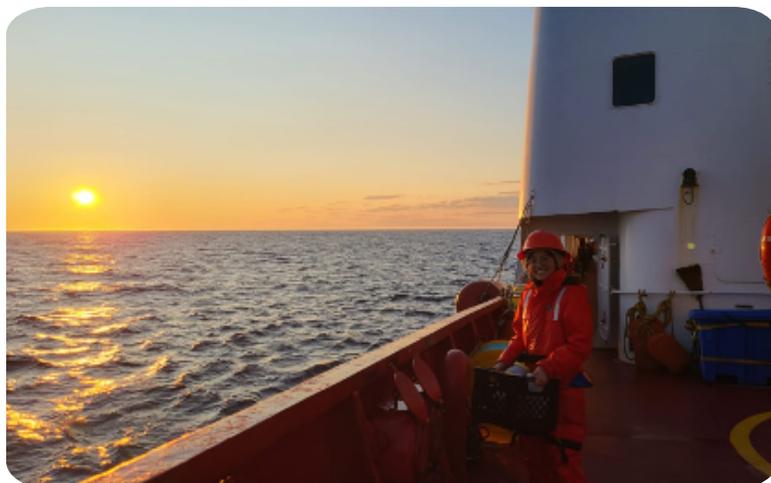
“Multiple students in the lab have, in years past, or are planning to embark on the CCGS Amundsen to conduct studies and collect samples throughout the North Atlantic Ocean on the Labrador Coast and into the Canadian Arctic. Research topics have covered carbon processing, bioturbation, zooplankton dynamics and eDNA. Participants include Becky Evans, Amy McCallister, Tia Chen, May Lin, and Pauline Rollat.

Additionally, many students have participated in field studies in Newman Sound in Terra Nova National Park in Newfoundland, conducting species surveys and acoustics research in collaboration with Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Participants include Ben King, Tia Chen, and May Lin.

A PhD student, Mary Clinton, conducted field work at the Ocean Networks Canada Deep Ocean Observatory off the British Columbia coast, studying benthic communities in the Pacific Ocean.” - Snelgrove Lab



Tia Chen aboard CCGS Amundsen conducting drop camera survey (2024)



May Lin aboard CCGS Amundsen collecting biodiversity samples (2025)



Field sampling aboard the Canadian icebreaker CCGS Amundsen in Auyuittuq National Park in the Canadian Arctic Ocean

“As part of the Transforming Climate Action project, zooplankton samples were collected by Dr. Gustavo Guarin aboard the Canadian icebreaker CCGS Amundsen between August 7 and September 4, 2025, in several regions of the Canadian Arctic Ocean. This study aims to investigate how carbon and lipids are transferred through pelagic food webs in contrasting Arctic environments. The sampling campaign was carried out in collaboration with First Nations participants.” - Parrish Lab

Fieldwork by the OSC

In the Arctic

"The members of the Mercier Lab carries out field research in the Lower Arctic, collaborating with the Inuit community of Sanikiluaq. Through various research techniques on the ice and on water, the lab members (Dr. Joséphine Pierrat, Dr. Kevin Ma, Andrew Tucker, Yuthika Jalim and Méliane Deshaies) explore the ecology of the benthic communities inhabiting these polar waters.

By working with the Hunters and Trappers Association of Sanikiluaq, along with the Government of Nunavut, the lab especially studies the populations of sea cucumbers to better understand its ecology and possibly develop sustainable commercial fisheries. Additionally, the lab is contributing to the development of a MPA around the archipelago." - Mercier Lab



Dr. Kevin Ma and Yuthika Jalim working on the ice



Andrew Tucker (Msc student) on the ice with a long pole net



Fieldwork in Labrador by the AEON Lab

"In collaboration with Nunatsiavut, the lab carries out fieldwork in Labrador, while other projects focus on changes to the biological carbon pump (BCP). Fieldwork in the Great Lakes centers on experimental oil biodegradation, whereas studies in Placentia Bay and Bay d'Espoir, NL, investigate the dispersal and transport mechanisms of microplastics." - Passow Lab

In Labrador

"The AEON lab conducts research across diverse regions of Newfoundland and Labrador and has recently expanded its reach to the Laurentian Great Lakes." - Passow Lab



Eleanor Barry (phd student) doing fieldwork in Labrador

Fieldwork by the OSC

Scientific diving

"The Cold Ocean Benthic Ecology Lab (COBEL) has done multiple fieldwork projects during last summer, under the supervision of Dr. Pat Gagnon. Student members of the lab have been diving for their research projects, including diving for a rhodolith study by Brooklyn Bolstad (Scientific Diver 1) and catching flounders for a project with Payton Allen (Scientific Diver-in-training). Additionally, Zintis Stasko (Scientific Diver 1) has been studying kelp beds with drone work over different locations in Newfoundland." - Gagnon Lab



Payton Allen (MSc student) diving for a research project



Brooklyn Bolstad (MSc student) and Payton Allen (MSc student) about to dive for a research project



Dr. Sarah Lehnert, Kiley Sims and Dr. Ian Fleming doing fieldwork

River fieldwork

"From the Fleming Lab, exploring the genetics and ecology of the Atlantic salmon, Kiley Sims has conducted work on the Avalon Peninsula, investigating the proportion of native Atlantic salmon to invasive Brown Trout. Additionally, Hallie Arno has done fieldwork in Maine collecting genetic samples from Atlantic Salmon in the Penobscot River." - Fleming Lab

Fieldwork by the OSC

Cape Eleuthera Institute

“While our lab is not currently exclusively doing much field work outside Newfoundland, I will be conducting my field work at the Cape Eleuthera Institute in South Eleuthera, The Bahamas starting in January 2026.”



Cape Eleuthera Institute

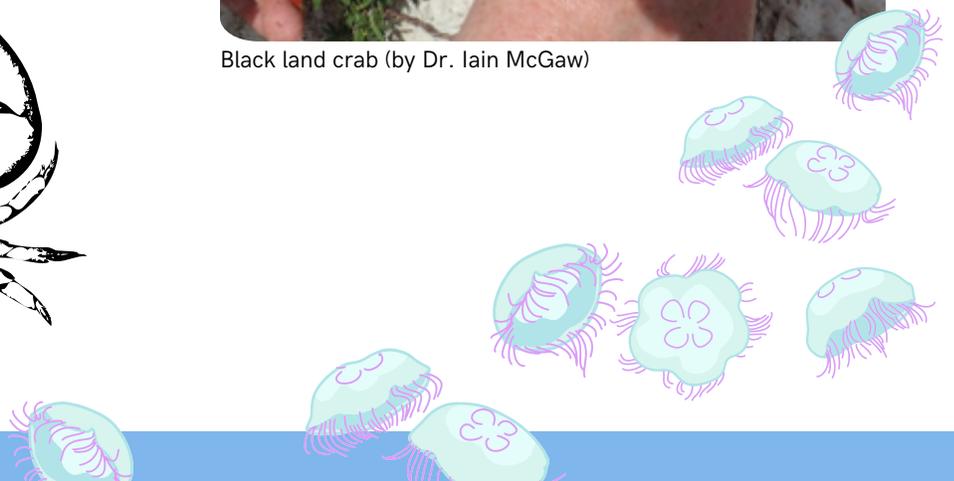
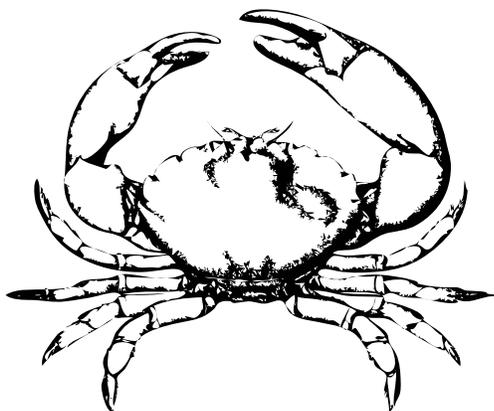


Camera trap (by Dr. Iain McGaw and Bill Bigelow)

“It will also involve a series of experiments to determine if the colour morphs and size classes of the black land crabs provide any benefit or refuge to camouflage from predators” - Che Nicholls (McGaw Lab)



Black land crab (by Dr. Iain McGaw)



Accomplishments within the Department

Exit Seminars

- Dec 10th (2024) MSc Exit Seminar of **Joanna Dicks**
Microplastic sedimentation in the Northern Gulf of Mexico
- Jan 30th MSc Exit Seminar of **Stephan Hamisch**
Deep-water biodiversity - ecosystem functioning in temperate to Arctic shelf and Fjord benthos
- April 22nd MSc Exit Seminar of **Natalie Perrin**
Advancing knowledge of striped shrimp (*Pandalus montagui*) biology and ecology in the northwest Atlantic
- September 16th MSc Exit Seminar of **Sathees Duglas**
Comparative response of Atlantic salmon cell line and primary macrophage to *Vibrio anguillarum* O1 and O2 serovars
- September 17th MSc Exit Seminar of **Aqsa Maqsood**
Exploring the biological effects of melanin and host response to *Aeromonas salmonicida* bath challenge in Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*)

Honours Thesis Defense

- April 11th Honours Thesis Defense of **Andrea Leyte**
Ontogenetic development and sexual maturation in a wild population of the sea cucumber *Cucumaria frondosa* in Nunavut (Canadian Arctic)
- April 15th Honour Thesis Defense of **Julianna Dyke**
Identification and validation of reliable *Francisella noatunensis* reference genes for differential gene expression analyses
- April 16th Honour Thesis Defence of **Mia Kocela**
The effects of microplastic concentration on the growth and aggregation of *Thalassiosira bulbosa*

Accomplishments within the Department

PhD Thesis Defense

- March 24th PhD Thesis Defense of **Dr. Verena Kalter**
Impacts of oil pollution on Sub-Arctic and Arctic invertebrates: A study on blue mussels and beyond

Congrats to all for successful defenses!

Graduate Awards

Dr. Joe Brown Graduate Research Award 2024/2025 - **Emma Porter** (PhD., Gamperl Lab)

J. Roger Pearson Graduate Award 2024/2025 - **Hallie Arno** (MSc., Fleming Lab)

Undergraduate Scholarship in Marine Science, Dr. Grant Gardner Undergraduate Scholarship in Biology - **Payton Allen** (MSc., Gagnon Lab)

NSERC Michael Smith Foreign Study Grant - **Brooklyn Bolstad** (MSc., Gagnon Lab)

Mitacs International Grant - **Brooklyn Bolstad** (MSc., Gagnon Lab)

F.A. Aldrich Fellowship (2025) from Memorial University - **May Lin** (Snelgrove Lab)

PEOPLE Conference, First place for Best Oral Presentation - **Eleanor Barry** (Phd., AEON Passow Lab)

Picture Us, Art exhibit showcasing research (April) - **Eleanor Barry** (Phd., AEON Passow Lab)

Accomplishments within the Department

SEA Conference 2025

Congrats to all participants, presenters and volunteers of this year's Scientific Endeavours in Academia. Multiple students and Post-docs from the Department of Ocean Sciences presented great posters and oral presentations. Many thanks to the organizing committee, and especially to all volunteers who made this conference possible.

Awards:

Best Earth Sciences Talk - Graduate: **Caroline Ofosu** (MSc., Fleming Lab)

Best Ocean Sciences Poster - Undergraduate: **Andrea Leyte** (BSc., Mercier Lab)

Best Ocean Sciences Poster - Graduate: **Shanan Brun-Dabbagh** (MSc., AEON Passow Lab)

Best Ocean Sciences Talk - Graduate: **Cameron MacPhail** (MSc., Fleming Lab)

Best Climate Change and Environment Talk - Graduate and Post-doctoral fellow: **Joséphine Pierrat**
(Post-doc, Mercier Lab)

Best Interdisciplinary Program poster: **Shimaa Salem** (Phd., Parrish Lab)

Best Innovation and Aquaculture presentation - Graduate: **Sathees Duglas** (Msc., Javier Lab)

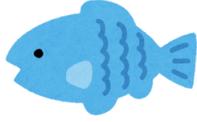
School of Graduate Studies Best Master's poster presentation: **Tia Chen** (MSc., Snelgrove Lab)

School of Graduate Studies Best Master's Talk: **Mélie Deshaies** (MSc., Mercier Lab)

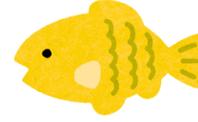
Vice-president (Research) Best Paper - Graduate: **Andrew Tucker** (MSc., Mercier Lab)

Congrats to all!

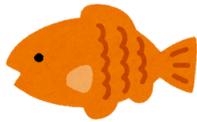
Outreach



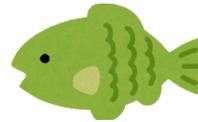
When traveling up to the Inuit community of Sanikiluaq (Nunavut), team members from the Mercier Lab organized classes on marine biology for students from the local high school. This summer, Dr. Joséphine Pierrat and Andrew Tucker lead a workshop on benthic communities for the students.



Community events held by Eleanor Barry and her collaborators in Labrador. They designed and delivered classes focusing on coastal ice and food web dynamics for grades 1 to 11).



Members of the Snelgrove Lab participated to the World Oceans Day Event 2025 at the Fisheries and Marine Institute, and also the World Oceans Day Event 2024 at the Johnson Geo Centre last year.



“At the Cape Eleuthera Institute, a program with the local high school allows the students to actively engage in ongoing research while gaining an understanding of employing the scientific method in an inclusive environment.”

- McGaw Lab

Champney's West Aquarium

The Champney's West Aquarium, under the initiative of Dr. Driedzic invited students from the OSC to create and lead workshops to educate the general public about marine biology. Students shared their knowledge on different aspects of the ocean, by animating activities oriented toward the general public and presenting a seminar on multiple related topics.



Inside of Champney's West Aquarium

Outreach



Aqsa, Thurka and Rahana preparing for a workshop on lobster

We thank the Champney's West Aquarium for this opportunity, and the students involved in developing and giving the workshops (Rahana Elbrahim, Thurka Paramanathan, Aqsa Maqsood, Dr. Joséphine Pierrat (post-doc), Yuthika Jalim, Méliane Deshaies, Brooklyn Bolstad and Zintis Stasko). The experience was greatly appreciated by both the students and the participants.



Champney's West Aquarium, NL



A female lobster carrying eggs shown to the participants



Joséphine, Méliane and Yuthika presenting a seminar on marine invertebrate ecology





CONCLUSION

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to this Tidepool edition of 2025!

These last semesters have been great for the Department of Ocean Sciences. All students, faculty members, administrators and other members of the OSC community have worked hard and achieved greatness. While we may not have been able to highlight every achievement of all members of our community, we relay our congrats to everyone!

If you have ideas for the next edition of Tidepool, or would like to share an academic milestone or achievement, please reach out to Méliane Deshaies (mdeshaies@mun.ca).

- The Editorial Team



