


Summer 2015

# Telonicher Marine Laboratory

HSU Telonicher Marine Laboratory  
*Humboldt State University*

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## HSU TELONICHER Marine Laboratory

Dear Brian,

Welcome to the first issue of HSU's Marine Laboratory Newsletter! There are so many new and exciting things happening here at the lab we felt it was time to reach out and let everyone know what's going on. We will be issuing an e-newsletter on a quarterly basis so stay tuned for future updates! If you do not want to receive these e-mails you can unsubscribe at the bottom.



### The Marine Lab is Turning 50!

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Lab we will be having an Open House and BBQ from 11-4 PM on Friday, Sept. 18, 2015. Come by the lab and enjoy a guided tour of the facility and surrounding area, a lecture on the history of the lab, updates on new projects, and great food. The event is free and open to everyone.

### Seven MPA Projects Currently Underway

#### HSU Involved in Ambitious Project to Survey the North Coast

13 HSU faculty and a small army of students are currently in

the 2nd of a 3-year study to examine newly established Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) on the North Coast. The baseline projects take a look at the abundance and diversity of marine plants and animals in several ecosystems.

[Link to Full Article](#)



## HSU Launches New Marine Institute



### Interdisciplinary Institute will Collaborate with Local and State Organizations

The Humboldt Marine and Coastal Science Institute will develop partnerships with the 20+ HSU marine-oriented faculty from a variety of disciplines -- oceanography, marine biology, fisheries biology, geology, chemistry, business, environmental science and management, and environmental engineering -- to study social and ecological aspects of the North Coast.

[Link to News Release](#)

## Featured Student Story: Jana Hennessy

### Exploring the Causes of Sea Star Wasting Disease By Jana Hennessy

*Jana Hennessy is an HSU Graduate Student in the Department of Biological Sciences working with Dr. Brian Tissot. Jana received her BS Degree in Biology from HSU in 2013.*

Sea Star Wasting Disease (SSWD) is the name given to a set of symptoms exhibited by sea stars that range from small lesions, to missing arms, to complete tissue decay and death. SSWD has been devastating the Pacific Coast from Alaska to Baja since 2013, and our Humboldt populations have been hard hit.



Since 2014 my team of undergraduate researchers and I have been documenting movement patterns of our local sea stars. My specific interest is in the movement patterns of Ochre stars (*Pisaster ochraceus*) and tracking their movements through the disease process. Since May 2015, we've collected data from multiple locations near Trinidad and Crescent City with some mixed results. The not-so-good news is that we're still documenting the disease in our Ochre star populations and are also seeing that juvenile stars are susceptible to SSWD. The great news is that we are seeing lots of juvenile stars! This means the stars are reproducing and recruiting young stars to our ecosystem. There has also been a shift in severity of the disease: we are seeing more stars with no symptoms of the disease, and those that are showing signs of disease are exhibiting less severe symptoms. Why?

Does this mean SSWD is getting better or worse? We don't know for sure, which is why we're looking at multiple angles. Lab observations have shown that temperature may play a role in exacerbating the disease so we are examining that as well. Temperature loggers are installed at the sites so we can look at the changes in both ocean and air temperature, and new field experiments are being implemented that will record the amount of desiccation and temperature stress that the stars experience.

While we don't yet know for certain what environmental factors are causing this disease, we are seeing some overall improvement in the general population; but it's too soon to be sure. What we do know is that the stars are sick and this mass mortality event will have significant effects on our rocky intertidal ecosystem. It is important to collect useful data about sea star wasting and disease epidemiology during this time when we are experiencing catastrophic loss of these and other sea stars. For more information or to learn about our upcoming fundraiser for SSWD, feel free to contact me at [jnh39@humboldt.edu](mailto:jnh39@humboldt.edu).

## FOR MORE VISIT OUR WEBSITE



### Dr. Cass Studies Salmon Food Chain

Zooplankton - a catchall term for the tiny animals that drift in ocean currents - are a key food source for salmon. Tracking these variations happens to be Cass's specialty



### Coral Sea's Uncovered History

During its 40-year existence, Humboldt State's marine research vessel, the Coral Sea, has seen its share of adventures. Read about it in this fascinating article.

## Give Now!

## Help Support the Lab!

As you can see there is a lot going on at the Marine Lab. If you are interested in supporting the lab your donations can help fund a number of activities; even a small donation is important to us:

- Increasing the hours we are open to the public;
- Support for our Marine Science Summer Kids program;
- Help us build a new, interactive touch tank.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to give me a call or send an e-mail.

Sincerely,

Brian Tissot, PhD  
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Humboldt State University Telonicher Marine Laboratory  
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