

ODYSSEY



CEN CAL DIVE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER Summer 2024

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CEN CAL SCHOLARS 2024:

Myaya Munstermann

Maya came to UC Berkeley from the highly regarded University of Hawaii after completing her masters degree and is now leading work out of Bodega Bay Marine Lab. She has done a masterful job completing 3 sets of experiments focused on both adult and juvenile sea urchin life stages contributing to her thesis: conducting scuba based kelp forest monitoring surveys, collections and field experiments.

Brayden Wiley

Brayden is a student in the Biological Sciences masters program at Cal Poly Humboldt and is now beginning graduate thesis research. He received his bachelors degree in biology from SDSU in 2021 and is currently beginning his graduate thesis. He is interested in the application of phycological research to real world problems specifically a study relevant to managing the loss of kelp forests due to warming ocean and increased grazing pressure by purple sea urchins. He has designed a combination of field and laboratory experiments to examine whether acid weed (*Desmarestia ligulate*) can inhibit purple sea urchin grazing.



NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES National

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington state to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa. The network includes a system of 16 national marine sanctuaries plus Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll (American Samoa) marine national monuments.”

West Coast Region

Channel Islands Chumash Heritage (in designation) Cordell Bank
Greater Farallones Monterey Bay Olympic Coast

Pacific Islands Region

American Samoa Hawaii Humpback Whale Papahānaumokuākea
Pacific Remote Islands (in designation)



NEW NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY!

Five years after initiating the sanctuary designation process for Lake Ontario and seven years after NOAA received the sanctuary nomination, today is a day to celebrate! HURRAH

It is hard to put into words how much work has gone into this designation. The valued Sanctuary Advisory Council members were key to bringing this to reality. From day one, they connected with community members, provided a vision for this sanctuary and continued to believe. Yes, there is a lot of work ahead to implement the management plan to bring the ideas to reality. It is both the finish line and the starting line. The new Sanctuary is the 16th and covers 40 ship wrecks (18th-19th Century wrecks) and 1 plane.

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries website will have a new map of the NMS system!

But now the work begins: to designate and buoy the irreplaceable shipwreck resource in the SE Lake Ontario area; to educate the greater New York State area on the resource we hold; to promote eco-tourism on the lake and in shoreline interpretation centers; to discover new resources in our Lake Ontario area and hopefully soon the upper St Lawrence River area.



SEA STARS !

The sunflower sea star, A starfish with up to 24 arms, faces a devastating pandemic from sea star wasting disease. This disease causes the sea stars to develop lesions and eventually dissolve into a jelly-like puddle, leading to their death within days. Since 2013, an estimated

5.75 billion sunflower sea stars have died, and the species was listed as critically endangered in 2020.

Efforts to save them include breeding programs and reintroduction initiatives by researchers from various institutions. Teams are also working to identify the disease's cause and study the genetics of survivors. In the US, University of Washington is leading the research.

AND

From the San Jose Flipper Dipper Dive Skindiving Club Newsletter: The Sunflower Star Laboratory in Moss Landing is currently raising hundreds of juvenile sunflower stars (*Pycnopodia helianthoides*) in their aquaculture facility. Check out www.sunflowerstarlab.org to learn more.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature reclassified the species as endangered in 2020, and a petition to list the species under the US federal Endangered Species Act was filed in 2021. Public hearings were held in 2023, and I have not seen an update yet on the progress of this initiative. Stay tuned! More info here: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-fisheries-proposes-listing-sunflower-sea-star-threatened-under-endangered-species.



MANAGE CALIFORNIA'S MARINE PROTECTED AREA NETWORK

At its February 2024 meeting, the *California Fish and Game Commission* (CFG) referred 20 petitions with over 80 unique requests to amend marine protected area regulations to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for review, evaluation, and recommendation.

The Commission has approved a 3-phase approach to evaluate the petitions. The Department has completed Phase 1 of the 3-phase approach and will present the draft to the Commission at the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) meeting July 17, 2024.

Binning is the first step, and the Commission has requested public feedback on the draft proposed binning of petitions. All petitions have been sorted into either Bin 1 (petitions ready to be evaluated in the near-term. Placement in Bin 1 does not guarantee the petition approval or Bin 2 (petitions those require additional policy guidance, information, and/or resources before evaluation).

Feedback on petition binning may be sent directly to the Commission to inform the discussions scheduled for the July 17 MRC meeting. The draft Phase 1 document outlining the proposed binning of petitions includes background information on binning criteria, tables outlining the proposed Bin 1 and Bin 2 petitions and justifications for why petitions are categorized into each bin.

It is anticipated the Marine Resources Committee will make a recommendation on the draft proposed binning for consideration at the Commission August meeting. Following the Commission's approval of petition binning, the Department will move forward with the evaluation of Bin 1 petitions for subsequent discussion and consideration by the MRC and the Commission.



VENTURA CNTY POACHING CONVICTIONS: JAIL TERMS & FINES

A sophisticated conspiracy to commit wildlife violations by seven men resulted in the arrest, prosecution, fines and jail terms for the subjects. Wildlife officers began investigating a group after receiving numerous tips from the public regarding a group of individuals engaged in suspected poaching activities in the southern Los Padres National Forest.

The investigation revealed the co-defendants obtained a highly unusual amount of replacement licenses and hunting tags issued from a CDFW license vendor. The men conspired with a clerk at a market to fraudulently obtain additional tags to exceed big game hunting limits. In total, 87 licenses, tags, or other entitlements were fraudulently obtained.

The long-term investigation occurred in partnership with the Ventura Cnty DA Environmental Protections Unit and resulted in the service of several search warrants. The search warrants resulted in the seizure of numerous taxidermy mounts, deer skulls, a mountain lion skull, a variety of game meat including deer and bear, fraudulent big game tags, 11 firearms, thousands of rounds of ammunition, roosters and cock fighting paraphernalia and stolen copper wire. During the year after the search warrants were served, wildlife officers continued to conduct an extensive investigation leading to the search of a local taxidermy shop resulting the discovery of additional evidence, including an illegally taken bear and a fraudulently acquired bear tag.

The VCDA's Office arranged a plea agreement with all seven co-defendants. The plea agreement stipulating all co-defendants plead guilty to counts of felony conspiracy for the unlawful take/possession of wildlife and for filing false documents with the state. The plea also stipulated the defendants each serve 180 to 220 days in jail, 24 months formal probation and a lifetime prohibition of hunting and fishing privileges in the state of California.



CALIFORNIA BAN THICK-FILM 'REUSABLE' PLASTIC BAGS

California is close to banning reusable plastic bags at grocery and convenience stores, closing a loophole in the plastic bag ban passed a decade ago. Two bills have been approved to ban thicker plastic bags and thin, single-use plastic bags that were already banned. Surprisingly, studies have found a sharp increase in plastic bag waste in the years following the bag ban. The amount of discarded plastic bags jumped 47% in 2022, compared to the year the bag ban was passed. This was possibly due to the promotion by the plastic bag industry of thicker, "reusable" plastic bags. The promotion failed, and the bags were simply thrown away instead. The bills, which still need to pass the opposite houses and be signed by the governor before becoming law, would go into effect on Jan. 1, 2026.



30 x 30 CALIFORNIA

Draft Decision Making Framework for Coastal Waters

INTRODUCTION

In October 2020, Governor Newsom issued [Executive Order N-82-20](#) (1), which advanced biodiversity conservation as an Administration priority and elevated the role of nature in fighting climate change. Part of this Executive Order committed California to conserving 30% of its lands and coastal waters by 2030 (the “30x30” target) – putting California at the leading edge of an international movement to protect nature (1), (2).

In 2022, the California Natural Resources Agency released [Pathways to 30x30](#), which defines 30x30 Conservation Areas and details strategies and opportunities for achieving the initiative’s goals. 30x30 will create and expand during conservation measures across a broad range of landscapes and seascapes in California to protect biodiversity, expand access to nature, and mitigate and build resilience to climate change.

Conserving additional 13.8% of coastal waters by 2030 requires action across 4 fronts:

Adaptively managing the state’s marine protected area (MPA) network

Strengthening biodiversity conservation in California’s federally- managed National Marine Sanctuaries

Supporting tribally-led conservation, including through the creation of Indigenous Marine Stewardship Areas

Exploring the role of other marine managed areas beyond MPAs and Sanctuaries in conserving biodiversity



CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS BAN THICK-FILM ‘REUSABLE’ PLASTIC BAGS

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CDFW RELEASES 1 MILLION CHINOOK SALMON INTO

San Pablo Bay from Cal Maritime Campus As the sun set over the San Pablo Bay June 10, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), joined by faculty, staff and students from the California State University Maritime Academy (Cal Maritime), released

approximately 1 million fall-run Chinook salmon smolts from the Cal Maritime campus in Vallejo.

It was the first release of Chinook salmon from this location in almost four decades and among the final releases of hatchery fall-run Chinook salmon taking place in San Francisco and San Pablo bays this spring and summer.



the monterey SHOOTOUT

2024 REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

- Event Date: August 23-25, 2024
- Registration: \$35

One low price gets you into the Competition, cocktail party and all Seminars

- Contest Hours - Fri 7AM to Sat 7PM
- Backscatter party on Saturday night at 6PM

First time underwater shooters will enjoy our introductory seminars held on Friday. All skill levels will get inspired with our more advanced seminars held on Sunday. Come meet fellow enthusiasts and learn from our professional presenters.

You don't need to be a pro to have fun and win big in our friendly competition. You just need to get in the water this weekend. Our 36 hour photo and video competition has categories for beginner, intermediate, and advanced shooters with great prizes from our sponsors. All competition entrants must register for a full weekend pass to enter.

VIDEO

We will reward the best underwater video with great prizes! Regardless if you shoot a point & shoot camera, digital SLR with video capability, or a pro level HD system, we're asking our judges to award prizes based on content, not broadcast quality.

PHOTO COMPETITION SKILL LEVELS:

BEGINNER

If you are a new underwater photographer, this is the category for you. In the spirit of rewarding new photographers, entries in this category are limited to photographers who have taken a camera diving less than 50 dives and have won less than \$500

	<p>in prizes in any major underwater photography competition or have received less than \$500 in payment for any underwater photography work. Our panel of judges reserve the right to eliminate any Beginner entries that they feel should have been entered in the Intermediate category based on the entrant's experience. Industry professionals, including those who lead photo trips, or refer to themselves as a "Professional Underwater Photographer" must compete at the advanced level.</p>
INTERMEDIATE	<p>The spirit of the intermediate digital photo category is to reward anyone that has shot underwater more than 50 dives and has already received a few kudos or prizes in the past. If you've won a total of 3 prizes or less (first, second or third place) in a major competition and/or are not regularly selling your underwater photography this is the category for you. Our panel of judges reserve the right to eliminate any Intermediate entries that they feel should have been entered in the Advanced category based on the entrant's experience. Industry professionals, including those who lead photo trips, or refer to themselves as a "Professional Underwater Photographer" must compete at the advanced level.</p>
ADVANCED	<p>If you have received a total of 4 or more prizes (first, second or third place wins) in a major competition the advanced category is for you. Our prize point system will reward winners in this category with the highest points and thus the best prizes. Industry professionals, including those who lead photo trips, or refer to themselves as a "Professional Underwater Photographer" must compete at the advanced level.</p>

UPDATED CALENDAR 2024

June

June 19	Juneteenth
June 20	First Day Summer
June 21-23	USOA UW Hockey Nationals, Denver
June 19-20	CDFW Meeting – Mammoth Lakes
June 29	Caspar Culling - Mendocino Cnty

July

July 4	<i>Independence Day</i>
July 16-27	UW Hockey Age Worlds Kuala Lumpur Malaysia
July 15-19	Skin Spear Nationals Islamorada Florida
July 18	Marine Resources Committee/CDFW – Santa Rosa
July 27	Caspar Culling – Mendocino Cnty
July 31	<u>CenCal BOD– 5th Wed</u>

August

Aug 1	Olympics Paris!!
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Aug 14-15 CDFW Meeting – Fortuna
Aug 23-25 Monterey **SHOOTOUT** – uw photo competition
August 31 Caspar Culling – Mendocino Cnty

September

Sept 11 Patriots Day
Sept 2 Labor Day Holiday
Sept 21 **Beach Clean Up Day**
Sept 22 First Day Fall
Sept 25 CenCal BOD
Sept 28 Caspar Culling – Mendocino Cnty

October

Oct 3 Rosh Hashanah
Oct 4-6 **North American Inter-Regional UWH Denver**
Oct 6 **USOA Annual Meeting**
Oct 9-10 CDFW Meeting - Sacramento
Oct 12 Yom Kippur
Oct 14 Indigenous Day
Oct 31 Halloween
Oct 31 Diwali

November

Nov 3 Daylight Savings Ends
Nov 5 Election Day
Nov 7 Pearl Harbor Remembrance
Nov 7 CDFW Marine Resources Committee - Sacramento
Nov 11 Veterans Day Holiday
Nov 19-22 DEMA Show Las Vegas
Nov 28 Thanksgiving Day Holiday

December

Dec 4 CenCal BOD – November Meeting
Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day
Dec 11-12 CDFW Meeting – San Diego
Dec 21 Winter Solstice/First Day of Winter
Dec 25 Christmas Day Holiday
Dec 26 Hanukkah
Dec 26 Kwanzaa