



NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF OF MEXICO COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEM

GCOOS NEWS AND UPDATES FOR 4 MAY 2012

GULF OF MEXICO REGIONAL NEWS

Record-setting Center for Ocean Technology Glider Mission in the Gulf of Mexico

The GCOOS-RA congratulates the University of South Florida's Center for Ocean Technology (COT) for continuing to push the boundaries of its glider capabilities in the Gulf of Mexico. The glider *Bass*, deployed on March 17, 2012 off the coast of Pensacola, FL, traveled 515 km over 33 days (see <http://ooma.marine.usf.edu/CROW/>), completing the longest COT mission to date. The duration exceeds the previous record by four days. The glider track from just west of DeSoto Canyon to the Florida Middle Grounds was accomplished by conserving power during the mission; science sensors transmitting in near real time were scaled back to minimize glider time spent on the surface. Reaching a depth of 205 meters, the goal of the effort was to combine these glider data (e.g., CTD, chlorophyll, Color Dissolved Organic Matter, Dissolved Oxygen, optical properties, and passive acoustic readings) with other fixed-platform and satellite-based observations and model simulations to determine and predict water property distributions on the West Florida Shelf. Water property distributions are important because these influence many issues such as hazardous material tracking, Search and Rescue operations, and Harmful Algal Bloom monitoring. The GCOOS-RA is currently working with COT engineer Chad Lembke and Mote Marine Lab Senior Scientist Dr. Gary Kirkpatrick to develop a pilot program to increase use of gliders in Gulf of Mexico monitoring efforts. Data from this recent deployment, Mission 55, can be found at <http://cotprojects.marine.usf.edu/data/gliderplots.html>. Lembke and team are applying work done by others to compensate for limitations of glider data from things like artificial temperature and salinity variations related to the thermal mass of the glider and its interaction with the environment and sensors; and erroneous backscatter readings due to biofouling that impact chlorophyll and CDOM measurements. Chad Lembke (clembke@marine.usf.edu) or Bob Weisberg (weisberg@marine.usf.edu) can be contacted for more details.

International SeaKeepers Society Partners with Research Scientists

The GCOOS-RA welcomed the International SeaKeepers Society to the network of Regional Association members in early April. SeaKeepers is proud to announce its newest initiative, the Yachts of Opportunity Program, which unites scientists and the broader yachting community by forming partnerships between research scientists and participating members. The program seeks to provide scientists with the necessary platform on which to conduct cutting-edge research by placing them on member vessels. Likewise, members have the exceptional chance to meet with scientists of interest and involve themselves directly in ocean data collection and preservation. Each research mission selected for the Yachts of Opportunity Program is unique and will vary in terms of location, duration and complexity. Funding for scientific exploration and data collection remains the leading impediment to ocean conservation efforts. SeaKeepers looks forward to working with the GCOOS-RA to orchestrate and facilitate essential research and water quality monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico. For more information, please contact Brittany Stockman, International SeaKeepers Society Programs and Policies at 704.458.0953.

NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary hosts public meetings, seeks comment on Sanctuary Marine Zones and Regulations

[NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary](#) is seeking public comment to guide a review of the

sanctuary's marine zones - areas set aside for specific uses - and regulations that will shape Florida Keys marine conservation for the next 20 years. The marine zoning and regulatory review is a multi-year, public process to determine whether existing sanctuary boundaries, regulations and marine zones are sufficient to address threats to marine resources, and if new or expanded protection strategies are warranted to better address these threats. Public comments are being accepted through 29 June, and during five meetings in South Florida and the Florida Keys from 19-27 June. Comments can be submitted online through the Federal eRulemaking Portal www.regulations.gov (Docket No. NOAA-NOS-2012-0061). Comments may also be mailed if postmarked by 29 June to: Sean Morton, Sanctuary Superintendent, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, 33 East Quay Rd., Key West, FL 33040; or Anne Morkill, Refuge Manager, US Fish and Wildlife Service, 28950 Watson Blvd., Big Pine Key, FL 33043. For additional information, including the dates and times of the public meetings, go to:

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2012/20120419_floridakeysmeeting.html

National Research Council hosts workshop on effect of *Deepwater Horizon* on ecosystem services

On 25 April the National Research Council's Committee of the Effects of the Deepwater Horizon Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill on Ecosystem Services in the Gulf of Mexico workshop was held at the NOAA Gulf of Mexico Disaster Response Center in Mobile, AL. The session included discussions on cultural and social impacts of the spill as well as impacts on Gulf seafood.

<http://dels.nas.edu/Study-In-Progress/Effects-Deepwater-Horizon-Mississippi/DELS-OSB-10-02>

NOAA's Adopt a Drifter Program sets sail in the Gulf of Mexico (*from the Gulf of Mexico Foundation*)

A group of high school students recently boarded the Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Alabama Discovery vessel to deploy the first-ever "Adopt a Drifter" for "America's Sea" in the Gulf of Mexico. The students were joined via distance technology by students at a partner high schools in Vera Cruz, Mexico (Colegio Bilingüe Madison). NOAA coordinated six such deployments nationally as part of its Earth Day celebrations on 20 April 2012. Drifter events also took place in Boston, Maui, Miami, Santa Barbara and Seattle. NOAA's Adopt a Drifter Program allows teachers and students to track their adopted drifter and integrate its data and path into their classroom content and activities. An educational sticker or drawing from each school is adhered to the drifter before deployment. The teachers receive the WMO number of their drifting buoy in order to access data from the school's adopted drifter online. Participating teachers use existing lesson plans and develop new plans to explore oceanographic concepts with their students, giving them a real world application using the drifting buoy data. Students become more engaged with the study of ocean currents, the Gulf of Mexico and regional ocean surface temperature pattern.

Rise in Asian Tiger Shrimp sightings prompts scientific look at invasion concerns

The recent rise in sightings of non-native Asian tiger shrimp off the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts has government scientists working to determine the cause of the increase and the possible consequences for native fish and seafood in those waters. Researchers from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are working with state agencies from North Carolina to Texas to investigate how this transplanted species from Indo-Pacific, Asian and Australian waters reached U.S. waters, and what the increase in sightings means for native species. "We can confirm there was nearly a tenfold jump in reports of Asian tiger shrimp in 2011," explained Pam Fuller, the USGS biologist who runs the agency's Nonindigenous Aquatic Species database. "And they are probably even more prevalent than reports suggest, because the more fisherman and other locals become accustomed to seeing them, the less likely they are to report them." NOAA scientists are launching a research effort to understand more about the biology of these shrimp and how they may affect the ecology of native fisheries and coastal ecosystems. As with all non-native species, there are concerns over the potential for novel avenues of disease transmission and competition with native shrimp stocks, especially given the high growth rates and spawning rates compared with other species. "The Asian tiger shrimp represents yet another potential marine invader capable of altering fragile marine ecosystems," said NOAA marine ecologist James Morris. "Our efforts will include assessments of the biology and ecology of this non-native species and attempt to predict impacts to economically and ecologically important species of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico." Anyone who sees one or more shrimp suspected to be an Asian tiger shrimp is asked to note the location and report the sighting to the USGS NAS database at

<http://nas.er.usgs.gov/SightingReport.aspx>.

If possible, freeze a specimen to help confirm the identity and contribute to a tissue repository maintained by NOAA.

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2012/20120426_tigershrimp.html

Rookery Bay Reserve Works in Partnership to Protect Important Mangroves (from NERRS)

The Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is working hard to restore mangrove forests in the Naples area. The Reserve is working with the Coastal Resources Group to restore mangrove forests that serve as essential breeding grounds and habitat for fish and birds. There are about 225 acres of mangroves that are either dead or dying, and another 250 acres are in danger. The project will reestablish a historic tidal channel adjacent to the Steven's Landing community near Marco Island and ultimately restore 64 acres of mangrove forests. The first phase of the project will aim to restore a small area at Steven's Landing with results becoming visible by this summer once the natural ebb and flow of water is restored to the affected area. This is a multi-party effort with several supporters, including Fabien Cousteau who lent his personal support and that of his environmentally focused nonprofit, Plant-a-Fish, at a recent press conference, "As wonderful as it is to have restoration happen, we need so much more of it to happen because we're really far behind in terms of catching up on the last 50 years of environmental impact ...The most important investment we can have is in our one and only life-support system, which is this planet," Cousteau added.

<http://www.nerrs.noaa.gov/News.aspx?id=379>

IOOS/NATIONAL NEWS

IOOS Summit 2012 - A new Decade of Integrated and Sustained Ocean Observing

The Interagency Ocean Observation Committee (IOOC) is bringing together community leaders in ocean observing, research, science, policy, management, and decision-making to develop a coordinated strategy. The IOOS Summit, being held November 13-16 at the Hyatt Dulles, strives to achieve better integration of regional, national, and global ocean observing efforts. Individuals will have a variety of ways to engage through submitting white papers, participating on thematic writing teams, participating at the IOOS Summit, and implementing strategic outcomes. The IOOS Summit is the exclamation point on the work preceding the event and will serve as an assembly of 200 representatives cross-sectioning the diverse and expansive ocean observing community. For more information please visit: www.iooc.us/summit. To submit an expression of interest: <http://www.iooc.us/summit/expression-of-interest-form/>

Public comment open for new Weather.gov

NOAA is pleased to announce that the National Weather Service's website [Weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) has been redesigned and is ready for final comment from customers and partners. The site includes a national map for weather watches, warnings and advisories. Comments are welcome on the live [preview site](http://www.weather.gov) through 18 May 2012.

EPA's National Coastal Condition Report IV available online

The EPA has released the *National Coastal Condition Report IV*, the fourth in a series of environmental assessments of U.S. coastal waters and the Great Lakes. The national coastal condition reports summarize the condition of ecological resources in the coastal waters of the United States and highlight several exemplary federal, state, tribal and local programs that assess coastal ecological and water quality conditions. This report relies heavily on coastal monitoring data provided by coastal states through EPA's National Coastal Assessment to assess coastal condition by evaluating five indicators of condition—water quality, sediment quality, benthic community condition, coastal habitat loss, and fish tissue contaminants—in each region of the U.S. The overall condition of the nation's coastal waters was rated fair for the reporting period 2003 to 2006. The report is available at:

<http://water.epa.gov/type/oceb/assessmonitor/nccr/index.cfm>

National Water Quality Monitoring Council's 5th edition of "National Water Monitoring News" available on-line

The National Water Quality Monitoring Council released the fifth edition of their online newsletter *National Water Monitoring News* : http://acwi.gov/monitoring/newsletter/national_monitoring_news_spring2012-final.pdf. This newsletter provides a forum of communication among water practitioners across the Nation. In support of the national Council's mission, this newsletter is geared to foster partnerships and collaboration; advance water science; improve monitoring strategies; and enhance data integration, comparability, and reporting. Newsletter topics include their upcoming conference, diatoms and the US database, application of *insitu* sensors and updates on monitoring programs.

NOAA invites comment on Coral Status Review Report and Draft Management Report

As part of the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service's ongoing process to evaluate 82 species of coral from the Caribbean and Pacific for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), NOAA is [inviting](#) public review of two reports, a scientific [Status Review Report](#) and a [draft Management Report](#). The Status Review Report examines the biology of, threats to, and extinction risk of 82 coral species, while the Draft Management Report describes existing regulatory mechanisms and ongoing conservation efforts to manage and conserve the 82 coral species throughout the Caribbean and Indo-Pacific. As part of this review, NOAA plans to host two regional public listening sessions and two scientific workshops focused on corals this summer. The specific dates, times, and locations of the regional listening sessions and scientific workshops will be announced in May. To learn more and access relevant documents, visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2012/04/4_13_12corals_petition.html.

Register for Capitol Hill Ocean Week

[Registration](#) is open for Capitol Hill Ocean Week, *One Nation, Shaped by the Sea*, which will be held 5-8 June 2012, in Washington, DC. Capitol Hill Ocean Week will provide policymakers, business leaders, academics, and concerned citizens with insights into America's interaction with the sea and offer valuable guidance as to how our relationship with the ocean can help chart an economically and environmentally sustainable course for the nation's future. The [agenda](#) and other event information are available online at <http://www.nmsfocean.org/CHOW-2012-splash>.

World Ocean Council's "Sustainable Ocean Summit" – December 2012

The [World Ocean Council's](#) (WOC) second "Sustainable Ocean Summit" (SOS) will be held 3-5 December in Washington, DC, to further advance leadership and collaboration among the diverse ocean business community in addressing marine environment and sustainability challenges. The SOS is the only international, cross-sector ocean sustainability conference designed by and for the private sector. The conference will address priorities for cross-sector industry leadership and collaboration in ocean sustainability, including: ocean policy, regulations and governance; marine spatial planning; the role of industries in ocean and climate observations; biofouling, biosecurity and invasive species; fisheries and aquaculture interaction with other industries; cross-sector collaboration in responsible use of the Arctic; sound and marine life; port waste reception facilities and marine debris; marine mammal interactions; and the role of finance, insurance and legal sectors in ocean sustainability. Limited opportunities are available for speakers to address the themes above. Experts interested in being considered as speakers are encouraged to contact WOC's Executive Director Paul Holthus by phone at (808) 277-9008 or by email at paul.holthus@oceancouncil.org.

COMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

May

"[SECOORA Annual Meeting](#)", 7-9 May 2012, Miami, FL.
<http://secoora.org/news/2012annualmeeting>

"[METOCEAN Awareness Course](#)", 8-10 May 2012, MCS Kenny 15115 Park Row, 3rd Floor, Houston, TX.
<http://www.southouston.com/Events>

"[From Stem to Stern](#)", 15-17 May 2012, Clearwater Beach Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater, FL.
<http://www.flseagrant.org/boating/StemtoStern/>

June

"[The Coastal Society's 23rd International Conference](#)", 3-6 June 2012, Hyatt Regency, Miami, FL.
<http://thecoastalsociety.org/conference/tcs23/index.html>

"[Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2012](#)" 5-8 June, Washington, DC
<http://www.nmsfocean.org>

["The Gulf States Hurricane Conference"](http://conference.ext.msstate.edu/ema2012/2012_hurricane_conference.html), 6-8 June 2012, Biloxi, MS.
http://conference.ext.msstate.edu/ema2012/2012_hurricane_conference.html

["Gulf of Mexico Alliance 2012 All Hands Meeting"](http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e5iilc9sb1da6277&llr=thgzaleab), 18-21 June 2012, Omni Bayfront & Marine Towers, Corpus Christi, TX.
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e5iilc9sb1da6277&llr=thgzaleab>

["Risk and Response: Sea Level Rise Summit, the Future of Florida and the Coast"](http://www.ces.fau.edu/SLR2012) 21-22 June 2012, Marriott Boca Town Center, Boca Raton, FL.
<http://www.ces.fau.edu/SLR2012>

["National Marine Educators Conference"](http://www.coseealaska.net/nmeaconference2012/) Co-Hosted by AOOs, 24-28 June 2012, University of Alaska Anchorage Campus, Anchorage, AK.
<http://www.coseealaska.net/nmeaconference2012/>

July

["2012 ASLO Summer Meeting"](http://aslo.org/meetings/japan2012/) 8-13 July 2012, Lake Biwa, Otsu, Japan.
<http://aslo.org/meetings/japan2012/>

["EARTH Workshop"](http://www.mbari.org/earth/) 8-13 July 2012, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, North Carolina. Hosted by MBARI and SECOORA.
<http://www.mbari.org/earth/>

["12th International Coral Reef Symposium"](http://www.icrs2012.com), 9-12 July 2012, Cairns, Australia.
<http://www.icrs2012.com>

["Fourth International Conference on Climate Change"](http://on-climate.com/conference-2012/), The University of Washington, Seattle, WA
<http://on-climate.com/conference-2012/>

["5th Annual International Ecosystem Services Partnership \(ESP\) Conference"](http://www.espconference.org/ESP_Conference/78852/5/0/60) 31 July – 4 August 2012, Portland, OR.
http://www.espconference.org/ESP_Conference/78852/5/0/60

September

"GCOOS-RA Board of Directors Meeting" 26-27 September 2012, Corpus Christi, TX.

October

["Restore America's Estuaries 6th National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration"](http://www.estuaries.org/conference/) 20-24 October 2012, Tampa, FL.
<http://www.estuaries.org/conference/>

["OCEANS '12 MTS/IEEE"](http://www.oceans12mtsieehamptonroads.org/) 15-19 October 2012, Hampton Roads, VA.
<http://www.oceans12mtsieehamptonroads.org/>

November

"IOOS Summit 2012 - A new Decade of Integrated and Sustained Ocean Observing" 13-16 November 2012, Herndon, VA. WE NEED YOUR HELP - Please visit <http://www.iooc.us/summit/ioos-summit/> to see how you can help.



GCOOS is the Gulf of Mexico regional component of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). Our mission is to provide timely, reliable, and accurate information on the open and coastal ocean waters of the Gulf of Mexico to ensure a healthy, clean, productive ocean and resilient coastal zone. Your input, guidance, support, and membership are important to the development of the data, products and services that you need.

Contact GCOOS Executive Director, Ann Jochens (ajochens@tamu.edu), to become a GCOOS member and for more information.

We welcome your feedback. If you have an item that you would like to share with others, please email that item to Laura Caldwell (lcaldwell@geos.tamu.edu).