

2010 Ocean Sciences Meeting: WHOI Press Conferences

WHOI Press Conferences

All press conferences will be held in the Press Room F150, on the first level of the Oregon Convention Center.

Visual materials are available by contacting the WHOI media office, media@whoi.edu.

Next-generation ocean bots

Tuesday, 23 February at 10 a.m.

[Norman E. Farr](#), Senior Engineer, WHOI

Improvements to undersea robots are extending the capabilities of oceanographic research. A novel optical communications technology promises to banish cumbersome tethers that now harness robotic undersea vehicles to their support ships. Another powerful, innovative technology — a self-contained biochemistry lab able to identify microscopic animals from genetic material in seawater — has recently been configured to work at enormous depths, and has begun exploring the microdenizens of the abyss. Yet another technology development is bestowing on submerged robots a kind of independence they have never before known: the ability to make autonomous decisions, and so to handle unexpected situations.

Related documents:

[Norm Farr's presentation slides](#) (PDF)

[Press release on Norm Farr's work](#) (PDF)

Plastic oceans

Tuesday, 23 February, at 3 p.m.

[Kara Lavender Law](#), Sea Education Association, Woods Hole

It's well known that plastic pollution has formed "garbage patches" in some parts of the ocean, but just how bad the problem is remains uncertain. Now, an analysis of 22 years worth of data collected in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea by undergraduate students reveals some surprising findings. Also, new research on surface currents, ocean mixing, and the physical characteristics of plastic debris is helping scientists understand where the plastic debris comes from, what happens to it once it enters the oceans, and where else garbage patches might be found. Other new findings suggest that the problem might go deeper than previously realized.

Long-distance larvae

Thursday, 25 February at 9:00 a.m.

[Lauren Mullineaux](#), Senior Scientist, WHOI

[Dennis J. McGillicuddy, Jr.](#), Senior Scientist, WHOI

In a series of remarkable studies, researchers have observed a Pacific Ocean hydrothermal vent where the ecosystem was destroyed by an eruption and then the site was recolonized by new organisms. Most extraordinary are the distances that larvae apparently have traveled to claim new territory. These studies' findings are changing scientists' ideas about what controls species composition and diversity at vents. Besides observing the site of the eruption and recolonization, researchers have also measured and modeled ocean currents in the region to better understand how tiny larvae may have traveled vast distances from one vent to another.

Related documents:

[Lauren Mullineaux's presentation slides](#) (PDF)

[Lauren Mullineaux's poster](#) (PDF)

[Dennis McGillicuddy's presentation slides](#) (PDF)

[Dennis McGillicuddy's poster](#) (PDF)

Related Files

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[#187 McGillicuddy ppt slides](#)

[#187 McGillicuddy Ocean Sciences poster](#)

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