



An international workshop at sims

On Wednesday 22nd November, more than 50 Australian and International marine scientists converged on the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (sims) at Chowder Bay for a three-day national workshop on the use of marine tracking systems and hosted by the Australian Acoustic Tagging and Monitoring System (AATAMS).

AATAMS is pioneering the large-scale Australian use of an acoustic tagging and monitoring system that will allow a variety of sea life – from snapper to whales living in our coastal and continental shelf ecosystems. These will be tracked for over 20 years by receivers placed at one-kilometre intervals along the ocean floor.

Australian scientists are keen to play a role in the Ocean Tracking Network (OTN), a global initiative that will comprehensively monitor ocean conditions and marine life responses in five oceans and around all seven continents. The Ocean Tracking Network will monitor thousands of creatures worldwide, from polar bears in the Arctic to king penguins in the Antarctic.



Chief Scientist of AATAMS, Associate Professor Rob Harcourt of Macquarie University, says that state of the art technology has the potential to deliver a new era of marine science.

“Through the use of this new technology we can now collect data about our marine life - including protected and endangered creatures like the grey nurse shark and the great white shark – and share it instantaneously with each other across the country and around the world.

“Some of these creatures travel vast distances underwater each year, so before now it has been very difficult for scientists to discover much about their lives.”

An afternoon with the Gurus!

On November 14th, undergraduate, postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellows were given the opportunity to spend the afternoon learning from three leading experts in statistics and experimental design. The session was organised by two student representatives, Paul York (UTS) and Candace McBride (MQ), for the Australian Marine Science Association (NSW branch) and was open to both members and non-members of the association around NSW.

The statistics workshop was a great success with the line-up of brilliant speakers attracting 54 students and postdoctoral fellows. Three of the world's experts in the field offered advice on statistical analyses and experimental design. Professor Tony Underwood and Professor Gee Chapman, both from the Centre for Research on Ecological Impacts of Coastal Cities at the University of Sydney offered their knowledge on experimental design and analysis of environmental impacts. The third speaker, an international guest, Dr Bob Clarke, the founder of the statistical software package, Primer, provided insight into particular functions of this software. All participants were provided with light refreshments to conclude a highly valuable and informative afternoon!

Sydney Harbour provides R & R for some weary travellers

The Humpback mother and her calf were on their annual migration south to Antarctica for the summer, when they altered their course and ended up in Sydney Harbour on the morning of the 12th November. The humpback whales are travelling 12,000 km south after breeding in the warmer waters off the coast of Queensland during the winter months.

The sighting of the whales is a positive sign with regards to the environmental conditions in the harbour, which are generally believed to be on the improve over the past few years.

Special thanks go to Ronwyn North for providing us with the excellent photo, which was taken from Bradley's Head at around 9:30 am



Successful Spring Function

To all of you that attended our first ever community social function last month, I hope you agree when with me when I say we all had a wonderful evening. For those that couldn't make it on the evening, don't panic I'm sure this will be the first of many!

On Friday the 28th of October SIMS officially launched our new community membership program and to mark the occasion we held a late afternoon Spring Function. The event was held in the (yet to be refurbished) top floor of our laboratory building, which overlooks the beautiful Chowder Bay. Approximately 85 guests made the most of the beautiful views, while enjoying light refreshments and hearing of the progress of the institute over the last few months. Prof Frank Talbot and Prof David Booth provided short talks on the institute and some of the projects that are taking place, this combined with a number of short tours of our aquarium facilities provided guests with a good overview of SIMS.

Thanks go to all those that volunteered their time and expertise to ensure that our first event was a successful one and I would like to especially thank Robyn Stutchbury and Barry Shaw for their efforts in pulling the event together. Another highlight of the evening was the assistance provided by our marine scientists and postgraduate researchers, too numerous to individually name, but without their assistance we would not have been able to provide such a well organised and catered event. All of these people happily volunteered their time to make the evening a success, for no other reason apart from their wish to have the institute succeed.

Through our community network SIMS can offer different degrees of commitment and as we are a "Deductible Gift Recipient" all membership contributions are tax deductible. If you would like further information on the SIMS community membership program you may contact our office by phone or email, drop in and have a chat with Tori & Paul or visit our website..

Contact Us

Phone: (02) 9969 2664

Email: paul.hallam@sims.org.au or tori.pollard@sims.org.au

Just drop by: Building 22 Chowder Bay Road, Mosman, NSW, 2088

Warm welcome to new staff member

The management and staff of SIMS would like to welcome Victoria (Tori) Pollard to our small team.



Among her many duties, Tori will keep current and future members up to date on events at the institute and will be quite happy to answer any queries you may have.

Tori can be found in our office on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 10 am and 1 pm.

Dates to remember

Friday 7th December
10am - 11:30am

Come along for a tour of our research aquarium and an update from one of our marine scientists on the work being carried out at the institute and around Sydney.

Numbers are limited, so please contact us if you wish to attend.

Sunday 2nd March 2008
10am - 5pm

To coincide with Harbour Week, SIMS in conjunction with the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and other Chowder Bay tenants will be holding a public Open Day. Come along and see our scientists in action, this will be a fun and educational day for all with public seminars, displays and activities for all ages.