

CORAL REEF NEWS
Coral Reef Conservation Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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NOAA Coral Reef News is a monthly e-newsletter established to provide current information on the activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and other relevant NOAA programs. The CRCP supports effective management and sound science to preserve, sustain and restore valuable coral reef ecosystems. Please share this newsletter with your colleagues and constituents. Back issues are available at <http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov>.

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OF SPECIAL NOTE

The Preliminary Report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, released on April 21, 2004, presents the Commission's initial findings and recommendations for a new, coordinated, and comprehensive national ocean policy. Chapter twenty-one - *Preserving Coral Reefs and Other Coral Communities* – includes four recommendations on coral issues. Chapter twenty-one can be found on pages 261-267 of the report, which is available on-line at: http://www.oceancommission.gov/documents/p_relimreport/. For future issues, send potential items of Special Note (new discoveries, key events, notable facts, etc.) to Lindsey.C.Williams@noaa.gov.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NOAA Fisheries Scientist Receives Presidential Award. Dr. Andy Bruckner, of the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, was recently awarded the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. Specifically, Andy was recognized "for international and domestic leadership as a world-renowned authority in the conservation of coral reef ecosystems, and excellence as an underwater photographer." These awards are intended to recognize scientists and engineers who, early in their careers, show exceptional potential for leadership at the frontiers of scientific knowledge and to foster innovative and far-reaching developments in science and technology. Read more on-line at: <http://www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/newsroom/pr.cfm?ni=91>.

International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Releases First Edition of Newsletter. ICRI recently released the first edition of their new quarterly newsletter. The first edition includes

follow-up on the second International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS 2) as well as news and upcoming events. Each issue will be available online in HTML and PDF format at: <http://www.icriforum.org>. Contact the ICRI News Editorial Team (newsletter@icriforum.org) with comments, suggestions for topics and news for the next edition, to be published just prior to the International Coral Reef Symposium in late June 2004.

New NOAA Research Publication on Coral Bleaching Available. The March 2004 NOAA Research publication "The Effects of Combined Sea Temperature, Light, and Carbon Dioxide on Coral Bleaching, Settlement and Growth" is available as a PDF on-line at: <http://www.coral.noaa.gov/cmrc/think-tank>.

UPDATES

New Exhibit Features Oldest Known Living Coral. A permanent exhibit featuring the oldest known living coral, located in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, is now on display at the Fossil Reef State Park on Windley Key. Called the "Bicentennial Coral," this 415-year-old "Redwood of the Sea" is a mountainous star coral (*Montastrea annularis*). On display is a core sample of the specimen and a full-length x-radiograph that reveals its annual growth bands. A similar exhibit is planned for the Nancy Foster Center in Key West. <http://floridakeys.noaa.gov/>.

New Publication Provides Technical Advice for Establishing Networks of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas for Biodiversity Protection. An international science group has concluded that well managed Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs), that afford a

high degree of resource protection, can aid the recovery of fisheries and habitats from over exploitation and environmental stress, and can help countries achieve the goal of sustainable use of living marine resources. The document succinctly provides key technical advice on a variety of issues involved in the successful establishment and management of MCPAs. Reference: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. 2004. Technical advice on the establishment and management of a national system of marine and coastal protected areas. *SCBD (CBD Technical Series No. 13)*. 40 p. *A pdf of the publication is available at: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/publications/cbd-ts-13.pdf>.*

NOAA Labs Spawn Invasive Lionfish to Predict Propagation. Will the recent invasive species, lionfish, *Pterois volitans*, reproduce and propagate in their new habitat, or will they die out, with little or no ecological consequence? Lionfish, identified in 2002 by the NOAA Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research (CCFHR) as an invader from the Indo-Pacific, have spawned in captivity for the first time in CCFHR labs. This now answers the question of whether the lionfish invasion is simply a flash-in-the pan, or whether it might rapidly propagate and have serious ecological consequences to Western North Atlantic ecosystems. Research on the reproductive biology and vital rates of lionfish will result in a predictive model that forecasts the propagation potential of this invasive species in its new environment. Visit <http://coastalscience.noaa.gov/about/ccfhr.html> to learn more about the Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research.

Pacific Coral Reef and Coastal Economic Valuation Studies. Technical assistance on the economic valuation of local coral and coastal resources is being provided to Guam

and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In late March and early April 2004, an environmental economist spent one week each in CNMI and Guam, meeting with local coral and coastal managers, and stakeholders including fishermen, cultural representatives, and tourism and other coastal industries. The outcome of the meetings will be locally-prioritized Terms of Reference and Requests for Proposals that the local government agencies will use to select experts to perform coral and coastal economic valuation studies. The studies will be supported by the NOAA Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) Coastal Programs Division and funded cooperatively by the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program, NOAA Pacific Services Center, CNMI and Guam. This work is part of a larger initiative to develop economic values for local coral reef and coastal resources in the U.S. Flag Islands in the Pacific and Caribbean.

New Satellite Sea Surface Temperature Dataset Available. An improved climate data record for Sea Surface Temperature (SST) is now available. These new Pathfinder SST data have a resolution of 4 km globally, the highest possible global resolution for Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer (AVHRR) data and a significant improvement over previous Pathfinder and NOAA operational SST data. Improved land masking and processing systems result in greatly improved coastal coverage. Daily, 5-day, weekly, 8-day, monthly, and annual SST summaries and climatologies, as well as data describing the quality and variability of the SST measurements, are available for 1985-2001 from <http://www.nodc.noaa.gov/sog>. An interim product is also available for 2002 and beyond. The NOAA National Oceanographic Data Center, NOAA Coral Reef Watch, and the University of Miami's Rosentiel School of

Marine and Atmospheric Science released these improved data records.

CITES Animals Committee Considers Fossil Coral Definition. At the 20th meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Animals Committee, the Coral Trade Working Group (WG) was requested to 1) consider approaches suggested by Parties and NGOs to define and distinguish fossilized corals in trade and 2) recommend a practical means of distinguishing fossilized corals from non-fossilized corals in international trade. Currently all stony corals (live and dead), including live rock and reef substrate are listed in Appendix II, which requires that exports are accompanied by permits that indicate the corals were legally acquired and that their trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species or its role in the ecosystem. The WG had not come to consensus during previous meetings, mainly because the existing proposal considered live rock as being permanently buried by coralline algae, and hence trade in live rock would no longer be regulated by CITES. The WG adopted an alternative approach that defines fossils as all categories of coral rock, except live rock, as defined in Res. Conf. 11.10 (Rev. CoP12). As defined, fossils that are no longer subject to the provisions of the Convention include dry coral rock with no readily recognizable corallite structures as well as “reef substrate”, which includes small pieces of reef rock with attached invertebrates transported in water, while live rock is still under CITES control. <http://www.cites.org/eng/cttee/AC/index.shtml>.

Proceedings from Caribbean Fisheries Workshop Available. A report on the proceedings of the Fall 2002 “Caribbean

Regional Workshop on Coral Reef Fisheries Management: Collaboration on Successful Management, Enforcement and Education Methods” is now available. Visit <http://seagrant.uprm.edu/publications.html> to download a copy.

Coral Reef Investigator Wins Prestigious Aldo Leopold Leadership Award. Dr. Bob Richmond is one of twenty scientists recently selected as a 2004 Aldo Leopold Leadership Fellow. Selected through a competitive application process, the goal is to improve the flow of accurate, credible scientific information to policy makers, the media and the public. By training outstanding academic environmental scientists to be better communicators of complex scientific information, the fellowship program provides scientists with intensive communications and leadership training to help them communicate scientific information effectively to non-scientific audiences. <http://www.leopoldleadership.org>.

CORAL REEFS IN THE NEWS

Saipan Tribune Article on Coral Reef Valuation Studies in CNMI. Read the April 2, 2004 article “Coral Reefs Valuable Asset in Pacific” from the Saipan Tribune (<http://www.saipantribune.com>) at <http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2004/April/04-02-27.htm>.

Honolulu – Star Bulletin Article on Coral Reef Expert. Read the March 23, 2004 article on Dr. Bob Richmond, “World expert on coral reefs joins UH staff.” at <http://starbulletin.com/2004/03/23/news/story9.html>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

If you have events you would like listed in future newsletters please send them to Lindsey.C.Williams@noaa.gov.

June 2004

5: **World Environment Day** <http://www.unep.org/wed/2004/>.

8: **World Ocean Day**. <http://www.worldocean.org/>.

9 – 10: **Capitol Hill Oceans Week 2004**. Washington, DC. <http://www.nmsfocean.org>.

21 – 25: **23rd Annual Pacific Islands Environment Conference**. Saipan, CNMI. Pacific Rim Concepts.

28 – July 2: **10th International Coral Reef Symposium**. Okinawa, Japan.

<http://www.plando.co.jp/icrs2004>.

July 2004

11 – 13: **Blue Vision Conference**. Washington, DC. <http://www.bluevizmeet.com>.

11 – 14: **Watershed 2004 Conference**. Dearborn, Michigan.

<http://www.wef.org/conferences/watershed04.jhtml>.

18 – 22: **National Marine Educators Association – Annual Meeting**. Tampa Bay, Florida.

http://www.floridamarine.org/education/category_main.asp?id=2088.

21 – 23: **Climate Change and Aquatic Systems – Past, Present and Future**. University of Plymouth, U.K. <http://www.biology.plymouth.ac.uk/climate/climate.htm>.

30 – August 2: **Society for Conservation Biology, 18th Annual Meeting**. New York, NY.

<http://cerc.columbia.edu/scb2004/>

September 2004

12 – 15: **Restore America's Estuaries' 2nd National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration**. Seattle, WA. <http://www.estuaries.org>.

14 – 15: **12th U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting**. Miami, Florida. <http://www.coralreef.gov>.

19 – 23: **13th International Conference of Aquatic Invasive Species**. Ennis, County Clare, Ireland. <http://www.aquatic-invasive-species-conference.org>.

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Questions, comments?

Contact Lindsey.C.Williams@noaa.gov, NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program.

Access to NOAA's coral reef data and information is provided through NOAA's Coral Reef Information System at <http://www.coris.noaa.gov>. Current news on NOAA's coral reef activities can be found on the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Web site, <http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov>.

