

# Susan Hinton

## ...NOAA's Mother Hen

Susan Hinton has an official title: Fisheries Biologist, of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Point Adams Biological Field Station. However, she also carries an unofficial title: NOAA'S Mother Hen. Susan—warm, funny, down-to-earth—“takes care of things.”

*Susan—warm, funny, down-to-earth—  
“takes care of things.”*

Sitting calmly and confidently amid the scientific hubbub around her, she laughs about a recent, interesting change she has noticed. “I’ve been here quite awhile. With about 22 years of experience with NOAA and the hiring of a few younger biologists, I’ve transitioned from being one of the ‘younger ones’ to being one of the old-timers.” ⇨



"However, I really enjoy the role of drawing on my experience to help others find ways to complete their scientific mission in the most accurate and efficient way possible. This can include everything from assisting senior managers in finding answers that can lead to preservation of endangered species to gently guiding college students with their research, which enables them to graduate and hopefully continue to contribute in any scientific community they choose."

It only takes a short conversation with Susan to understand her priorities. Her family comes first, and caring is an ever-present aspect of her life. After her son Samuel was born, she quickly rearranged her professional life to accommodate being a mom.

*"...things didn't seem quite right until I returned to the coast."*

type of pencil, every tiny detail you can imagine. I also make sure everyone has a way home at the conclusion of the cruises, no matter what port we end in. That makes me particularly popular at times. However, I do get teased a bit by my colleagues and ship's crew about being 'the girl' at every port of call."

"I used to go to sea, but I haven't gone since my son was born. I traded all the time at sea for doing all the logistical work. If we have an ocean research cruise that goes out for one to two weeks, I get everything ready so they will have what they need while at sea. From the big trawl nets right down to zipties and the Chief Scientist's favorite



*Susan donates her hair to help children suffering from long-term medical hair loss*

*"...I've seen it when conditions are downright scary."*

It appears that being a mother hen comes naturally. Susan donates cuttings of her beautiful, long hair to "Locks of Love," a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children suffering from long-term medical hair loss. She also enjoys more time with her mother, who has moved nearby. "My whole family gets along, and having her nearby has had the added bonus of our seeing each other much more often." Susan's dog, Glacier, a yellow Labrador Retriever, alternately serves as an unofficial NOAA lab assistant or as a companion for her mother when Susan is in the field. ⇨