

eBulletin

A monthly update for the community

HARBOR BRANCH

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Upcoming Events

November, 2016

Wed Nov 30

Ocean Science Lecture Series - SPECIAL EVENT

FAU Harbor Branch scientists present on research funded by proceeds from Harbor Branch's Specialty License Plate Program. Johnson Education Center Auditorium, 7pm. Free admission.

Wed Dec 7

Ocean Science Lecture Series

Indigenous Knowledge and Modern Science - Should We Connect? Can We Connect?

presented by Jon Waterhouse, Oregon Health and Science University. Johnson Education Center Auditorium, 7pm. Free admission.

GRAND REOPENING

The Ocean Discovery Visitor's Center will reopen to the public on **January, 3 2017**.

Mission: Ocean Discovery public outreach programming, including Immersion Tours, Lectures and Marine Science Fridays will resume in January.

HAPPY *Thanksgiving*

HARBOR BRANCH

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Scientists Researching Ways to Create Biosynthetic Version of Cancer-Fighting Sponge Compound

[Click here](#) for more info.

If you enjoy our programs at FAU Harbor Branch, [please consider making a donation.](#)

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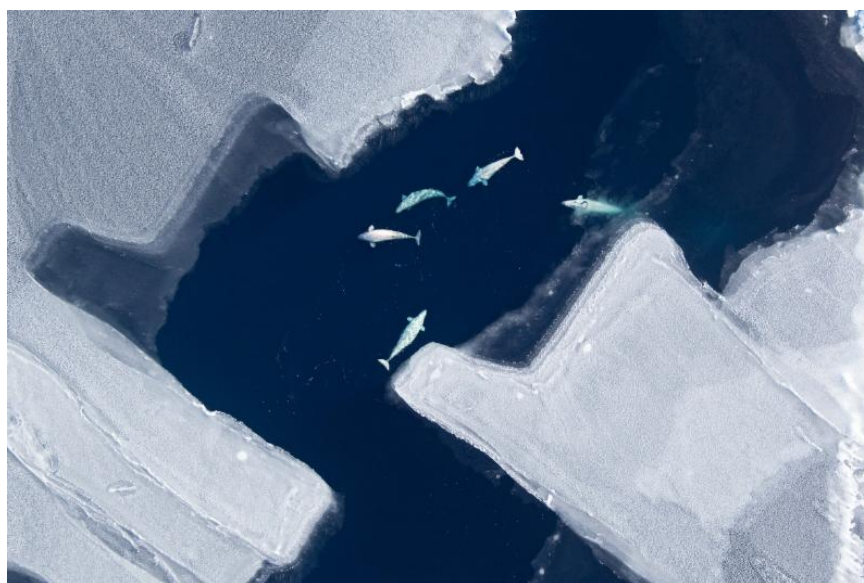


In the 1990s, scientists at FAU Harbor Branch isolated the compound, lasonolide A, from a marine sponge and found that it was extremely active against cancer cells including lung cancer, leukemia and pancreatic cancer. Later work conducted at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) showed that lasonolide A was also potently active against melanoma and glioblastoma. Lasonolide A kills cancer cells in a unique way that may provide new opportunities for treating cancer. One challenge to clinical development of lasonolide is how to produce large quantities of the compound when the supply of the sponge it is derived from is limited. The NCI recently awarded a grant that will allow researchers at FAU Harbor Branch to recreate lasonolide A in a laboratory flask using the genes that nature uses to make the compound.

FAU Harbor Branch assistant research professor Guojun Wang, Ph.D., is the principal investigator on the project along with research professor and co-investigator Shirley Pomponi, Ph.D. The pair were recently awarded a multi-year grant of more than \$380,000 from NCI to identify which genes nature uses to make lasonolide A and then to use these genes to produce the material in the laboratory. If successful, this work will provide the foundation for developing a sustainable method to supply a "biosynthetic" form of the compound for use in clinical trials and future treatments in different types of cancer.

[Click here](#) to read more.

O'Corry-Crowe Co-authors Study on Impacts of Climate Change and Whale Migration



FAU Harbor Branch Research Professor Dr. Greg O'Corry-Crowe, along with a team of scientists working in collaboration with Native hunters in Alaska and Canada, have just published results of a study in the Royal Society Biology Letters titled "Genetic Profiling Links Changing Sea Ice to Shifting Beluga Whale Migration Patterns." The research assesses the relationship between changing sea ice and beluga whale migration, as well as summer residency patterns of a number of populations over two decades of dramatic sea ice changes in the Pacific Arctic. The researchers found that beluga whales, often known as the white whale (*Delphinapterus leucas*), exhibited a tremendous ability to deal with widely varying sea ice conditions from one year to the next over a 20-year time frame in their return to traditional summering grounds each year.

[Click here](#) to read more.

License Plate Research to be Featured During Lecture Series Event



Some of the research projects that are funded through proceeds from Harbor Branch's specialty license plate program, granted through the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute Foundation, will be featured in November during a special Ocean Science Lecture Series event.

Five researchers will present their projects in 15 minute mini-sessions on November 30 at 7 p.m. in the Johnson Education Center Auditorium. Admission is free.

Laurent Chérubin, Ph.D.

Ventilation Rates of the Indian River Lagoon through its Inlets

Brian Lapointe, Ph.D.

Ecology and Biochemistry of Harmful Algal Blooms

Amy Wright, Ph.D.

Analysis of Sediments in the IRL for Herbicides

Elizabeth Titcomb

Photo-identification - Dolphin Census and Spatiotemporal Trends

Joshua Voss, Ph.D.

Project CLOUD

Research Shows Insight Into Dolphin Disease



FAU Harbor Branch Research Professor Dr. Peter McCarthy and Epidemiologist Adam Schaefer, MPH, are co-authors on a paper that was recently published in the Center for Disease Control's Journal of Emerging Infectious Diseases. The study found that lesions on dolphins in the Indian River Lagoon were actually caused by a fungus closely related to one commonly found in Brazil, *Paracoccidioides brasiliensis*, and not the pathogen that causes similar lesions in humans known as *Lacazia loboi*, which scientists initially believed was the culprit. These findings represent a significant step forward in understanding this disease and why it is so prevalent in the IRL. [Click here to view the full paper.](#)