A Return to Sea: Students Embark on Tall Ship Research Expedition

WOODS HOLE, MASS. — The college students listed below recently arrived aboard the SSV Corwith Cramer to spend the next five weeks at sea studying the marine ecosystem of coastal and near-coastal East Coast waters and the western Sargasso Sea. They are enrolled in Marine Biodiversity & Conservation, a SEA Semester study abroad program offered by Sea Education Association (SEA), and their research voyage will take them from St. Petersburg, Florida to Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

After a rigorous application process, this class of 24 upper-level science students arrived on March 21st for three weeks of initial coursework at Sea Education Association’s campus in Woods Hole. They learned practical shipboard skills, gained essential knowledge about marine ecology, governance and conservation while honing practical skills.

While on campus, the students lived in specially modified cottages and observed strict health and testing protocols to achieve a Covid-free “bubble” prior to travelling safely to St. Petersburg, Florida by private motorcoach.

In Florida they boarded the SSV Corwith Cramer, SEA’s state-of-the-art 134-foot brigantine, on April 13. The ship will serve as their home, classroom, and laboratory for more than five weeks. All students become full working members of the ship’s crew, sharing responsibilities for standing watch, processing oceanographic samples, navigating by the stars, and participating in round-the-clock operations. Perhaps most importantly, students will learn to challenge themselves and will cultivate new skills in leadership, teamwork, and field research.

During their voyage, the students will conduct first-hand exploration of this important coastal and near-coastal environment and western Sargasso Sea. In addition to measuring biodiversity for their research projects, students will collect archive samples for the global marine biodiversity assessment effort.

While there are no port stops on the voyage, research points of interest planned along the way include the Florida Keys, the Gulf Stream, Chesapeake Bay, Hudson Canyon, Northeast Canyons and Seamounts National Marine Monument, and Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

The ship arrives back in Woods Hole on May 20th, for two additional weeks on the SEA campus. This second shore component culminates with the students presenting their research findings at SEA’s Large Marine Ecosystem Symposium, a capstone experience.

The Marine Biodiversity & Conservation program will next be offered in Spring 2022 and welcomes undergraduate students of all majors with an interest in the oceans

- Track the voyage on the SEA Semester blog through May 20th.
- Download photos and access more information about SEA Semester through our online press kit.

About Sea Education Association/SEA Semester® Sea Education Association (SEA) is an internationally recognized leader in undergraduate ocean education. For 50 years and more than one million nautical miles sailed, SEA has educated students about the world’s oceans through its Boston University accredited study abroad program, SEA Semester. SEA/SEA Semester is based on Cape Cod in the oceanographic research community of Woods Hole, Massachusetts and has two research vessels: the SSV Corwith Cramer, operating in the Atlantic Ocean, and the SSV Robert C. Seamans, operating in the Pacific.

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Participating Students

Martha Stevens, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Elisabeth Landgren, Macalester College
Daviana Berkowitz-Sklar, Yale University
Kira Fontana, American University
Elena Kaminskaia, Whitman College
Ava Kiss, Cornell University
Sydney Marie Jones, Carleton College
Cam Ragland, Union College, NY
Kayla Sklar, Northeastern University
Ryan O'Hara, University of Arizona
Lucy Mantlick, Mount Holyoke College
Kass Wojcik, Bryn Mawr College
Laurens Vermeulen, University of Central Florida
Leanna Cherrette, Boston University
Anna Winkler, University of New England
Isabelle Stewart, Gettysburg College
Arielle Umansky, Colorado College
Lydia Shaw, Skidmore College
Natalie Cross, Stanford University
Emma Iverson, Macalester College
Julia Wolf, Mount Holyoke College
Ariana Patterson, Northeastern University
Fiona Swope, Colorado College
Alex Albrecht, Claremont McKenna College