

Young Professional Spotlight

Young Professional members of AIFRB represent the next generation of leaders in fisheries science and management. Through *Briefs* and our social media platforms we will be highlighting our Young Professionals as a way to introduce them to the full membership and create opportunities for collaborations. AIFRB's Young Professional Representative, Connor Capizzano (connor.capizzano001@umb.edu), will be showcasing a new Young Professional each month through a series of biographical interviews. This month's Young Professional Spotlight features **Dr. Lynn Waterhouse, Central States Region and Research Biologist** at the **Shedd Aquarium's Daniel P. Haerther Center for Conservation and Research in Chicago, IL.**

Dr. Lynn Waterhouse – Central States Region



What is your current position, with what company/organization, and what is the focus of your research/work?

I work as a Research Biologist in the Daniel P. Haerther Center for Conservation and Research at the John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, IL. The focus of my research is on mesopredators (grouper and snappers) in The Bahamas.

Where did you receive your education, and what helped pave your way to your current position?

I defended my PhD in December 2018 at Scripps Institution of Oceanography with Dr. Brice X. Semmens as my major advisor. Part of my thesis focused on Nassau grouper work in the Cayman Islands with REEF (Reef Environmental Education Foundation) and the Cayman Islands Department of Environment. Brice really emphasizes the importance of communication to the members of his lab. Collectively the lab spends a lot of time helping each other to improve any talks we give – I think this really helped me during my interview. I also have a Master's degree in Statistics from

Pennsylvania State University, which I think helps me emphasize my quantitative skills.

How does your work apply to, or influence, fishery management (e.g., stock assessments, sportfishing, commercial regulations, habitat protection, etc.)?

For my current work I will be working towards updating the stock assessment of Nassau Grouper in The Bahamas. Additionally, I plan to work with fishermen and key stakeholder in The Bahamas to collect more data on other commercially important groupers and snappers in order to hopefully complete a stock assessment for them.

What is your professional outlook for fisheries management? In other words, what will the future of fisheries management look like 10-20 years from now. What are we doing correctly, what needs to be improved (e.g., in research, policy, education)?

I hope the demography of fisheries management continues to diversify. As a student, I heard stories of how in just the generation prior to me, some women were the only female in their class. I think we have made some strides with increasing representation from under-represented minorities but there is still a long way to go. It's a bit of a hard sell for me to make sometimes, because it is a difficult career, with limited jobs, and many other careers make a lot more money, but I think we need to continue to work towards increasing

the inclusivity and diversity within our profession. By including more people from different backgrounds, we only increase the creative and problem-solving capacity of our profession. Awards, like the Clark Hubb Research Assistance Award, are fantastic in that they can help to increase the accessibility of our field.

What is the importance of young fishery professionals today and for the future of fishery management?

When I think about fisheries management I think about sustainability. Sustainability of the fishery, for the species, and for the role fisheries scientists play in the larger world of all things fish-related. I started as a graduate student in 2007, and even since that time I have seen a large shift towards emphasizing communication of our work with all sorts of different people. I think keeping that dialogue between fisheries professionals and other parties in fisheries is really important for the future of fisheries management.

What drew you to AIFRB, and what does AIFRB do for you and what can it do for other young professionals in this field?

I first heard about AIFRB from another member of the Semmens lab, Lyall Bellquist. I attended some of the Southern California district meetings, where they have a guest speaker and dinner. It was a great opportunity for someone new to the West Coast to learn more about the important fisheries on the West Coast and also hear from many of the wonderful labs doing work in that region. I was fortunate enough to win the Clark Hubb Research Assistance Award which helped me attend American Fisheries Society (AFS) annual meeting one year. AIFRB has also been a supporter of the “Monsters of ...” events at 3 past AFS meetings. These events are fundraisers for future student travel award for the Marine Fisheries Section and Estuaries Section of AFS (and in 2017, the Fish Habitat Section). AIFRB offers a great network of fisheries scientists at every career stage. For students, is a great way to look for future collaborators or employment opportunities. AIFRB also provides multiple stages to present your work or be recognized for it.

Please contact Lynn (waterhlz@gmail.com) to continue the conversation!