

To close out Women's History Month, we're highlighting the dynamic, capable women at CFF who lead our research! These women help us carry out our mission of supporting sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and agricultural industries! Clockwise from top left: Luisa Garcia, Sarah Whitman, Dr. Liese Siemann, Natalie Jennings, Quinn McWatters, Tasha O'Hara, and Allison Maikath.



Luisa Garcia received a bachelor's degree in Biology with concentration in Marine biology in 2009 from Universidad del Valle, Colombia. After graduating, she worked for four years as an Assistant Researcher in the Instituto de Investigaciones Marinas y Costeras – INVEMAR (Colombia). In this position she participated in research trips and specialized in fisheries stock assessments and the reproductive biology of the main commercially harvested shrimp species (*Litopenaeus occidentalis*, *Solenocera agassizi*, and *Farfantepenaeus brevirotris*) in the Colombian Pacific. Luisa completed a master's degree in Marine Affairs at University of Rhode Island in 2016. At CFF, Luisa leads a seasonal bycatch study researching changes in the distribution of bycatch species in the scallop fishery on Georges Bank. Luisa is interested in the distribution and prevalence of diseases in scallop and other important species, as well as lobster damage caused by different dredge configurations.

Natalie Jennings currently leads CFF's surfclam research projects. Natalie received her bachelor's degree in Marine Biology in 2011 from UNC Wilmington. She then graduated a master's program at UMass Dartmouth's SMAST in 2015 in Living Marine Resource Management specializing in fishing gear

technology. Her project focused on reducing bycatch in trawl nets used in the groundfish fishery. She then worked for North Carolina's state fisheries department first as an observer, then on their gillnet sampling and tagging program. Her primary interests lie in fishing gear and its interactions with living organisms and their associated ecosystems.

Sarah Whitman leads the CFF sea scallop enhancement project. She received a Bachelor's degree in Biology with a concentration in Marine Biology in 2015 from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She then went on to receive her Master's degree in Conservation Medicine in 2017 from the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, and is currently working towards her PhD. While pursuing her degrees she worked as an intern for multiple organizations, including two internships with the New England Aquarium conducting rehabilitation of sea turtles. She has also worked on multiple ecological research projects as both an undergraduate and graduate student on an array of different topics, including North Atlantic right whale fecundity and eyeshine in sea scallops. Prior to working at CFF she worked as a research assistant in the Marine Fisheries Field Research Group at SMAST conducting sea scallop research and assisting with their drop camera survey.

Allison Maikath received a bachelor of science in studio art and a certificate in urban architecture from University of Oregon. Allison started her career serving in the Peace Corps in West Africa where she learned agro-forestry, mud stove construction and food preservation techniques. Later, she planted olive and walnut trees in Greece; harvested oysters in French Polynesia; mustered cattle on horseback in Australia; worked with Burmese refugees in Thailand to improve water diversion; implemented permaculture practices in Panama; and taught students hoop house construction in Costa Rica. Drawing on her unparalleled experience, Allison's focus at CFF is conducting research to support local, sustainable foodsheds.

Dr. Liese Siemann is a Senior Biologist at CFF. Her research focuses on using innovative methods to design bycatch reduction technologies, model animal-fishing gear interactions, and assess marine animal populations. Previously, she worked at the Marine Biological Laboratory studying animal camouflage using novel image analysis and statistical methods and raising multiple species of cuttlefish and octopus. She later took on an administrator role at the Woods Hole Science and Technology Education Partnership. Liese received a BA in Biology from Cornell University and a PhD in Biological Oceanography from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology/Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Joint Program. Her dissertation focused on modelling the molecular population genetics of long-finned pilot whales. She has taught college courses on marine resource management and cetacean biology.

Tasha O'Hara currently leads the HabCam v3 program, which conducts our annual RSA-funded sea scallop assessment survey. She completed her Masters degree in Coastal and Marine Management in 2019 as a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Akureyri in Iceland, focusing on the impact of depth on green sea urchin growth, roe quality, and reproductive cycle in Iceland. Prior to graduate school, she worked in wind and solar consulting and aquaculture in Block Island and later joined the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program in 2012, working as an observer on high volume herring, small mesh, and groundfish vessels. After transitioning to the Ecosystems Surveys Branch at the NEFSC in Woods Hole, she worked as a biological technician, providing at-sea leadership for groundfish, scallop, shrimp, and cooperative industry surveys, and focused on supporting the integration of the HabCam v4. She has since completed surveys in Iceland and Alaska.

Quinn McWatters started with CFF in February 2021, making her the most recent addition to the CFF staff as our Research Coordinator. She earned a BS in Environmental Science with a focus in ecological restoration and a BA in International Studies from Humboldt State University and is currently pursuing an MBA in Environmental Sustainability at Wilmington University. Additionally, she has a professional certification in GIS from University of California San Diego and a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt certification

from University of Delaware. Quinn worked for the State of Delaware as a wastewater, groundwater and industrial stormwater inspector, and prior to that she was an Environmental Technology Analyst for a multinational defense contractor, where she primarily focused on waste to energy and energy efficiency projects for DoD. She also has an array of grant experience, predominately in community development programs, and has worked most closely with native peoples in Hawaii, Alaska and the Sioux Nation.