

Shifting Boundaries New Horizons

Sitka WhaleFest celebrates marine life through science, art, culture, and adventure. Attendees of all ages and backgrounds leave WhaleFest with a deeper connection to the ocean.

The core of Sitka WhaleFest is the three-day Science Symposium, where scientists and knowledge-bearers share the latest research and learning about marine life. This symposium is for everyone: speakers highlight the relevance and accessibility of their knowledge to people from all walks of life. Deepen your WhaleFest experience by participating in hands-on workshops, appreciating the work of artists and performers, exploring Sitka Sound, and engaging with Sitka's vibrant community. This annual Sitka tradition is not to be missed!

This year we follow how life is on the move in a dynamic ocean. Together we will learn how animals are redrawing the maps of their historical ranges, and how these distribution shifts are reshaping our ties to the land and water.

Artwork by Crystal Worl

Crystal Kaakeeyáa Rose
Demientieff Worl is Athabascan,
Filipino, and Tlingit from Raven moiety,
Sockeye Clan, from the Raven House.
She is Deg Hit'an Athabascan from Fairbanks, AK.

Crystal is a talented multidisciplinary artist based in Juneau, Alaska. She draws inspiration from her cultural roots and the natural world around her. Worl's artwork is diverse, ranging from Tlingit Northwest Coast design to contemporary multimedia pieces. Her work often explores

themes of identity, connection to land, and the interplay between traditional and modern ways of life. In addition to creating art, Worl is also an advocate for Indigenous rights and works to promote cultural awareness and understanding through her art. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world and she continues to be a prominent voice in the Indigenous art community.

Today Crystal lives in Juneau, Alaska, working as a co-owner and co-designer of Trickster Company with her brother Rico Worl.

We are on Lingít Aaní – Lingít land. The Lingít people have been Indigenous to these lands and waters for over 10,000 years. Gunalchéesh to the Lingít people for their stewardship of Lingít Aaní since time immemorial and today.

SOCIAL EVENTS



Tongass to Table Wednesday 5:00 to 7:00 pm Sitka Sound Science Center Register online \$50



Snorkel & Sauna Thursday 9:00 to 11:00 am Sitka Sound Science Center Register online \$50



Student Art Show Thursday 5:30 pm through Sunday 4:00pm Harrigan Centennial Hall Free



A short film by Kimberly Pikok and Lloyd Pikok Jr. Thursday 7:00 pm Doors open 6:30 pm Harrigan Centennial Hall Free



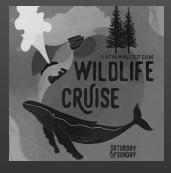
Scientific Illustration Friday & Saturday 9:00 to 11:30 am Register online \$80



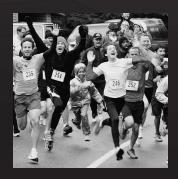
Market & Cafe Friday & Saturday 10:00 am to 4:30 pm Sunday 11:00 am to 3:00 pm Harrigan Centennial Hall



Maritime Grind Friday 7:30 to 9:00 pm Harrigan Centennial Hall Tickets at the door \$5



Wildlife Cruise Saturday and Sunday 8:30 am to 11:30 am Crescent Harbor Register online \$65



Fun Run & Walk Saturday 9:00 to 10:00 am Whale Park Register online \$5-\$25



Behind the Scenes of Science Saturday 9:00 to 11:00 am Sitka Sound Science



Marine Trivia Night Saturday 7:00 to 9:00 pm Harrigan Centennial Hall Register online \$15



Marine Mammal Necropsy Sunday 8:30 to 11:30 am University of Alaska Register online \$50

Friday | Nov 1

12:45PM-1:00PM
Welcome and Opening Remarks

1:00PM-1:45PM

Navigating Change: From Microscopic Plankton to Majestic North Pacific Right Whales

Join Deana Crouser as she shares her journey exploring Alaska's large marine ecosystems. She'll discuss her research on how temperature affects zooplankton size and introduce us to fascinating friends she's met along the way. Discover how commercially important fish are responding to warming waters, learn about the inspiring recovery of the endangered short-tailed albatross, and marvel at the migratory habits of the critically endangered North Pacific right whale.

2:00PM-2:45PM

How Alaska's Fisheries (and Science!) are Keeping Pace with a Changing Climate

Explore how climate change is affecting Alaska's oceans and fisheries. Attendees will learn about the intersection of science and sustainable management, and how collaboration among hundreds of researchers each year provides real-time science in a rapidly changing environment. Elizabeth will explore recent case studies of extreme climate events,

impacts to fish and crab, and lessons learned for scientists and fisheries managers. Elizabeth will wrap up with an overview of 2024 climate and ocean conditions across Alaska as well as forecasts for 2025.

Elizabeth Siddon

3:00PM-3:45PM

Are marine mammals in Arctic Alaska responding to warmer waters and less sea ice?

The Arctic is warming. Sea ice is melting earlier and forming later, so we expect that seals, whales, and polar bears that have depended on sea ice as habitat will likely need to adjust their behavior. Join Lori Quakenbush to learn what changes have, and have not, been seen in marine mammal behavior and health, what tools researchers use to detect changes, and what happens when long-established tools do not work anymore.

Lori Quakenbush

Deana Crouser

Saturday | Nov 2

1:00PM-1:45PM

Donna

Pikok

Marie Zahn

Hauser

Nunaaqqit Savaqatigivlugich – Working with Iñupiaq Communities to Understand a Changing Arctic

Co-created community-based observing programs offer an opportunity to harness the holistic breadth of knowledge in Indigenous Peoples across the Arctic with the goal of tracking Arctic change while simultaneously supporting community priorities and local-scale needs. Here, our speakers describe the Alaska Arctic Observatory and Knowledge Hub (AAOKH or 'A-OK'), a network of Iñupiag observers from northern Alaska coastal communities working in partnership with academic researchers. Focusing on how shifts in coastal sea ice and wind conditions impact traditional marine harvests, the talk will outline specific actions and opportunities that have been used to increase knowledge exchange of AAOKH observations, make space for the next generation of Indigenous scholars, and create locally-relevant data products and syntheses that reflect societal impacts of Arctic environmental change.

2:00PM-2:45PM Mean and Green (or Not!). European Green Crab in Southeast Alaska

Roberta

TG-B

European green crab are listed among the top 100 most impactful invasive species in the marine environment. European green crab threaten nearshore subsistence resources and habitats. In 2022, they were discovered in Southeast Alaska in Tamgas Bay on the Annette Island Reserve by the Metlakatla Indian Community. Tribes and other partners are conducting multiple mitigation efforts to help lessen the impacts of European green crab in Southeast Alaska. In this session, learn about the invasion history for European green crab, lifecycle stages and strategies, and specific mitigation efforts being conducted in Southeast Alaska.

3:00PM-3:45PM

Tracking the Tusk: Using Sound to Study Narwhal Movements

The narwhal is one of the most sensitive Arctic marine mammals to climate change and human-generated noise pollution. As the Arctic becomes more ice-free, ship traffic and hydrocarbon resource extraction are on the rise, leading to increased underwater noise. In recent years, scientists have collected underwater recordings of narwhal vocalizations and their surroundings to track their movements and understand how they are adapting to the changing environment.

In this talk, Marie will highlight how these acoustic methods are used to study the combined impact of sea ice loss and increased underwater noise on narwhal behavior.

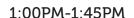
Kari Lanphier Sunday | Nov 3

12:40PM-1:00PM

Gunalchéesh Dana.ils'eik Geistéen Chuck Miller

Chuck Miller's impact on our community is immeasurable. He shared his time and knowledge so generously, including at the Science Center and at events like Sitka WhaleFest. We will always carry his teachings with us, as will the thousands of students from all over the world whose lives he touched.

Chuck will be deeply missed. His humor, his passion for education, and his care for our community will continue to inspire us.



In Support of the Coming
Generations: Lessons Learned and
Lessons Taught from Subsistence Hunting
and Whaling Communities on the North Slope

Richard Glenn and Lee Kayotuk will share their insights and observations from living in Utqiagvik and Kaktovik. Topics will include seasonal shifts in year-to-year conditions (freeze-up, break-up) and how those changes affect arrival time of marine mammals, including seals, bowheads and polar bears. They'll share stories related to hunting, travel safety, and marine mammal observations.



Richard Glenn

2:00PM-2:45PM

Alaska Salmon in a Warming World: From Too Hot to Just Warm Enough

There is scientific consensus that our actions as people are having an outsized role in warming of the global climate system, and some of the fastest rates of warming are observed in the far north. It is unclear what warming will mean for species such as salmon that are adapted to and reliant upon clean, complex, connected, and cold habitats. In this talk Peter considers the variable role of warming on Alaska's salmon and its impact on salmon-reliant communities. In some regions, warm summers are associated with unusual mortality, delayed migrations, and prespawning mortality on the spawning grounds. In other regions, warming is associated with increasingly observed occurrences of salmon in places that historically have been too cold. The talk concludes with a call to action of what tangible actions we can take to sustain the 14,000+ year relationship between salmon and people in Alaska.

Peter Westley
Westley

Lauren Wild

John

Moran

Mike Miller 3:00PM-3:45PM

Following the Arc of Humans' Relationship with Marine Mammals in Southeast Alaska

This panel-style discussion among three regional specialists will explore the history and changing landscape of human and marine mammal interactions in our local waters. From harvesting practices to entanglement concerns to the impacts of climate change, this conversation will bring the theme

of Sitka WhaleFest 2024 home by zooming in on local perspectives of change and how community members can help support ongoing studies and initiatives.

Speaker biographies can be found at SitkaWhaleFest.org

Educational Programs

Sitka WhaleFest week is an education extravaganza, bursting at the seams with activities that revolve around the weekend symposium event. All ages of curious learners – from young children in the "Tiny Tales" program through adults in a science, art, or adventure workshop – revel in the opportunities to explore new ideas and try their hand at unique experiences.

Scientists in the Schools

Over two decades ago, Sitka WhaleFest organizers launched the program "Scientists in the Schools" to connect visiting WhaleFest speakers with local students. Scientists in the Schools (SIS) has since extended outreach into the schools throughout the year. Scientists and knowledge holders participate in lessons that fit with their expertise and the curriculum at each grade level. SIS is truly a wonderful legacy for Sitka WhaleFest.

In the fall of 2024 leading up to WhaleFest, Scientists in the Schools has already sparked interest in engineering, field science, environmental ecology, and whale biology:

- Dr. Lara Roketenetz (Dr. Rocket), from University of Akron, facilitated an exploration of adaptations and biomimicry (innovation inspired by nature) in all 2nd grade classes at Keet Goshi Heen. Dr. Rocket also visited the Advanced Placement Biology class at Mount Edgecumbe High School to connect concepts of adaptations in living organisms to the inventions they inspired.
- Dr. Shannon Atkinson, professor in the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, University of Alaska Fairbanks, engaged Sitka High students in the rearticulation of a humpback whale skeleton and inspired them to think scientifically and artistically about the final display of the whale.
- **Dr. Gavin McNichol,** in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois Chicago, facilitated a field study with high school students to explore methods of measuring nutrient cycling in temperate rainforests and linking those ideas to yellow cedar ecology.

- **Dr. Caroline Daws**, currently teaching at Outer Coast College, planned and facilitated an outdoors exploration of fungus with all 4th grade classes.
- **Dr. Andrew Cyr**, environmental toxicologist with the Alaska Dept. of Health, led Sitka High's Field Science class before WhaleFest and a student workshop during WhaleFest in learning and practicing protocols for taking fish tissue samples to test for organic and inorganic contaminants.
- Stacy Golden, Sitka High School science teacher, in her own Marine Biology class and in workshops throughout Sitka WhaleFest weekend, demonstrated marine mammal necropsy techniques and supported participants in exploring marine mammal adaptations. Stacy leads the Whale Rearticulation Project in Sitka along with Shannon Atkinson and Lauren Wild. Their efforts have created many opportunities for community members to participate in rearticulation of a young humpback whale to be displayed at Sitka High School.

After WhaleFest additional scientists will bring their passion and expertise into classrooms as part of the Scientists in the Schools year-long program. This program inspires schoolchildren, K – 12, to be curious and see themselves as scientists.

Partners in Sitka WhaleFest Education: Sitka Sound Science Center thanks each of the following organizations for the remarkable diversity of programs they make possible.

BLaST: Biomedical Learning and Student Training is a University of Alaska, Fairbanks program funded by NIH. The goals of the program include enhancing undergraduate training and mentoring in the very broad scope of biomedical research. During WhaleFest, BLaST undergraduate scholars attend WhaleFest and participate in student workshops offered each morning, join the presenting scientists in small group seminars after the lectures, and experience the fun of a science festival. This year, BLaST funds support the remarkable slate of student workshops offered.

University of Alaska, Southeast: Each year, Dr. Heidi Pearson brings a university course to Sitka WhaleFest to participate in the symposium and workshops as part of her university course curriculum.

UAS Sitka campus: Campus director Paul Kraft and UAS staff welcome high school participants in the regional Sitka WhaleFest Ocean Bowl as well as marine mammal workshop participants into UAS facilities, including the necropsy lab.

Oregon State University OPEnS Lab:

Chet Udell, Director of the OPEnS (Openly Published Environmental Sensing) Laboratory at Oregon State University, brings unique weather monitoring technology to Sitka WhaleFest workshops. Participants are able experiment with innovative ways to create data visualization from weather patterns.

Prince William Sound Science Center:

Lauren Bien and other educators from the Prince William Sound Science Center bring the organization's exceptional submersible Remotely Operated Vehicle Challenge to Sitka for WhaleFest. Participants build, submerge, and guide their ROVs through an underwater obstacle course to simulate the actions of a research or industrial ROV.

Alaska Whale Foundation: Director Andy Szabo and fellow researchers bring their expertise to student workshops on whale research technology and techniques.

Ocean Bowl: The annual Southeast Alaska Regional competition of local National Ocean Science Bowl (NOSB) teams takes place at the University of Alaska Southeast Sitka Campus from 8am-12 noon on Friday, November 1. NOSB is an academic competition for high school students that focuses on ocean-related topics in a quiz bowl format. High school teams from throughout Southeast Alaska gather to compete in this no-stakes regional quiz bowl organized by Dr. Ellen Chenoweth. The students also participate together in symposium lectures, exploratory workshops, and other WhaleFest events.

Adult Workshops

The science-minded adults of Sitka also enjoy extending their learning opportunities in the form of workshops during WhaleFest. Beginning on Wednesday, October 30, adults participate together in snorkeling, culinary, art, and science adventures.

Community Programs

Students of all ages can display their artistic creativity in the Student Art Show displayed at Centennial Hall all weekend.

SSSC educators host Tiny Tales, a program for younger children. During WhaleFest, instead of attending symposium lectures, children can enjoy books, movement, projects, and explorations related to WhaleFest themes.

Film Fest | Thursday 7 to 8pm

"It's All About the Happy People: A Tale of Joy and Life Around the Sea Ice" A short film by Kimberly Pikok and Lloyd Pikok Jr. of Utqiagvik, made for Kimberly Pikok's Master's thesis research. Lloyd Jr. is a homegrown and self-taught Iñupiaq photographer and videographer, specializing in sports photography and landscape imagery. The filmmakers interviewed Alex Kaleak Sr. and his wife Diedre, Joe Mello Leavitt, and the late Craig George about their experiences and relationships with sea ice and spring whaling. Lloyd Jr. filmed spring whaling events such as sea ice trail breaking and Nalukataq (blanket toss). This film centers around local voices and highlights their experiences and livelihoods around the Arctic sea ice and whaling. The beauty of subsistence whaling and community is emphasized by uplifting joy and knowledge exchange.

Marine Trivia | Saturday 7 to 9pm

Put your marine knowledge to the test with a night of trivia! This year's WhaleFest speakers will join your team as you compete to answer questions about the ocean. Mingle with fellow attendees, get to know scientists and experts, and enjoy food and beverages available for purchase.

Because alcohol will be available at this event, please note that all attendees must be at least 18 years old and anyone under the age of 21 must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 21.

Due to the popularity of this event, we have moved the location to Harrigan Centennial Hall this year to accommodate for more attendees.



Marketplace & Café

Showcasing Alaska businesses, artists, nonprofits, educational groups, and natural resource agencies.

Southeast Alaska Conservation Council

Advocating for the Tongass and Inside Passage since 1970

Sitka Maritime Heritage Society

Preserving Sitka's rich maritime heritage and educating the public

Little Fish Line Co.

Handwoven baskets made of recycled and repurposed fishing line

Pioneer Provisions

Locally harvested teas, salves, and oils

57 North Arts

Hand drawn paintings created using ink, paint, and candle soot

Sitka Conservation Society

Non-profit organization, protecting the Tongass and supporting thriving communities across Southeast Alaska

Four Winds Desgins Pearl jewelry with leather.

Pearl jewelry with leather, silver, and gold filled wire

SEATOR LAB

Environmental research lab monitoring Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning risks

Sammie's Creations

Handcrafted copper, silver, and gemstone jewelry

Cara Crain Ceramics

Handmade pottery mugs, bowls, and more

Sitka Wild Art

Showcasing a stunning array of fine art quilts, quilt prints, and more

Xút'aa Hídi

Showcasing exquisite handmade pieces created by talented Indigenous artists from across Alaska

Sitka Sound Science Center

Sitka WhaleFest shirts, hats, and more

NOAA Law Enforcement

Enforcing laws that conserve and protect our nation's marine resources and their natural habitat

The Outer Coast

2025 wall calendar of art, poetry, and notecards about the world of southeastern Alaska

Homer Whales

Unique soft-form toys individually hand made in Homer, Alaska from recycled fabrics

University of Alaska Southeast

Offering bachelor's and associate degrees, certificates, and occupational endorsements

Rugged Weaves

Handmade baskets and other creations from retired Alaska fishing line

Evening Star Arts

Handmade goat's milk soap, salves, and lip balm

Sealaska Heritage Institute

Perpetuate, enhance, and share Southeast Alaskan Native culture

Wintersong Soap Company

Locally made soaps, lotions, and more.

F/V Axel

Commercial fishing family doing marine debris clean-ups with SeaGrant

Sitka Salvaged Woodworks

Handmade wood carvings and art

Café

Sample local fare such as:

Juan's Cuban Cuisine

Serving up Cuban dishes with a side of adventure

The Fresh Fish

Poke, chowder and more

Enoki Eatery

Japanese-inspired comfort food from the Tongass

Thai Alaska Kitchen

Mixing authentic Thai flavors with Alaska seafood and more



Help the Science Center serve our community better with updated research laboratories, an inspiring new aquarium, and fully accessible grounds.

The Aquarium, Laboratories, and Grounds (AL-G) project will create spaces that students, scientists, and visitors from Sitka and beyond will use to build a deeper understanding of our world.

Join our Behind the Scenes of the Science Center event Sunday 9:00am to 11:00am to learn more.

Sage Through the Century

Built in 1929 as an extension to Sheldon Jackson College, the Sage building has served many different purposes all in the name of education. From carpentry shops grew scientific laboratories which evolved further into the salmon hatchery we know and love. The building has seen countless students and educators of many different disciplines inspiring the love of learning across generations. Currently it is home to our research laboratories, education department, administration office, hatchery office, and salt water aquarium.

Help us carry this love of discovery into the future with a donation in support of our upcoming remodel. The AL-G project will update aging equipment and infrastructure bringing our nearly 100-year-old building into the future. With these funds we will



transform our aguarium to better showcase our nearly 200 local species, update our laboratory spaces with modern equipment, and open our grounds to be accessible for all visitors.



Donate Todav!

Thank You to Our Sponsors

John Craighead "Umigmuk" George Family

Sandra Kincheloe

Janet Clarke & Dan Gray

Rachel Myron & Steve Lewis

Grenold & Dorothy Collins













Help Support Sitka WhaleFest

Your sponsorship of Sitka WhaleFest brings world-renowned scientists to Sitka to share current research on North Pacific marine life with a diverse audience at its unique science symposium. Sponsorship also helps support our programs encouraging students to engage in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) majors and careers. Sitka WhaleFest provides a stimulating variety of marine-themed activities such as whale watching cruises, concerts, exhibits, artisans' market, 5K/10K run, and more!

Sitka WhaleFest is a program of the Sitka Sound Science Center which is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Contributions are tax deductible.

For more information on sponsorship of Sitka WhaleFest, visit SitkaWhaleFest.org



Sitka WhaleFest is a program of the Sitka Sound Science Center; visit sitkawhalefest.org to learn more.

Mission

Science Education and Research

Dedicated to increasing awareness and understanding of aquatic, marine and terrestrial ecosystems of coastal Alaska through education and research.

Vision The Science Center envisions a region where community members, scientific innovations, and Indigenous knowledge and values work together to enable our marine ecosystems, people, and economy to thrive for generations to come.

Values

Integrity | We model scientific integrity through evidence-based research and accessible educational programming

Curiosity | We believe that a playful curiosity of the world inspires innovation and growth

Respect | We honor and respect the history of this place and look towards its future to inform our present decisions

Community | We build relationships across our community in support of a shared appreciation for discovery and overall community wellbeing

Sitka WhaleFest Science Committee Members

Lauren Bell Lauren Wild John Moran

Sitka WhaleFest Director | Tiffany Pearson

Sitka Sound Science Center Staff

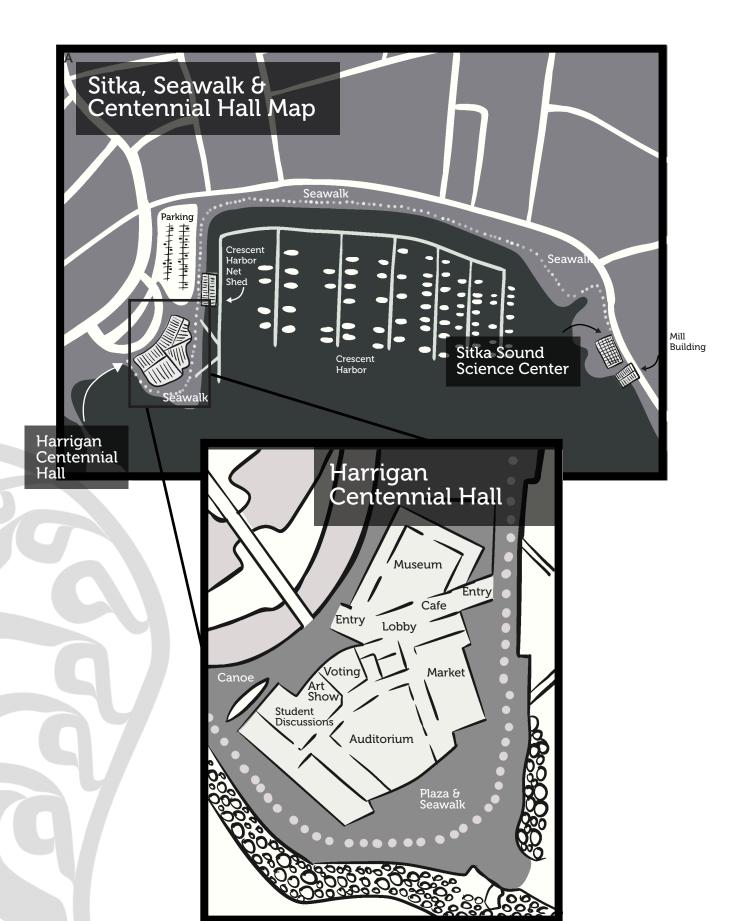
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SitkaScience.org | 834 Lincoln St, Sitka, AK 99835 | 907-747-8878



Sitka WhaleFest 2024

The heart of Sitka WhaleFest is the three day science symposium, where world-renowned scientists share their current research on a wide range of subjects. This innovative event gives all those interested in our oceans the opportunity to meet and interact with a passionate, diverse group of speakers.

SitkaWhaleFest.org

Wednesday | Oct 30

5:00 pm-7:00 pm

Tongass to Table Sitka Sound Science Center

Thursday | Oct 31 |

9:00 am-11:00 am Snorkel & Sauna

Sitka Sound Science Center

5:30 pm-6:30 pm **Student Art Show Opening**

7:00 pm-8:00 pm Film Fest | It's All About the

Happy People: A Tale of Joy and Life Around the Sea Ice

НСН

Friday | Nov 1

9:00 am-11:30 am Scientific Illustration Class

Sitka Sound Science Center

10:00 am-4:30 pm Market, Café, & Student Art Show

12:45 am-1:00 pm Welcome & Opening Remarks

Navigating Change: From 1:00 pm-1:45 pm

Microscopic Plankton to Majestic

North Pacific Right Whales

Deana Crouser HCH

2:00 pm-2:45 pm How Alaska's Fisheries (and

Science!) are Keeping Pace with

a Changing Climate

| Elizabeth Siddon HCH

Are marine mammals in Arctic 3:00 pm-3:45 pm

Alaska responding to warmer waters and less sea ice?

Lori Quakenbush HCH

Maritime Grind 7:30 pm-9:00 pm

HCH





Saturday | Nov 2

8:30 am-11:30 am Marine Wildlife Cruise

Crescent Harbor

9:00 am-10:00 am WhaleFest Run

Whale Park

9:00 am-11:30 am Scientific Illustration Class HCH

10:00 am-4:30 pm Market, Café, & Student Art Show

Nunaaggit Savagatigivlugich 1:00 pm-1:45 pm

- Working with Inupiaq Communities to Understand a Changing Arctic | Donna Hauser, Roberta TG-B, & Kim Pikok HCH

2:00 pm-2:45 pm Mean and Green (or Not!).

European Green Crab in Southeast Alaska Kari Lanphier HCH

3:00 pm-3:45 pm Tracking the Tusk: Using Sound to

Study Narwhal Movements

| Marie Zahn HCH

7:00 pm-9:00 pm Marine Trivia HCH

Sunday | Nov 3

8:30 am-11:30 am Marine Mammal Necropsy

University of Alaska Southeast

8:30 am-11:30 pm Marine Wildlife Cruise

Crescent Harbor

9:00 am-11:00 am Behind the Scenes of Science

Sitka Sound Science Center

11:00 am-3:00 pm Market, Café, & Student Art Show

HCH

1:00 pm-1:45 pm In Support of the Coming

Generations: Lessons Learned and Lessons Taught from Subsistence Hunting and Whaling Communities on the North Slope

| Richard Glenn & Lee Kayotuk HCH

2:00 pm-2:45 pm Alaska Salmon in a Warming World: From Too Hot to Just

Warm Enough | Peter Westley HCH

3:00 pm-3:45 pm Following the Arc of Humans'

Relationship with Marine Mammals in Southeast Alaska Lauren Wild, John Moran,

& Mike Miller HCH