

Sea Science

A Series by SCDNR Marine Resources Division

Careers in Marine Science



Marine Scientists:

- Protect marine habitats and animals
- Answer questions about the ocean through meticulous, long-term research
- Work in a lab and outdoors in all weather

Does marine science sound like an exciting career, but you're not exactly sure what jobs are out there or how to get started? You've come to the right place, and you are not alone! In South Carolina, there are many organizations, state and federal agencies, nonprofits, universities and local governments that have careers in marine science. Here at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), we are a state agency with offices located all around South Carolina with the marine science careers stationed at the Marine Resources campus located on James Island, SC. This campus is open to the public and is shared with the College of Charleston, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and Hollings Marine Lab.

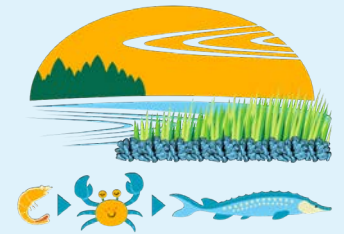
At SCDNR, we study the animals and habitats within estuaries and the Atlantic Ocean. This can include many important marine species such as shrimp, crabs, oysters, sea turtles and a variety of fishes from flounder to sea trout to cobia. To study these animals' life histories and the ecology of their habitats, marine scientists use boats ranging in size from large research vessels to small skiffs and sampling days ranging from an afternoon to extended overnight trips. Some marine scientists do not need a boat to conduct their research, as they study water and sediment samples in the laboratory or spend their days hip deep in pluff mud.

Marine Scientists study many things:

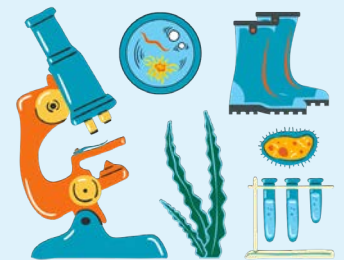
Fisheries



Ecology



Microbiology



Climate Change



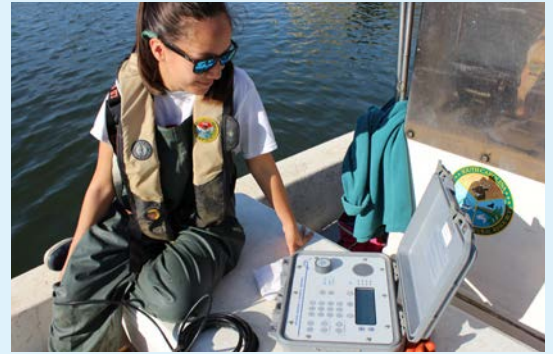
Find the full Sea Science Series by SCDNR at bit.ly/seasciences

Start Gaining Experience!

Becoming a marine scientist takes hard work and patience because marine science is a competitive field. You will want to take any science-related classes in high school including biology, chemistry, physics and any environmental or marine science classes available. When you are applying for college, you can be more specific with what classes you want to take and do research on the school before applying. Getting a broad background in the sciences is essential for understanding the complexities of oceanic or biological systems. Getting a bachelor of science degree is important and you will want to make sure the college you apply for offers marine biology, marine science, zoology, chemistry and biology classes. A good educational background includes more than just science. Marine scientists need good writing and speaking skills, which includes public speaking and writing scientific papers and grants.

Job shadowing, volunteering and interning can help you identify your interests and will look great on your college and job applications. You can start job shadowing as early as middle school, though you may need to be 16+ to volunteer at certain organizations. You can begin applying to internships during college to gain experience and ultimately help you select a job for after school.

Besides SCDNR, you could gain valuable experience shadowing or interning at aquariums, zoos, nature conservancies, wildlife/nature centers, fisheries, non-profits, and state or national parks. Look for organizations with a mission of protecting nature and wildlife through conservation and education. Even having a part time job with a nature-based tourism company during school can help you expand your knowledge of the outdoors.



Other Careers at SCDNR include but are not limited to:



Managers



Media Staff



Boat Captains &
Deck Hands



Educators



Trade
Specialists



Administrative
Staff