JANUARY 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

New study tracks microplastics in Choptank watershed

A two-year NOAA Marine Debris Program funded project will track how microplastics move through the Choptank River watershed on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Understanding the fate and transport of microplastics will provide a baseline of understanding what kind of plastics exist in the waterway and how they move through coastal systems.

"A lot of attention is paid to the giant garbage patch in the Pacific Ocean, but those plastics came from somewhere. We have to understand where they are coming from and what happens to them before they get to the ocean," said Associate Professor Jamie Pierson. **MORE**

Fisheries expert Dave Secor reflects on career studying sturgeon

Professor Dave Secor began his journey studying the living fossils known as sturgeon when he arrived at UMCES' Chesapeake Biological Laboratory in 1993. He embarked on a scientific mission to understand how these prehistory giants disappeared from the Chesapeake Bay. Read about how studying sturgeon has taught him more than ever imagined in his reflections in "Atlantic sturgeon: Not the 'ghosts' I thought they were" in

the *Bay Journal*. **MORE**

Reducing mercury entering ecosystems quickly lowers mercury in fish we eat

A study conducted over more than 15 years found that reducing mercury pollution entering lakes lowers how much harmful mercury is found in freshwater fish that end up for consumers' plates. Fish populations were able to recover from mercury much quicker than previously understood, which suggests that curbing mercury pollution through policy initiatives will have a rapid and tangible benefit regarding the quality of fish we consume. **MORE**

Photo by: Paul Blanchfield, Queens University

Next Generation: Olivia Pares on disease in blue crabs

Graduate student Olivia Pares was raised understanding importance of conserving and understanding the environment that allowed us to thrive. Her work at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology leads to a greater understanding of the disease ecology of viruses, specifically reovirus, in Maryland's favorite crustacean, the blue crab.

"Research on the dynamics of these pathogens is vital because the reovirus causes mortality to an economically and ecologically important species. In addition, understanding the factors that influence the prevalence of the pathogen can help with management and biosecurity strategies for the blue crab fishery," said Pares. **MORE**

John Piasecki wins UMCES Staff Excellence Award

Appalachian Laboratory Facilities ManagerJohn Piasecki has been selected as the 2021 recipient of the UMCES Staff Excellence Award. The annual award recognizes those staff members who consistently demonstrate a high level of commitment and dedication to UMCES.

“I’m honored to have been selected for this year’s award,” said Piasecki. “We work as a team at the Appalachian Laboratory, and I truly appreciate being recognized as a valued member of that team.” **MORE**

UMCES IN THE NEWS

Unprecedented die-offs, melting ice: Climate change is wreaking havoc in the Arctic and beyond (Los Angeles Times)

Climate change brings a perfect storm of raw sewage and rainfall in cities that can least afford it (USA Today)

Five opportunities for sailors to knock down marine plastic pollution (Spinsheet)

Editorial: Making sense of bay grades (Yahoo News)

Here's why blue crab has disappeared from menus around D.C. (Inside Hook)

Chesapeake Bay Hypoxia Report – Year-End 2021 (Southern Maryland Chronicle)

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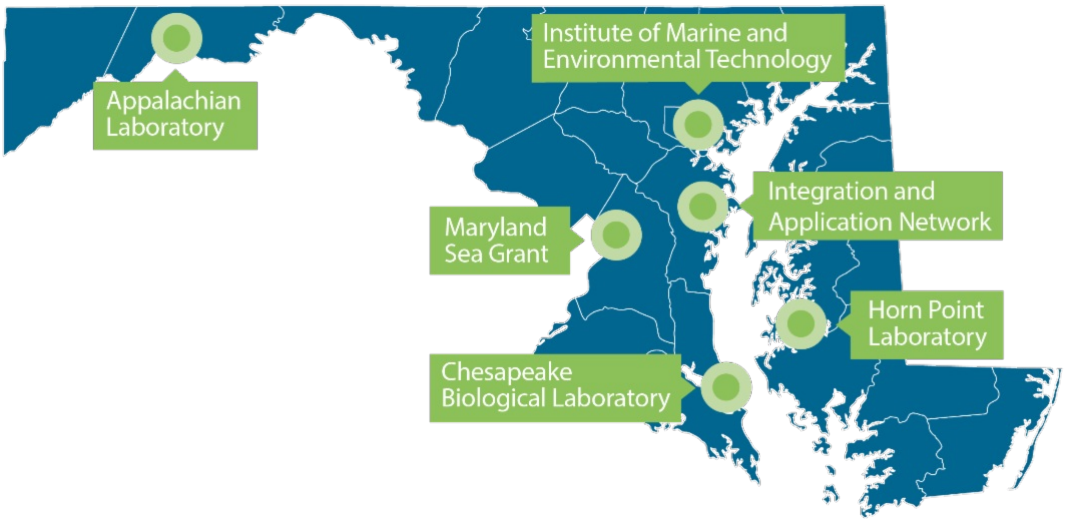

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