



Word on the Waves

a publication of the Fisheries Observation Science Program at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center

Observer Spotlight: Morganne Price

Observer since 2018
Currently in the At-Sea Hake Program

From the Atlantic to the Pacific, Morganne Price is taking her Maine heritage and putting it to good use.

Morganne is from Waldoboro, Maine, a small fishing town on the Atlantic coast. Becoming an observer post-college was a natural fit: “I wanted to work on the ocean and learn more about commercial fishing. Since I’ve lived in New England fishing towns my whole life, observing seemed like a good fit.”



Morganne left New England to accept observer positions first in Alaska and most recently with our At-Sea Hake program. Her favorite part of observing is meeting people from all over the country and around the world. She says, “I enjoy interacting with people outside my normal bubble. It really expands my world view.”

Like many observers, Morganne is an avid traveler and outdoors lover. Hiking is her go-to activity, although dog sledding running a close second. She discovered the sport last year and it’s her “new favorite thing.” She’s planning to be a dog sled guide in Jackson, WY this fall and winter. “There’s nothing like hanging out with adorable, fuzzy athletes in the mountains,” she says.

Morganne’s bucket list is bold. She wants to ride horses in Mongolia. That trip hasn’t come together yet, however, in June she’ll be traveling 700km across the Gobi Desert on horseback. She’s “pretty stoked.”

We’re happy to have Morganne in the ASHOP program. Her dedication to the job, attention to detail, and easy rapport make her a stellar observer. We hope she’ll be back after dog sled season.

Thank you for your work, Morganne. It’s much appreciated and highly valued. Safe travels.



From the Program

Jon McVeigh,
Program Manager

Hello Observers and Friends,

I hope everyone had a productive summer and that you’re enjoying this fantastic fall.

I had a very productive summer. My wife and I welcomed our new daughter into the world in August. Since then, I’ve been out of the office on paternity leave bonding with our new family member and adjusting to a new routine. Luckily, the FOS team is so awesome that the program is running smoothly in my absence. Thanks to all FOS staff for stepping up and helping while I’m away.

Although I don’t have much to share in this edition, I do want to bring your attention to NOAA Fisheries’ [National Seafood Month Spotlight](#), released at the beginning of October. It spotlights two west coast species: Canary rockfish and Shortspine Thornyhead. It also highlights a few west coast issues as well as general seafood and sustainable choices. Interesting stuff.

Follow the [Footage from the Fisheries](#) link in the sidebar to see harvesting videos from around the country. I’m particularly fond of the [geoduck harvesting video](#).

I also encourage you to check out the [Fish-Watch portal](#) to learn fish facts about your favorite species.

Stay safe,

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Observers Needed

Looking for a change of pace? Here are two opportunities to use your observing skills to further other projects. Check them out.



Seabird Observers

Oregon Sea Grant is starting a new collaborative research project with the At-Sea Hake fleet to characterize albatross and other seabird interactions with trawl cables and 3rd wires. The work will expand on the foundation of knowledge that A-SHOP observers have helped build during the seabird special project over the last three years.

This fall, Amanda Gladics, Oregon State University, Assistant Professor of Practice, will be finalizing protocols and collecting preliminary data for the project. She plans to hire up to four dedicated seabird observers. These people will be deployed in the at-sea hake CP fleet during Spring and Fall 2019.

Additional details, updates, and job announcements will be in future newsletters. If you are interested in learning more about the project, please contact Amanda Gladics: amanda.gladics@oregonstate.edu or 503-325-8573.

Social Science Study Participants

Laura Drakopoulos is a University of Washington social science PhD student. She's interviewing current and former observers as part of her research. The interview is a one-hour session involving questions about your life at work, your ambitions, motivations, and interests in fisheries; and how the work you're doing is important to you. All participants remain anonymous in the research. She's especially interested in speaking with women and people of diverse backgrounds and identities.

If you'd like to participate, contact Laura: drako@uw.edu or 941-504-6890.

Featured Observer - continued

Morganne's advice to new observers:

Come with an open mind. You'll be amazed how much you learn!

Morganne's favorite observing story

One day, I told the crew that if we landed a dead sea lion, I would have to cut its snout off for data collection purposes. One of the deck hands immediately laughs it off saying, "I've

been fishing for 40 years. I've never seen a sea lion come up in our net." Sure enough, a dead sea lion comes up in the next haul. The look on his face was priceless.

But now, I have to cut off the sea lion's snout! So there I was, on a boat in the middle of the ocean, cutting the snout off a 900lb sea lion. Ack!

I love this story for two reasons: 1) the look on the deck hand's face when he saw the sea lion, and 2) I never imagined I'd cut the snout off a dead sea lion. Live and learn.

Fisheries News

The Pacific Salmon Commission has reached an agreement on conservation and harvest sharing of Pacific salmon. The 10 year agreement continues the longstanding partnership between the United States and Canada to cooperatively and sustainably manage salmon fisheries. See the full press release [here](#).

Although the Pacific bluefin tuna numbers continue to be low, there are signs the population is recovering. Rebuilding targets set forth by international agreement are on track to be met. Get more information [here](#).





From the Galley

John LaFargue, CA Coordinator

When is a shrimp a prawn and a prawn a shrimp? In Southern California, we ask this question all the time. The names Spot prawn and Ridgeback shrimp are technically incorrect. The Spot prawn is biologically a shrimp and the Ridgeback shrimp is biologically a prawn. Go figure.

So what's the difference? Prawns have branching gills, claws on three sets of their legs and a second set of larger pincers in the back. Prawns also lack the bend in their bodies that is common with shrimp. Lastly, each of their body segments overlaps the one behind it in succession.

Shrimp have smaller gills and claws on two pairs of their legs. Their front pincers are usually their largest. Shrimp also have a distinct bend in their bodies and their second segments overlap the first and third segments.

Whatever you call them, they are all pretty delicious. James Grunden, our year-round observer in Ventura, California, shared this recipe with me. Give it a try and let me know what you think. Feel free to send me any good recipes. I'm always looking for something new.

Cheers!

Apple Brandy Ridgeback Shrimp/prawns

This recipe is adapted from Manresa's Ridgeback Prawns by David Kinch a Michelin starred chef.

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp salted butter
15-20 Ridgeback prawns, headed or whole (or favorite shell-on shrimp/prawns) deveined
~3+ Tbsp apple Brandy
1/2 tsp sea salt
1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
1/4 yellow sweet onion chopped
2-3 garlic cloves chopped
Lemon and chopped green onion for garnish

Directions

1. Melt butter in large pan. Add chopped onions. Sauté until onions are opaque and soft.
2. Increase the heat until the butter begins to brown and foam. Add Prawns and chopped garlic.
3. Cook prawns/shrimp for 15-20 seconds or until opaque on both sides and just cooked through.
4. With prawns/shrimp in pan and the pan off the heat, deglaze with apple brandy (don't start a fire!). Add chopped green onions and season with salt and pepper.
5. Transfer prawns/shrimp to a serving plate and drizzle deglazed garlic and onion bits over the top.
6. Finish with a squeeze of lemon.
7. Let shrimp cool to the point where you can peel and eat them.



James Grunden at the stove.

Contact Us

Word on the Waves is published quarterly by the **Fisheries Observation Science Program** at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center to maintain communications with current observers. We want to hear from you! Please send submissions, suggestions and questions to our newsletter editor, Rebecca Hoch, at rebecca.hoch@noaa.gov. You can also contact your debriefer.



The 9th IFOMC Conference in Vigo, Spain: A Recap

Jason Eibner, Newport, OR Debriefing Team Lead

The International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference (IFOMC) is the premier forum for issues related to fisheries observers, observer programs, emerging monitoring technologies, and fishery-dependent data collection. Every two years, we gather at a fisheries-significant international locale to network and discuss pertinent topics.

On stage, in the audience, and in the halls, conference attendees find representatives from observer/monitoring programs and industry, fisheries managers, data analysts, fish monitoring gear techies, and fish geeks, sharing ideas on enhancing and improving fisheries monitoring programs worldwide.

The conference focused on 11 predetermined topics with presenters speaking toward each topic. Each round of presentations was followed by a discussion session. Fueled by endless tapas, café, and refreshments, the discussions typically spilled into the hallways and courtyard during breaks. This gave ample opportunity to network with peers from all over the globe. It was enlightening and invigorating to learn about the diversity of programs and the common or unique issues each encounters.

The Northwest Fisheries Science Center's (NWFS) Fisheries Observation Science Programs (FOS), including both the A-SHOP and WCGOP, sent a strong contingent:

John LaFargue (CA Coordinator/Safety Lead) co-led a safety workshop and was the panel leader for the "Observer Training, Safety and Mental Health"

presentation and discussion session, which prompted an extended discussion and improved awareness of observer sexual harassment. John is also a member of the conference's steering committee.

Kevin Stockmann (San Francisco Bay observer) spoke on the "Industry Engagement with Monitoring" panel. He shared the Green Sturgeon research he and the WCGOP have done in cooperation with California Halibut trawl fishermen in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Kayleigh Somers (FOS Analyst) provided insight into unifying electronic monitoring and observer data to improve the US West Coast groundfish management. She also competed in the international immersion suit donning races. Team Korea ultimately captured the title.

Jason Eibner (Newport, OR debriefing team lead) spoke on the expected data review benefits that OPTECS tablet-based data collection promises.

Steve Todd (San Diego observer) delivered a presentation on monitoring artisanal fisheries. A stellar performance that had many talking for the remainder of the conference.

Posters submitted to IFOMC were displayed for the duration of the conference. A number of FOS members contributed posters and fielded questions:

Ryan Shama (FOS Debriefing Team Lead) highlighted the contributions FOS observers have made toward successful US West Coast fisheries

management.

Kate Richerson (FOS Analyst) showcased how US West Coast observers contribute to the conservation and scientific research of protected species.

Vanessa Tuttle (A-SHOP Program Lead) provided an example of how collaboration between ASHOP and industry regarding seabird trawl cable strike mitigation strategies can result in cooperative stewardship for fishing industry best practices.

Kevin Stockmann produced a poster illustrating the observation of a commercial Yellowtail Rockfish jig fishery off California's coast.

Jim Benante (PSMFC Program Manager) highlighted the involvement of industry in creating and maintaining the California Shelf Rockfish Hook and Line Survey over the years.

Scott Leach (OR coordinator) described the collaborative incident reporting process and relationship between NOAA Office of Law Enforcement and the WCGOP.

Steve Samana (Ft. Bragg, observer) provided insight into the use of observer data in rebuilding overfished species stocks and posited Fort Bragg as a case study.

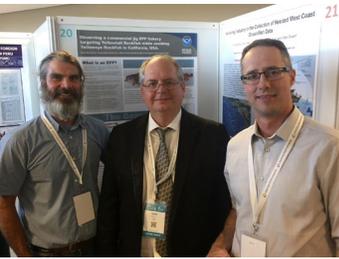
James Grunden (Ventura observer) showcased his perspective on transitioning to paperless e-data collection and evaluated the effectiveness of the tablet models tested.

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Observer Perspectives on the IFOMC

Four current observers participated in the IFOMC conference in Vigo, Spain. Below are their thoughts and comments on the event.

Kevin Stockmann San Francisco observer



Observer Kevin Stockmann, NOAA's Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Samuel Rauch, and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission Program Manager, Jim Benante at the poster session.

It was an honor to be part of the WCGOP's IFO-MC delegation. I delivered my oral presentation on the first day as part of the Engagement with Industry session and displayed a poster.

The conference was a cosmo-

politan gathering. I met delegates from Chile and England and observers from Peru and North Korea. Extended coffee breaks and the a la carte outdoor lunches provided plenty of time to mingle and enjoy old and new friendships.

During the poster reception, I described the WCGOP observer coverage of a promising California Yellow-tail Rockfish EFP with Samuel Rauch, NOAA's Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs. He was impressed with my poster and keen to know when this EFP would be evaluated for success or failure.

Vigo was a great location. We had views of the Vigo Estuary and Atlantic Ocean. We spent an afternoon on Cies Island, (Atlantic Islands of Galicia National Park) hiking, swimming and viewing the world's largest colony of nesting Yellow-legged Gulls.

Steve Todd San Diego observer

Vigo is a city rich in history and home to Europe's largest fishing port. An extensive waterfront houses a thriving maritime industry with abundant seafood and aquaculture processing plants, canning facilities, fishing vessels large and small, industrial shipbuilders, and marinas for industrial and recreational usage.

I gave an oral presentation in the Monitoring Artisanal Fisheries panel: *San Diego artisanal fisheries, the Tuna Harbor Dockside Market, and zero discard*. I highlighted San Diego's new type of farmer's market where local catch is sold directly to the public. This gives the fishermen the freedom to explore new fishery resources previously un-targeted. I also spoke about my observing protocols on these vessels, how the data is processed and recorded, and the vessel diversity in the fleet.

My presentation was well-received, generated dialogue and questions in the panel discussion and throughout the remainder of the conference. To have my topic and presentation resonate so positively with the audience was very gratifying.

Meeting and talking with like-minded, passionate individuals whose career paths run parallel my own was a major highlight. Support was received and given, helping us remember why we do what we do and why we love it.

James Grunden Ventura observer

It's hard to know where to start with IFOMC Vigo 2018. The regional beauty was incredible. It was mountainous, green and lush from the recent rains. The inland mountain ranges are permeated by 'rias' or inlets. These inlets are where human settlements took hold including the Celts and Romans whose structures still stand.

Vigo itself was impressive. It's Spain's commercial fishing hub and has many open fish markets and boat yards. The conference venue was amazing. The hotel overlooked the Ria de Vigo, had excellent service and great local traditional fare.

The conference was well organized and had a homogeneous feel. The discussion topics focused on stock management, observer health and safety, and specific programs in different fisheries around the world. As an observer, I gained a lot from these topics.

My biggest impression was that there were more observers present and actively participating. I met many U.S. and international observers. We compared our sampling protocols and our role in fisheries management.

Overall the cohesiveness and camaraderie of the conference were spot-on. I left feeling like part of a larger family.



Database News

Neil Riley, Database Coordinator

Curious to know what’s going on the database world? Here’s what’s in the works.

Reporting & Data Entry

Since the Catch Share program started in 2011, our goal has been to deliver the best data available to the vessel accounting system. This led to robust error checking protocols and the development of new data collections systems. From 2015 to the present, we’ve maintained a consistent 95% trip finalization rate (see Table 1).

In 2016, we started exploring new technologies to improve the data delivery. This instigated the OPTECS paperless data entry system. Many of you have been integral in testing OPTECS on trawlers, which helped make the program a success.

We’re currently working on adding fixed gear to the latest version of the system. We hope to have this available in late 2019 or early 2020. In the meantime, we will support the offline data entry, which allows us to maintain consistent data entry times (see Table 2).

Percentage of Catch Share Trips Finalized into the IFQ VA System by Day 15			
Year	Total Trips for Year	Average Days To Final	Percent Trips Finalized by Day 15
2011	1586	55.37	36.13
2012	1375	59.86	44.29
2013	1486	26.11	76.65
2014	1539	14.77	90.45
2015	1023	11.59	93.45
2016	906	9.48	94.59
2017	904	9.24	93.03
*2018	633	7.43	95.58

*Through 10.30.2018

Table 1

Upcoming Projects

The biggest and most impactful project on the horizon is the WCGOP web application redesign and upgrade. The current web application is 16 years old. An upgrade is overdue. We’re building the new web app in parallel with the OPTECS program. Our goal is to create a system that provides easier access to data and more efficient reporting. This will lead to faster debriefings and better data accessibility.

We’re also developing an Observer Trip Selection (OTS) app in conjunction with the new web application. Currently, EM vessels have to call the WCGOP coordinators to determine their selection status. The OTS system will allow fishers to log their trips and get immediate notification if they’re selected for coverage.

All of these new technologies have the potential to increase the speed and accuracy of reporting. We’re looking forward to getting them to you. .

Stay tuned for more details and keep up the good work!

Percentage of Catch Share Trips Entered into the IFQ VA System by Day 15			
Year	Total Trips for Year	Average Days To Load Year	Percent Trips Loaded by Day 15
2011	1586	39.67	38.02
2012	1375	31.18	48.87
2013	1486	11.9	79.54
2014	1539	6.76	92.07
2015	1023	5.21	95.11
2016	906	4.89	96.8
2017	904	5.95	94.36
*2018	633	4.12	97.31

*Through 10.30.2018

Table 2

IFOMC Recap - continued

Eric Brasseur (FOS Gear Technician) created a poster showing OPTECS’ positive changes to at-sea sampling flow and observer life. He also demonstrated the OPTECS setup and trawl application during breaks.

The opportunity to visit Vigo for the IFOMC was an amazing experience I won’t forget. I highly recommend submitting an abstract for a poster

or talk for the 10th IFOMC in 2021. It’s in Hobart, Tasmania! Hope to see you there!

See the conference proceedings [here](#).

View the conference posters [here](#).

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Eric Brasseur, Jim Benante, Alex Perry, and Jason Eibner