



Dear Friends,

We have had a busy summer of research and travel! In this newsletter, enjoy hearing about some important events of the summer, such as the 5th Galapagos Research and Conservation Symposium and the 10th annual Shark Day, both held on San Cristobal Island. We are also excited to announce a new social work certificate program for the local Galapagos community and the receipt of a \$2.5m National Science Foundation grant looking at biodiversity on a changing planet! Let us whisk you away to the Galapagos so you can learn more!

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## **5th Galapagos Research and Conservation Symposium: Igniting solutions for the future of ecosystems and communities**



The Galapagos Science Center, with support from the Galapagos National Park, hosted the [5th annual Galapagos Research and Conservation Symposium](#) in San Cristobal. This multidisciplinary annual [event](#) brings together experts and community members dedicated to protecting and restoring the island's precious ecosystems. It not only underscores the

importance of research in finding solutions but also facilitates collaboration between experts and the local community and allows for a celebration of this collaboration.

## UNC School of Social Work and USFQ launch social work certificate program in Galapagos



We're excited to announce the launch of a [social work certificate program](#) in Galapagos! This collaborative effort with UNC's School of Social Work and USFQ is designed to equip the Galapagos community with necessary social work skills to address local issues, such as gender-based violence and inadequate access to mental health services. The inaugural session of this 12-week program began in June and is scheduled to finish up in September, and will help address the social issues in the Galapagos through a partnership with local communities and an expansion of resources available to them.

## CGS researchers, alongside international partners, receive \$2.5m grant from National Science Foundation



UNC researchers Adrian Marchetti and Harvey Seim in the Department of Earth, Marine and Environmental Sciences, alongside researchers from MBARI and University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley, recently [received a \\$2.5m grant](#) from the National Science Foundation's Biodiversity on a Changing Planet program. This award will be an expansion of almost 10 years

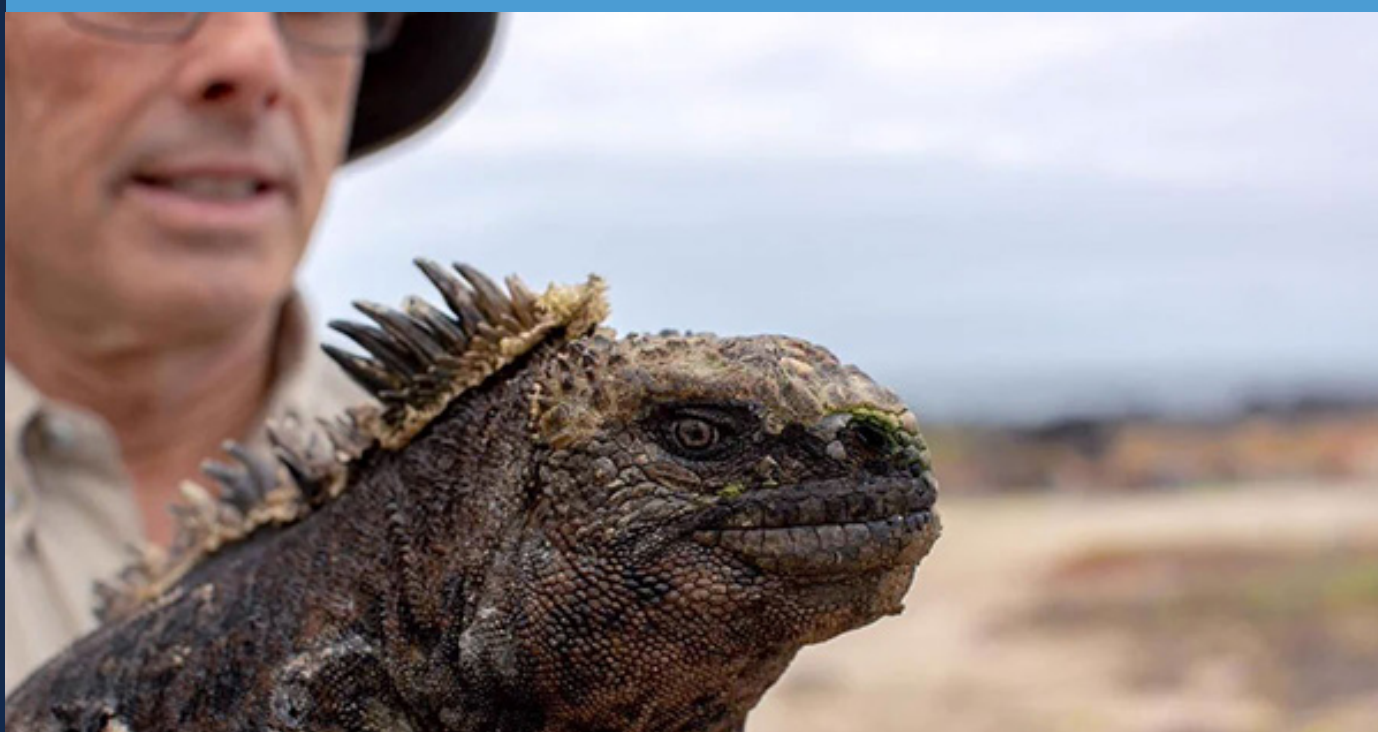
conducting research in the Galapagos studying the impacts of changing physical environments on nutrient availability to marine plankton.

## Shark Day: 10 years celebrating the importance of protecting sharks and their habitat



The Galapagos Science Center, with help from global collaborators, hosts an annual Shark Day in San Cristobal to celebrate sharks and their habitats and raise awareness about how to protect these creatures. This year, we celebrated a successful [10th Shark Day](#) in Playa Mann where local families enjoyed stations designed to teach them all about the importance of sharks in the ecosystem! To learn more about the essential role of sharks in our oceans and how we can contribute to their conservation, check out [this video](#) from the Galapagos Science Center.

## GSC Researcher Greg Lewbart on PBS's "Evolution Earth," September 6, 2023



Did you know that marine iguanas have evolved to shrink and regrow their vertebrae in response to changes in food availability? On September 6, Galapagos Science Center researcher Greg Lewbart was featured on PBS's series '[Evolution Earth](#)' to discuss his research x-raying marine iguanas in Galapagos to better understand their adaptation! Lewbart is a professor of aquatic, wildlife, and zoological medicine at North Carolina State University, one of the International Galapagos Consortium partners with the Galapagos Science Center.

## Research UNCovered: Savannah Ryburn uses fecal forensics to unlock shark diets



UNC Ph.D. student Savannah Ryburn studies the diet and ecology of sharks in the Galapagos and North Carolina by conducting DNA analyses on their fecal matter to determine what they've eaten, down to the species level. Her work contributes to the effort to better conserve endangered species such as the scalloped hammerhead shark. Read [UNC Research's interview](#) with Savannah to hear more about her research and inspiration!

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I hope you enjoyed reading these impactful stories from Galapagos and look forward to sharing more with you in the future! If you would like to support our Center to allow us to continue making an impact in this way please click [here](#) or feel free to reach out to me at [weaverk@email.unc.edu](mailto:weaverk@email.unc.edu) to arrange a phonecall or Zoom to learn more!

Kind regards,

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