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Scripps Biological Oceanographer Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

Lisa Levin a pioneer in observing the consequences of diminishing supply of oxygen in the deep ocean

Lisa Levin, a biological oceanographer at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California San Diego, will receive the A.C. Redfield Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association of the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO) Wednesday.



Biological oceanographer Lisa Levin

The Redfield Award honors major, long-term achievements in the fields of limnology (the study of lakes) and oceanography, including research, education, and service to the community and society. The association cited her “extraordinary long-term contributions to understanding the composition and function of seafloor ecosystems, and for her leadership in identifying and communicating anthropogenic pressures on aquatic ecosystems, with relevance to policies for sustainable and healthy seas.”

The award will be presented in Portland, Oregon at the [Ocean Sciences Meeting](#), which is co-sponsored by ASLO and the American Geophysical Union.

“This was completely unexpected and I am incredibly humbled by this honor,” said Levin, who has worked at Scripps Oceanography since 1992. “My contributions stem largely from my association with extraordinarily talented mentors, students, and collaborators over the last 40 years and I thank them sincerely.”

ASLO noted that in the 36 years since her first publication, Levin has had a profound influence in marine science through her broad research portfolio, creative teaching, dedicated mentorship of young scientists, and commitment to outreach and stewardship of deep-sea

ecosystems. Levin's research in areas such as larval dispersal, hypoxia, and deep-sea biodiversity, is known for its rigor and scientific insights.

Levin's more than 230 papers have been cited more than 20,000 times, with 59 of her papers having more than 100 citations each. These statistics reveal a publication record that is impressive in reach and influence, and are a testament to her work's impact across numerous subdisciplines of marine science.

A hallmark of Levin's career has been pioneering the use of new technology and methodology. She helped lead the first use of isotope-labeling tools for examining food chains in the deep sea. She was also first to use trace elemental fingerprinting for tracking invertebrate larvae to study connectivity of marine habitats. Throughout her career, Levin has combined a variety of classical and modern (including the use of submersibles and remotely operated vehicles) methods in her work, demonstrating that the ecology of even the most remote ocean environments can be quantitatively studied.

Known in the ocean sciences community for her "insight, collaborative spirit and tireless dedication to deep-sea research," Levin has been a leader in advancing conservation and observation of deep sea ecosystems. She served as director for Scripps' Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation (CMBC) for six years, founded and co-leads the Deep Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI), and has been instrumental in efforts to develop the Deep Ocean Observing Strategy (DOOS), a global initiative to provide novel insights into this unexplored frontier.

A recognized and respected voice on threats to aquatic ecosystems, Levin's reviews, commentaries, and policy papers can be found in venues such as Science and Nature. She has served numerous roles in the scientific community, such as editor to many journals and is a frequent session chair at ASLO and other conferences. She regularly communicates with decisionmakers, ranging in scope from local advisory boards to global assemblies such as the International Seabed Authority and United Nations Climate Change Conference.

Levin has mentored more than 30 graduate students and 35 undergraduate students. As director of CMBC, she developed interdisciplinary approaches to teaching ocean science in master's and PhD programs, extending her influence to multiple institutions. She has contributed internationally as well, serving as a visiting professor in Namibia and South Africa and as a lecturer in Senegal, Chile, and Peru.

ASLO is an international aquatic science society that was founded in 1948. For more than 60 years, it has been the leading professional organization for researchers and educators in the field of aquatic science. The purpose of ASLO is to foster a diverse, international scientific community that creates, integrates, and communicates knowledge across the full spectrum of aquatic sciences, advances public awareness and education about aquatic resources and research, and promotes scientific stewardship of aquatic resources for the public interest. Its products and activities are directed toward these ends. With more than 3,500 members worldwide, the society has earned an outstanding reputation and is best known for its journals, interdisciplinary meetings, and special symposia.

“The A.C. Redfield Lifetime Achievement award honors individuals who have excelled in all arenas of a scientific career: research, education, and service,” said ASLO President Linda Duguay. “Lisa Levin is an extraordinary scientist and richly deserving of this award. Lisa’s contributions to deep-sea biology research and the education of the next generation have been enormous. Her current work at the UN Climate Change Conferences and with the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) informs world policy and shines a light on the massive importance of the deep-sea domain in carbon cycling.”

The award is named for Alfred C. Redfield (1890-1983), a Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution marine biologist who performed pioneering research in marine ecology and biogeochemistry.

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