

2024 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit



Summit Program

#YOCS24

Welcome

Welcome to the 2024 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit! We look forward to seeing you at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, FL on Saturday, September 14.

This year's Summit will provide you with inspiration and ideas from across the ocean conservation field as you "Seas the Future" and take action to protect our ocean planet. At the Summit, you'll have the opportunity to learn about ocean conservation challenges and solutions, build skills to support your work as a young ocean leader, and develop or refine your own ocean conservation project.

The Youth Ocean Conservation Summit program is your road map to the sessions and activities happening at this year's event.

A special thanks to the incredible partner organizations, sponsors, presenters, and volunteers who have contributed to making this event possible, as well as to the staff and YOCS Youth Crew at Mote Marine Laboratory!

We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, September 14 for the 2024 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit!



2024 Summit Schedule

All times in Eastern Daylight Time

- 9:30am-10:00am Check-in and attendees arrive at Mote Marine Laboratory
- 10:00am-10:15am Welcome to the Summit and Mote Marine Laboratory
- 10:15am-10:30am Keynote Presentation by Brice Claypoole and Megan Barry
- 10:30am-11:00am – Youth Presentations
- 11:00am-12:00pm – Summit Workshops Session 1
- 12:00pm-12:45pm – Lunch and Networking
- 1:00pm-2:00pm – Summit Workshops Session 2
- 2:00-2:45pm – Conservation Project Action Planning Session
- 2:45pm-3:00pm – Closing Remarks

Participants attending the 2024 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit will have a chance to select a track of two afternoon workshop sessions to further explore the 2024 Summit theme "Seas the Future" while gaining inspiration and ideas for their own ocean conservation project. We are partnering with the following organizations to bring these tracks to life:

Track 1: Clean Waves: [Oyster Restoration Ecology](#) and [Right to Clean Water](#) will focus on water quality and water policy/advocacy.

Track 2: Shoreline Stewardship: [Suncoast Waterkeepers](#) & [Sarasota Sea Grant](#) will focus on mangrove restoration and coastal resilience.

Track 3: Fish for the Future: [Mote Aquaculture](#) & [NOAA Marine Debris Program](#) will focus on sustainable fisheries and marine debris.

Meet our 2024 YOCS Speakers

Keynote Speaker – Brice Claypoole

Brice Claypoole is 16 years old and lives in Sarasota, FL. He runs the youth advocacy club Kids for Clean Water and writes the blog The Kid Who Cares. He is also a member of Sarasota Bay Estuary Program's Citizen Advisory Committee. He has advocated for the protection of local mangroves, wetlands, and water quality. His work has been featured in The Bradenton Times, The Washington Post, and The Guardian. Brice spends his free time on wildlife photography, exploring nature, and sailing on Sarasota Bay.



Join the conversation on social media!

Share highlights from the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit and your plans for ocean conservation action.

#YOCS24

#MoteMarineLab

#MoteEducation



Meet our 2024 YOCS Speakers

Joseph Bonasia

Joseph Bonasia is a retired teacher who serves as Chair of Florida Rights of Nature Network and Operations and Communications Director for FloridaRightToCleanWater.org. Until recently, he served as Citizen Climate Lobby's volunteer Liaison to Senator Rick Scott's office and as founding board member of the SWFL RESET Center. He writes about constitutional environmental rights, the rights of nature, and our climate crisis. Read his articles at The Invading Sea.



Ashley Hill

Ashley Hill is the Florida Regional Coordinator for the NOAA Marine Debris Program and is based in St. Petersburg, FL. In this position, she collaborates with partners to tackle marine debris issues and protect coastal communities and ecosystems across the state. She works with partners to investigate and prevent the adverse impacts of marine debris and facilitates information sharing with local stakeholders, the national marine debris community, and the NOAA Marine Debris Program. Ashley received her Bachelor's degree from Florida Institute of Technology and her Master's degree from the University of Miami.

Damon Moore

Damon Moore is a habitat restoration practitioner with 20 years of experience developing and implementing local habitat restoration projects. His career has included ten years working in private-sector consulting and ten years working for Manatee County Government within the Natural Resources Department. Damon played an instrumental role in local large-scale habitat restoration projects including the restoration of Perico Preserve and the Robinson Preserve Expansion Project, among many other habitat improvement projects across the region. He is a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner (CERP) through the Society for Ecological Restoration. Damon enjoys spending time with his lovely wife and daughter as well as fishing, hiking, uploading plant and insect observations in iNaturalist, and volunteering on habitat restoration projects.



Meet our 2024 YOCS Speakers

Sean Russell

For over a decade, Sean Russell has worked with a diverse set of non-profit organizations, corporations, and government agencies, to elevate the role of youth leadership in the fields of marine science, education, and conservation. As the founder and director of the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit, Sean supports the development of this annual event, and youth-driven satellite Summits, designed to equip youth participants with the knowledge, tools, and funds to launch solutions-oriented ocean conservation projects. Sean also serves as EarthEcho International's Director of Youth Leadership Programs, where he leads the organization's strategy and programs to build the capacity of young ocean advocates on a global scale.



Dr. Abbey Tyrna

Dr. Abbey Tyrna joined Suncoast Waterkeeper in 2022. She grew up in southwest Florida and focused her education on wetlands and water quality. Tyrna has a doctorate in geography from Pennsylvania State University, where her research examined the positional importance of wetland systems across watersheds. After receiving her degree in 2015, she moved to the Suncoast region, where she became an adjunct professor of Environmental Studies at State College of Florida and later the Water Resources Agent for UF/IFAS Extension and Sustainability. Tyrna is a founding member of the Healthy Pond Collaborative and a lead author of the Healthy Pond Guide. At Suncoast Waterkeeper, she works with a fantastic staff, a brilliant

board of directors, and numerous influential stakeholders to achieve the 1972 federal Clean Water Act goal of swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters for all.

Armando Ubeda

Armando J. Ubeda is the Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent of UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County. His Extension program focuses on the FL Master Naturalist Program, Living Shorelines, Sustainable Fisheries, Marine Resource Conservation, Marine Debris prevention, and Water Quality/Quantity. He brings his experience and training to these courses from his time as a coral reef researcher in Nicaragua, from his time as a staff biologist at the Department of Shark Research at Mote Marine Laboratory, and from his former position as a Mesoamerican Program Manager for a conservation organization called LightHawk. Armando received his master's degree in marine resource management from Oregon State University. Armando received a Fulbright scholarship as well as several other competitive scholarships such as the Hatfield Marine Science Center's Mamie Markham Research Award from Oregon State University. Armando is also a Ph.D. student at the Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Department at the University of Florida.



Location and Directions

The 2024 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit will be held at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, FL. The event will take place in the New Pass Room of Mote's Keating Marine Education Center located at 1599 Ken Thompson Parkway.

