CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2015 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)
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Project Number
J2203

Project Title
Ochre Star: Is the Population Still Devastated?

Abstract

Objectives/Goals
The goal of my project was to examine the different ways Sea Star Wasting Syndrome affected the species of the sea star known as Pisaster Ochraceus. I believe that the effects of the disease will lessen over time.

Methods/Materials
Materials:
meter tape, ruler, category chart
Methods:
Prepare one of two plots during a negative tide located at Natural Bridges State Beach by using a meter tape to outline the perimeter. Examine the plot by counting the number of sea stars, measure the size (using the radius), and categorize the health of the sea star. Repeat this procedure for the second plot. Lastly, analyze recent and past data from other northern California locations and compare it to the data gathered from Natural Bridges.

Results
My findings were relatively similar to other locations. Most of the sea stars found throughout northern California were juveniles and the overall populations increased. However, there was a difference in the percent diseased at each location.

Conclusions/Discussion
In conclusion, I found that the effects of Sea Star Wasting Syndrome are decreasing. Perhaps sea stars are reproducing offspring that are immune to the wasting disease. Perhaps salinity, water temperature or pollution affect the sea star population.

Summary Statement
The past and present effects of Sea Star Wasting Syndrome on the Pisaster Ochraceus sea star in northern California.

Help Received
1) My mother supervised me during the data collection 2) Laura Anderson from UCSC Long Marine Lab Ecology and Evolutionary Biology for lending me equipment and teaching me how to monitor accurately. 3) Melissa Redfield from UCSC Long Marine Lab Ecology and Evolutionary Biology for providing me