



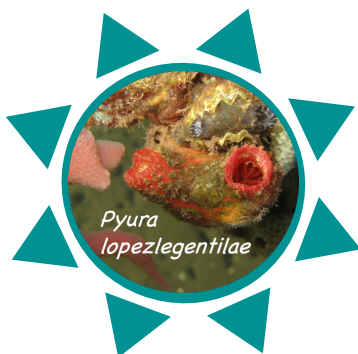
# LÓPEZ-LEGENTIL, SUSANNA

PROFESSOR | BIOLOGY & MARINE BIOLOGY  
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## RESEARCH

Biology and ecology of marine invertebrates as it relates to their resilience to anthropogenic impacts

Main research focus is on invasive ecology of introduced sea-squirts, species identification and genetic barcoding, population connectivity and significance of microbial symbiotic communities



## EDUCATION

**MBA • 2009 • UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON • USA**

Outstanding Academic Achievement Award

Boyd Robinson Most Value-Added Award

**PHD • 2005 • UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA • SPAIN**

European Doctorate Certificate

**MS • 2001 • UNIVERSITY OF PARIS VI • FRANCE**

**BS • 2000 • UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA • SPAIN**

## APPOINTMENTS

**PROFESSOR • UNCW • 2023 – CURRENT**

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR • UNCW • 2018 – 2023**

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR • UNCW • 2014 – 2018**

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR • U. BARCELONA • 2009 – 2013**

**RESEARCH ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR • UNCW • 2007 – 2009**

**FULBRIGHT POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW • UNCW • 2006 – 2007**

**POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW • U. PERPIGNAN • 2005 – 2006**

## A FEW HIGHLIGHTS

- Language skills: Fluent in English, Spanish, Catalan and French.
- Two sea-squirt species have been named after my lab (*Pyura imesa*) and myself (*P. lopezlegentilae*) as a homage to my work.
- Diving certifications: PADI nitrox, AAUS scientific diver, ACUC divemaster; > 700 dives.



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## PUBLICATIONS

### Undergraduate and graduate students in bold

1. **Morrison SK**, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2024) Effects of color variation and physiological state on ascidian microbiomes. *MicrobiologyOpen*, e1405.
2. **Hutchings B**, López-Legentil S, Stefaniak L, Nydam M, Erwin PM (2024) Distinct microbial communities in an ascidian-crustacean symbiosis. *Environmental Microbiology Reports* 16: e13242.
3. López-Legentil S (2023) Ascidians and their microbial symbionts. *Genesis* 61: e23534.
4. **Surprenant M**, Jarvis JC, López-Legentil S (2023) Ascidian diversity and abundance in North Carolina seagrass meadows. *Marine Ecology* 44: e12772.
5. **Hutchings B, Stiles E**, López-Legentil S (2023) Hurricane events facilitate the dominance of introduced invertebrate species in North Carolina harbors. *Biological Invasions* 25: 2495-2506.
6. López-Legentil S, Palanisamy SK, Smith KF, McCormack G, Erwin PM (2023) Prokaryotic symbiont communities in three ascidian species introduced to both Ireland and New Zealand. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 30: 6805-6817.
7. Nydam ML, Stefaniak LM, Lambert G, **Counts B**, López-Legentil S (2022) Compositional stability of invaded marine communities over time. *Biological Invasions* 24: 3489-3507.
8. Pawlik JR, Manker DC, **Evans JS**, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2021) Unusual morphotypes of the giant barrel sponge off Barbados. *Diversity* 13: 663.
9. **Evans JS**, López-Legentil S, Pawlik JR, **Turnbull IG**, Erwin PM (2021) Symbiotic microbial communities and cryptic lineages in the Caribbean giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. *Coral Reefs* 40: 853-865.
10. **Streit O**, Lambert G, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2021) Diversity and abundance of native and non-native ascidians in Puerto Rican harbors and marinas. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 167: 112262.
11. **Evans JS**, Erwin PM, **Sihaloho HF**, López-Legentil S (2021) Cryptic genetic lineages of a colonial ascidian host distinct microbiomes. *Zoologica Scripta* 50(4): 423-438.
12. **Goddard-Dwyer M**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2021) Microbiome shifts across the native and invasive range of the ascidian *Clavelina oblonga*. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 87(2): E02233-20.
13. **Lopez-Guzman M**, Erwin PM, Hirose E, López-Legentil (2020) Biogeography and host-specificity of cyanobacterial symbionts in colonial ascidians of the genus *Lissoclinum*. *Systematics and Biodiversity* 18(5): 496-509.
14. **Dror H**, Novak L, Evans JS, López-Legentil S, Shenkar N (2019) Core and dynamic microbial communities of two invasive ascidians: Can host-symbiont dynamics plasticity affect invasion capacity? *Microbial Ecology* 78(1): 170-184.
15. Riesgo A, **Taboada S**, Pérez-Portela R, **Melis P**, Xavier J, Blasco G, López-Legentil S (2019) Genetic diversity, connectivity and gene flow along the distribution of the emblematic Atlanto-Mediterranean sponge *Petrosia ficiformis* (Haplosclerida, Demospongiae). *BMC Evolutionary Biology* 19: 24.
16. **Evans JS**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2018) Comparing the efficiency of two common DNA extraction kits in the characterization of symbiotic microbial communities from ascidian tissue. *Microbes and the Environment* 33(4): 435-439.
17. **Evans JS**, Erwin PM, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2018) A comparison of prokaryotic symbiont communities in nonnative and native ascidians from reef and harbor habitats. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* 94(9): fiy139.
18. **Deignan LK**, Pawlik JR, López-Legentil S (2018) Evidence of shifting genetic structure among Caribbean giant barrel sponges in the Florida Keys. *Marine Biology* 165: 106.
19. Delsuc F, Philippe H, Tsagkogeorga G, Simion P, Tilak M-K; Turon X, López-Legentil S, Piette J, Lemaire P, Douzery EJP (2018) A phylogenomic framework and timescale for comparative genomics and evolutionary developmental biology of tunicates. *BMC Biology* 16: 39.
20. **Evans JS**, Erwin PM, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2017) Introduced ascidians harbor highly diverse and host-specific symbiotic microbial assemblages. *Scientific Reports* 7: 11033.

21. **Moitinho-Silva L**, Nielsen S, **Amir A**, **Gonzalez A**, **Ackermann GL**, **Cerrano C**, **Astudillo-Garcia C**, **Easson C**, Sipkema D, Liu F, **Steinert G**, Kotoulas G, McCormack GP, Feng G, Bell JJ, **Vincente J**, Björk JR, Montonya JM, Olson JB, Reveillaud J, Steindler L, **Pineda MC**, **Marra MV**, Ilan M, Taylor MW, Polymenakou P, Erwin POM, Schupp PJ, Simister RL, Kniwght R, Thacker RW, Costa R, Hill RT, López-Legentil S, Dailianis T, Ravasi T, Hentschel U, Li Z, Webster N, Thomas T (2017) The sponge microbiome project. *GigaScience* 6: 1-7.
22. **Gewing M-T**, López-Legentil S, Shenkar N (2017) Anthropogenic factors influencing invasive ascidian establishment in natural environments. *Marine Environmental Research* 131: 236-242.
23. **Villalobos MS**, Lambert G, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2017) Distribution and population dynamics of key ascidians in North Carolina harbors and marinas. *Aquatic Invasions* 12(4): 447-458.
24. Novak L, López-Legentil S, **Sieradzki E**, Shenkar N (2017) Rapid establishment of the non-indigenous ascidian *Styela plicata* and its associated bacteria in marinas and fishing harbors along the Mediterranean coast of Israel. *Mediterranean Marine Science* 18: 324-331.
25. Monniot F, López-Legentil S (2017) Deep-sea ascidians from Papua New Guinea. *Zootaxa* 4276(2): 529-538.
26. **Gantt SE**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2017) Stable microbial communities in the sponge *Crambe crambe* from inside and outside a polluted Mediterranean harbor. *FEMS Microbiology Letters* 364: fnx105.
27. **Moitinho-Silva L**, Steinert G, Nielsen S, **Hardoim CCP**, Wu Y-C, McCormack G, López-Legentil S, Marchant R, Webster N, Thomas T, Hentschel U (2017) Predicting the HMA-LMA dichotomy in marine sponges by machine learning. *Frontiers in Microbiology* 8: 752.
28. **Marino CM**, Pawlik JR, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2017) Latitudinal variation in the microbiome of the sponge *Ircinia campana* correlates with host haplotype but not anti-predatory chemical defense. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 565: 53-66.
29. Turon X, Cañete JI, Sellanes J, Rocha RM, López-Legentil S (2016) Too cold for invasions? Contrasting patterns of native and exotic ascidians in subantarctic and temperate Chile. *Management of Biological Invasions* 7(1): 77-86.
30. Riesgo A, Perez-Portela R, Pita L, Blasco G, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2016) Population structure and connectivity in the Mediterranean sponge *Ircinia fasciculata* are affected by mass mortalities and hybridization. *Heredity* 117(6): 427-439.
31. **Schreiber L**, Kjeldsen KU, Funch P, Jensen J, Obst M, Lopez-Legentil S, Schramm A (2016) Endozoicomonas are specific, facultative symbionts of sea squirts. *Frontiers in Microbiology* 7: 1042.
32. **Pineda MC**, **Lorente B**, López-Legentil S, Palacin C, Turon X (2016) Stochasticity in space, persistence in time: genetic heterogeneity in harbour populations of the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata*. *PeerJ* 4: e2158.
33. Thomas T, **Moitinho-Silva L**, Lurgi M, Björk JR, Easson C, Astudillo C, Olson JB, Erwin PM, Lopez-Legentil S, Luter H, Chaves-Fonnegra A, Costa R, Schupp P, Steindler L, Erpenbeck D, Gilbert J, Knight R, Ackerman G, Lopez JV, Taylor MW, Thacker RW, Montoya JM, Hentschel U, Webster N (2016) Diversity, structure and convergent evolution of the global sponge microbiome. *Nature Communications* 7: 11870.
34. **Pineda MC**, Turon X, **Perez-Portela R**, López-Legentil S (2016) Stable populations in unstable habitats: temporal genetic structure of the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata* in North Carolina. *Marine Biology* 163: 59.
35. Turon X, Cañete JI, Sellanes J, Rocha RM, López-Legentil S (2016) Ascidian fauna (Tunicata, Ascidiacea) of subantarctic and temperate regions of Chile. *Zootaxa* 4093(2): 151-180.
36. López-Legentil S, Turon X, Erwin PM (2016) Feeding cessation alters host morphology and bacterial communities in the ascidian *Pseudodistoma crucigaster*. *Frontiers in Zoology* 13: 2.
37. **Taboada S**, **Riesgo A**, Blasco G, **Sola J**, Xavier JB, López-Legentil S (2015) Development of 10 microsatellite markers for the Atlanto-Mediterranean sponge *Petrosia ficiformis*. *Conservation Genetic Resources* 7(4): 895-897.
38. **Riesgo A**, Maldonado M, López-Legentil S, Giribet G (2015) A proposal for the evolution of *Cathepsin* and *Silicatein* in sponges. *Journal of Molecular Evolution* 80(5-6): 278-291.
39. López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, **Turon M**, Yarden O (2015) Diversity of fungi isolated from three temperate ascidians. *Symbiosis* 66(2): 99-106.
40. López-Legentil S, Turon X, Espluga R, Erwin PM (2015) Temporal stability of bacterial symbionts in a temperate ascidian. *Frontiers in Microbiology* 6:1022.

41. López-Legentil S, **Legentil ML**, Erwin PM, Turon X (2015) Harbor networks as introduction patchworks: contrasting distribution patterns of native and introduced ascidians. *Biological Invasions* 17: 1623-1638.
42. **Zhang F, Pita L**, Erwin PM, **Abaid S**, López-Legentil S, Hill R (2014) Symbiotic archaea in marine sponges show stability and host specificity in community structure and ammonia oxidation functionality. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* 90(3): 699-707.
43. **Burgsdorf I**, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S, Cerrano C, **Haber M**, Frenk S, Steindler L (2014) Biogeography rather than association with cyanobacteria structures symbiotic microbial communities in the marine sponge *Petrosia ficiformis*. *Frontiers in Microbiology* 5(529): 1-11.
44. **Riesgo A**, Blasco G, Erwin PM, Pérez-Portela R, López-Legentil S (2014) Optimization of fourteen microsatellite loci in a Mediterranean demosponge subjected to population decimation, *Ircinia fasciculata*. *Conservation Genetic Resources* 6: 301-303.
45. Erwin PM, **Pineda MC**, Webster N, Turon X, López-Legentil S (2014) Down under the tunic: Bacterial biodiversity hotspots and widespread ammonia-oxidizing Archaea in coral reef ascidians. *The ISME Journal* 8(3): 575-588.
46. **Pita L**, Erwin PM, Turon X, Lopez-Legentil S (2013) Till death do us part: Stable sponge-bacteria associations under thermal and food shortage stresses. *PLoS ONE* 8(11): e80307
47. **Pita L**, Turon X, Lopez-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2013) Host rules: Spatial stability of bacterial communities associated with *Ircinia* spp. in the Western Mediterranean Sea. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* 86: 268-276
48. **Kersting DK, Casado C**, López-Legentil S, Linares C (2013) Unexpected divergent patterns in the sexual reproduction of the Mediterranean coral *Cladocora caespitosa*. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 486: 165-171.
49. López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, **Velasco M**, Turon X (2013) Growing or reproducing in a temperate sea: Optimization of resource allocation in a colonial ascidian. *Invertebrate Biology* 132(1): 69-80.
50. Erwin PM, **Pineda MC**, Webster N, Turon X, López-Legentil S (2013) Small core communities and high variability in bacteria associated with the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata*. *Symbiosis* 59(1): 35-46
51. **Pita L**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2013) Assessing the fidelity of sponge-bacteria relationships: Biogeography and host-specificity of bacterial communities in *Ircinia* spp. from the Bahamas. *Microbial Ecology* 66: 437-447.
52. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2013) Year-round reproduction in a seasonal sea: Biological cycle of the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata* in the western Mediterranean. *Marine Biology* 160: 221-230.
53. Hirose E, Turon X, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Hirose M (2012) First records of didemnid ascidians harboring *Prochloron* from Caribbean Panama: Genetic relationships between Caribbean and Pacific photosymbionts and host ascidians. *Systematics and Biodiversity* 10(4): 435-445.
54. **Pineda MC**, McQuaid CD, Turon X, López-Legentil S, **Ordóñez V**, Rius M (2012) Tough adults, frail babies: An analysis of stress sensitivity across early life-history stages of widely introduced marine invertebrates. *PLoS ONE* 7(10): e46672.
55. Erwin PM, **Pita L**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2012) Stability of sponge-bacteria symbioses over large seasonal shifts in temperature and irradiance. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* 78(20): 7358-7368.
56. Erwin PM, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2012) Ultrastructure, molecular phylogenetics and chlorophyll a content of novel cyanobacterial symbionts in temperate sponge hosts. *Microbial Ecology* 64: 771-783.
57. **Valero-Jiménez CA**, Pérez-Portela R, López-Legentil S (2012) Characterization of novel microsatellite markers from the worldwide invasive ascidian *Styela plicata*. *Conservation Genetics Resources* 4(3): 559-561.
58. **Pineda MC**, Turon X, López-Legentil S\* (2012) Stress levels over time in the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata*: The effects of temperature and salinity variations on *hsp70* gene expression. *Cell Stress and Chaperones* 17: 435-444. *Journal cover*.
59. **Loh T-L**, López-Legentil S, Song B, Pawlik JR (2012) Phenotypic variability in the Caribbean orange icing sponge *Mycale laevis* (Demospongiae: Poecilosclerida). *Hydrobiologia* 687(1): 205-217.
60. Erwin PM, López-Legentil S, **Gonzalez-Pech R**, Turon X (2012) A specific mix of generalists: Microbial symbionts in Mediterranean *Ircinia* spp. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* 79: 619-637.
61. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2011) The whereabouts of an ancient wanderer: Global phylogeography of the solitary ascidian *Styela plicata*. *PLoS ONE* 6(9): e25495.

62. López-Legentil S, Song B, Bosch M, Pawlik JR, Turon X (2011) Cyanobacterial diversity and a new *Acaryochloris*-like symbiont from Bahamian sea-squirts. PLoS ONE 6(8): e23938.
63. López-Legentil S, Turon X (2011) Pump water or produce larvae? Oscula occlusion during the reproductive period of the sponge *Svenzea zeai*. Zoological Studies 50(3): 395.
64. Martínez-García M, Koblížek M, López-Legentil S, Antón J (2011) Epibiosis of oxygenic phototrophs containing chlorophylls a, b, c, and d on the colonial ascidian *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*. Microbial Ecology 61(1): 13-19.
65. Erwin PM, López-Legentil S, Schuhmann PW (2010) The pharmaceutical value of the sea for anti-cancer drug discovery. Ecological Economics 70: 445-451.
  - Covered by Conservation Magazine 'This Week in Conservation Science', November 6, 2010. URL: [www.conservationmagazine.org/2010/11/crabs-and-cancer/](http://www.conservationmagazine.org/2010/11/crabs-and-cancer/)
66. López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Pawlik JR, Song B (2010) Effects of sponge bleaching on ammonia oxidizing Archaea: Distribution and relative expression of ammonia monooxygenase genes associated with the barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. Microbial Ecology 60(3): 561-571.
67. Bontemps N, Bry D, López-Legentil S, Simon-Levert A, Long C, Banaigs B (2010) Structure and antimicrobial activity of three new pyridoacridine alkaloids isolated from different color morphs of the ascidian *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*. Journal of Natural Products 73(6): 1044-1048.
68. López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Henkel TP, Loh T-L, Pawlik JR (2010) Phenotypic plasticity in the sponge *Callyspongia vaginalis*: morphological and molecular data. Scientia Marina 74(3): 445-453.
69. López-Legentil S, Song B, DeTure M, Baden DG (2010) Characterization and localization of a hybrid non ribosomal peptide synthetase and polyketide synthase gene from the toxic dinoflagellate *Karenia brevis*. Marine Biotechnology 12: 32-41.
70. López-Legentil S, Pawlik JR (2009) Genetic structure of the Caribbean giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta* using the I3-M11 partition of COI. Coral Reefs 28:157-165.
71. Pawlik JR, Henkel TP, McMurray SE, López-Legentil S, Loh T-L, Rohde S (2008) Patterns of sponge recruitment and growth on a shipwreck corroborate chemical defense resource trade-off. Marine Ecology Progress Series 368: 137-143.
72. López-Legentil S\*, Song B, McMurray SE, Pawlik JR (2008) Bleaching and stress in coral reef ecosystems: *Hsp70* expression by the giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. Molecular Ecology 17(7): 1840-1850.
73. López-Legentil S, Turon X (2007) Lack of genetic variation in mtDNA over the amphiatlantic distribution range of the ascidian *Ecteinascidia turbinata*. Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution 45(1): 405-408.
74. López-Legentil S, Bontemps-Subielos N, Turon X, Banaigs B (2007) Secondary metabolite and inorganic contents in *Cystodytes* sp. (Ascidacea): Temporal patterns and association with reproduction and growth. Marine Biology 151: 293-299.
75. López-Legentil S, Turon X, Planes S (2006) Genetic structure of the sea star squirt, *Botryllus schlosseri*, introduced in southern European harbors. Molecular Ecology 15: 3957-3967.
76. López-Legentil S, Turon X (2006) Population genetics, phylogeography and speciation of *Cystodytes* (Ascidacea) in the western Mediterranean. Biological Journal of the Linnaean Society 88: 203-214.
77. López-Legentil S, Bontemps-Subielos N, Turon X, Banaigs B (2006) Temporal variation in the production of four secondary metabolites in a colonial ascidian. Journal of Chemical Ecology 32: 2079-2084.
78. López-Legentil S\*, Turon X, Schupp P (2006) Chemical and physical defenses against predators in *Cystodytes* (Ascidacea). Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology 332(1): 27-36.
79. López-Legentil S, Dieckmann R, Bontemps-Subielos N, Turon X, Banaigs B (2005) Qualitative variation of alkaloids in color morphs of *Cystodytes* (Ascidacea). Biochemical Systematics and Ecology 33(11): 1107-1119.
80. Charles F, López-Legentil S, Grémare A, Amouroux JM, Desmalades M, Vétion G (2005) Does sediment resuspension by storms affect the fate of polychlorobiphenyls (PCBs) in benthic food chain? Interactions between changes in POM characteristics, adsorption and absorption by the mussel *Mytilus galloprovincialis*. Continental Shelf Research 25: 2533-2553.
81. López-Legentil S, Turon X (2005) How do morphotypes and chemotypes relate to genotypes? The colonial ascidian *Cystodytes* (Ascidacea: Polycitoridae). Zoologica Scripta 34(1): 3-14.

82. López-Legentil S, Ruchy M, Doménech A, Turon X (2005) Life cycles and growth rates of two morphotypes of *Cystodytes* (Ascidiacea) in the western Mediterranean. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 296: 219-228.
83. Turon X, López-Legentil S, Banaigs B (2005) Cell types, microsymbionts and pyridoacridine distribution in the tunic of *Cystodytes*. *Invertebrate Biology* 124(4): 355-369. *Journal cover*.
84. Turon X, López-Legentil S (2004) Ascidian molecular phylogeny inferred from mtDNA data with emphasis on the Aplousobranchiata. *Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution* 33: 309-320.
85. Agell G, Turon X, De Caralt S, López-Legentil S, Uriz MJ (2004) Molecular and organism biomarkers of copper pollution in the ascidian *Pseudodistoma crucigaster*. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 48(7-8): 759-767.
86. Caralt S, López-Legentil S, Tarjuelo I, Uriz MJ, Turon X (2002) Contrasting biological traits of *Clavelina lepadiformis* (Ascidiacea) populations from inside and outside harbors in western Mediterranean. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 244: 125-137.
87. Tarjuelo I, López-Legentil S, Codina M, Turon X (2002) Defence mechanisms of adults and larvae of marine invertebrates: patterns of toxicity and palatability in colonial ascidians. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 235: 103-115.

## GRANTS AND SPONSORED PROJECTS

**Only grants > \$1,000 are listed. CSURF awards, applied learning funds, & others < \$1,000: obtained yearly.**

1. PIs: Monteith G (undergraduate), S. López-Legentil (supervisor). Wrightsville Beach King Mackerel Tournament Undergraduate Research Fellowship (2023-2024) – \$3,000. “Characterizing ascidian diversity in aquaculture facilities and harbors from southern North Carolina”.
2. PIs: B. Hutchings (PhD student), López-Legentil (supervisor). Ruth D. Turner Scholarship in Marine Biology award (2022) – \$6,500. “Teamwork throughout evolutionary time: characterizing the gut and tunic-associated microbiomes of four Belizean ascidian species”.
3. PI: S. López-Legentil. UNCW CAS Summer 2022 Professional Development Grant (Summer I, 2022) – \$1,250. “Project Completer”.
4. PI: L. Stefaniak. Co-PIs: S. López-Legentil, P. Erwin, N. Nydam (January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024) – \$662,905 (\$302,077 to UNCW). NSF-DEB, Systematic and Biodiversity Science (SBS), “RUI: Development and application of genomic resources for ascidian taxonomy and holobiont evolution”.
5. PI: S. López-Legentil. Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development (Spring 2021) – \$4,908. “Ascidians in NC seagrass meadows: diversity, abundance and invasive potential”.
6. PI: S. López-Legentil. CAS equipment funding (Spring 2020) – \$7,073.94. “New PCR machine and vortex genie for the Molecular Teaching Lab at CMS”.
7. PIs: B. Hutchings (undergraduate), M. Madison-Cooper (undergraduate), S. López-Legentil (supervisor). UNCW SURCA (Summer 2019) – \$4,985.79. “Assessing the impact of Hurricane Florence in sea-squirt communities along the coast of North Carolina”.
8. PI: A. Taylor, Co-PIs: C. Alves de Souza, S. Emslie, S. López-Legentil, A. Pabst (September 1, 2018 to August 31, 2020) – \$611,130. NSF-MRI, DBI-1828053. “Acquisition of an [FEI APREO] ultra-high-resolution scanning microscope for UNCW microscopy facility”.
9. PI: S. López-Legentil, Co-PI: P. Erwin. Puerto Rico Sea Grant (May 1, 2018 to April 30, 2020) – \$115,600. “Development of a cost-efficient assessment tool to prevent the establishment of invasive marine species in Puerto Rico”.
10. PI: S. López-Legentil. CMS Pilot funds, UNCW (Spring 2018) - \$44,976.36. “Small autoclave replacement for CMS main building (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)”.
11. PI: A. Frampton, Co-PI: S. López-Legentil. CMS Pilot Project (Academic year 2017-2018) – \$15,000. “The first ascidian virome: A novel pathogen reservoir in coastal habitats”.
12. PI: S. López-Legentil, Co-PI: P. Erwin. CMS Pilot Project, UNCW (February 2016) – \$14,970.25. “Understanding microbial structure and function in host ascidians using metatranscriptomics”.



13. PI (USA): S. López-Legentil. PI (Israel): N. Shenkar, Bi-National Science Foundation (January 1, 2016 to September 31, 2017) – \$150,000. “Hidden allies: The potential contribution of symbiotic microbes to the ecology and invasive potential of introduced ascidians”.
14. PI: S. López-Legentil, Co-PI: P. Erwin. Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development, UNCW (December 2015 to May 2016) – \$4,850. “Microbial symbionts and marine bioinvasions: Contribution of the ascidian microbiome to the ecology and invasive potential of introduced species in North Carolina”.
15. PI: R. Collin, Co-PIs: (coordinator), S.L. Fredericq, E. Rodriguez, R.W. Thacker, S.A. Maslakova, M.P. Miglietta. Supporting: S. Lopez-Legentil (\$7,500 to support UNCW graduate student Bailey Counts while in Brazil) NSF 14-503, DEB - Biodiversity: Discovery & Analysis (March 2015, February 2018 “Collaborative Research: ARTS: Integrative Research and Training in Tropical Taxonomy”.
16. PI: S. Kamel, Co-PIs: P. Erwin, S. Lopez-Legentil. CAS Equipment Allocation (October 2014) – \$7,778. “Omega Fluor Plus Gel Documentation System”.
17. PI: S. López-Legentil. CMS Pilot Grants (July 1, 2014 to May 31, 2015) – \$20,000. “Sea-squirts of North Carolina: Species diversity and distribution”.
18. PI: S. Kamel, Co-PIs: P. Erwin, S. López-Legentil. CAS Equipment Allocation (January 14, 2014) – \$6,600. “Eppendorf refrigerated microcentrifuge”.
19. PI: P. Erwin, Co-PI: S. López-Legentil. UNCW Charles L. Cahill Award (January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014) – \$2,982. “Integrating genetics, taxonomy and chemical ecology to understand biodiversity and ecosystem function of sponge-microbe symbioses on Caribbean coral reefs”.
20. PI: S. López-Legentil. European Commission Marie Curie International Reintegration Grant FP7-PEOPLE-2010-RG 277038 (January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2014) – €87,500. “SYMASC: Bacterial symbiosis in ascidians”.
21. PI: S. López-Legentil. Spanish Government CTM2010-17755 Grant (January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013) – €166,980. “SOLID: Small organisms, large impacts: Diversity, dynamics, and significance of microbial symbionts in sponges and ascidians”.
22. PI: S. López-Legentil. Spanish Government RYC-2008-02829 (September 30, 2009 to July 31, 2014) Spanish Government RYC-2008-02829 – €192,480. “Biology and Ecology of Marine Invertebrates”
23. PI: X. Romero. Group faculty member: S. Lopez-Legentil & others. Catalan Government Fund for Quality Research Groups SGR 484 (January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2013) – €47,840. “Benthic Biology & Ecology Group”.
24. PI: S. López-Legentil. The Linnean Society & Systematics Association Research Fund (2009-2010) – €1,416. “Molecular characterization of key ascidians from the Bahamas”.

## UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Postdoctoral supervision

- Ana Riesgo (2012-2015).

### Graduate students, Chair

- **PhD Students (4):** (1) Mari Carmen Pineda (2007-2012); (2) Lucia Pita Galan (2009-2013); (3) James Evans (2016-2020); and (4) Brenna Hutchings (2022- *in progress*).
- **MS Students (12):** (1) Clara Casado Bueno (2010-2011); (2) Claudio Valero-Jimenez (2010-2011); (3) Marta Velasco (2011-2012); (4) Aïda Oliver González (2012-2013); (5) Miquel López (2012-2013); (6) Mirielle Lopez-Guzman (2014-2016); (7) Stephanie Villalobos (2014-2016); (8) Bailey Counts (2016-2018); (9) Olivia Streit (2018-2020); (10) Mina Surprenant (2020-2022); (11) Sammy Morrison (2020-2022); and (12) Jaclyn Levine (2023- *in progress*).



### **Graduate students, Committee member**

- Served in 7 PhD committees and 20 MS committees.

### **Undergraduate students, Chair**

- Supervised 4 Honors Theses (BIO 499), 23 Directed independent studies (BIO 49), 5 students in the FYRE program, 2 internships, and 2 practicums.

### **Research technician**

- Roger Espluga (2011).

## **TEACHING**

**Maternity leave Fall 2015; Departmental teaching release Fall 2019; CAS Research Reassignment Fall 2020.**

### **Undergraduate courses**

- Principles of Biodiversity (BIO 202, >150 students per class, Fall 2017, 2014; Spring 2016).
- Introduction to Research (BIO 291, 2021, 2020).
- Biological Invasions (BIO 322, 30 to 60 students per class, Fall 2023, 2022, 2021, 2018, 2016).
- Global Environmental Problems (BIO 378, 60 students per class, Spring 2023).
- Directed Independent Study (BIO 491, Fall 2023, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2014; Spring 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015).
- Senior Seminar (BIO 495, max. 12 students per class, Summer 2019, Fall 2023, 2022, 2021, 2018, 2017, 2016; Spring 2016).
- Internship in Biological Science (BIO 498, Summer 2019, Fall 2017).
- Honors Work in Biology (BIO 499, Fall 2023, 2022, 2020, 2018; Spring 2022, 2021, 2019).
- Biology of Marine Invertebrates (max. 40 students per class, lecture, lab, field; Spring 2013).
- Zoology I (max. 24 students per class, lecture and laboratory, Fall 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013).
- Zoology II (max. 22 students per class, lecture and laboratory, Fall 2010, 2011, 2012).
- Zoology (20 students per class, laboratory and field, Fall 2003, 2004, 2005).
- Invertebrates (max. 15 students per class, laboratory and field, Spring 2003, 2004, 2005, 2010).
- Animal Biology (20 students per class, laboratory. Spring 2005, Spring 2006).

### **Graduate courses**

- Advanced Topics in Ecology (BIO 534, max. 12 students per class, Spring 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017).
- Advanced Topics in Ecology Labs (BIOL 534, max. 12 students per lab, Spring 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017).
- Special Topic: Molecular Ecology (BIO 585, max. 12 students per class, Spring 2015).
- Directed Independent Study (BIO 591, Fall 2023, 2021, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2014; Spring 2020, 2019, 2018, 2016, 2015).
- Master's Research (BIO 598, Fall 2021, 2019, 2016; Spring 2020, 2016).
- Master's Thesis (BIO 599, Fall 2023, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2015; Spring 2021, 2020, 2018, 2016, 2015).
- Doctorate Level Directed Independent Study (BIO 691, Fall 2023, 2022; Spring 2023, 2020).
- Dissertation Research (BIO 698, Fall 2022, 2016; Spring 2023).
- Dissertation (BIO 699, Fall 2023, 2022, 2019).



## High School

- Coastal and Marine Environment (max. 20 students, field, over 400h between 1999 and 2000). ECOIMA Environmental Education Center.

## PRESENTATIONS AT MEETINGS

### Invited Seminars & Workshops

1. “Globetrotter sea-squirts and their microbial allies”. (2024) Department of Genetics, University of Barcelona, Barcelona (Spain).
2. “Ascidians in NC and their microbial symbionts” (2023). Woman in Tunicate Biology Symposium (virtual).
3. “Especies bioindicadoras de invasiones: Ascidias nativas y exóticas en puertos y marinas de Puerto Rico” (2020) Universidad Interamericana Puerto Rico PR (USA).
4. “Bioindicators of island invasions: Native and non-native sea-squirts in Puerto Rican harbors and marinas” (2020) University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez PR (USA).
5. “Friends, foes and freeloaders: Microbial symbionts in native and introduced ascidians” (2019) Department of Biological Sciences, UNC Charlotte (USA)
6. “Ascidians and their microbial symbionts” (2018) Center for Advanced Studies of Blanes, Spanish National Research Council, Blanes (Spain).
7. “Distant but not so different: Symbiotic relationships between bacteria and sponges and ascidians” (2012) Department of Cellular Biology – Seminar. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain).
8. “A case of sponge-envy? An emerging picture of ascidian-associated bacterial communities” (2012) Lower Invertebrates Symbiosis with Microorganisms – Workshop. Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv and Eilat (Israel).
9. “Bleaching and stress in the redwoods of the reef” (2010) Biodiversity Research Institute – Seminar. Zoological Museum of Barcelona (Spain).
10. “Marine science and business” (2009) Summer Ventures in Science and Mathematics – Seminar UNC Wilmington (USA).
11. “Interdisciplinary approaches to marine chemical ecology: Polymorphism, secondary metabolite production and life cycle of a sea squirt” (2007) Department of Biology and Marine Biology – Seminar. UNC Wilmington (USA).
12. “Assessing relationships between morphotype-chemotype-genotype to determine polymorphism” (2005) École Pratique des Hautes Études – Seminar. University of Perpignan (France).
13. “Patterns of palatability and toxicity of larvae and adults of colonial ascidians” (2004) Marine Laboratory – Seminar, University of Guam (USA).
14. “The importance of multidisciplinary approaches in assessing intraspecies variability in ascidians” (2003) Marine Laboratory – Seminar, University of Guam (USA).

### Conferences, Symposiums & Workshops

**Undergraduate and graduate students in bold. Presenter author is underlined.**

1. **Brenna TB**, López-Legentil S, Stefaniak L, Nydam M, Erwin PM (2023). Distinct microbial communities among microhabitats in an ascidian-crustacean symbiosis. North Carolina American Society for Microbiology (NC-ASM), Raleigh NC.
2. **Kennedy GE**, López-Legentil S, Tolar BB (2023) Using molecular methods to explore host-associated ammonia-oxidizing Archaea inhabiting ascidian tissues. North Carolina American Society for Microbiology (NC-ASM), Raleigh NC.
3. López-Legentil S, **Evans JS**, **Morrison SK**, Erwin PM (2023) Evolving together: Microbial symbionts as indicators of speciation. Benthic Ecology Meeting (Miami, FL).

4. **McNeil T**, Nydam M, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Stefaniak L (2023) Combining molecular and morphological markers to identify members of the family Perophoridae (Chordata, Ascidiacea). Benthic Ecology Meeting (Miami, FL).
5. **Hutchings BT**, López-Legentil S, Stefaniak L, Nydam M, Erwin PM (2023) Happy at home: distinct microbial communities among microhabitats in an ascidian-crustacean complex. Benthic Ecology Meeting (Miami, FL).
6. **Gulnick M**, Nydam M, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Stefaniak L (2023) Furthering ascidian taxonomy through the use of molecular markers. Benthic Ecology Meeting (Miami, FL).
7. **Erwin PM**, **Hutchings BT**, López-Legentil S (2023) All in the mix: Functional profiles of ascidian microbiomes remain stable despite shifts in symbiont composition. Benthic Ecology Meeting (Miami, FL).
8. **Morrison KS**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2022) Genetic and microbial community analyses in two physiological states and color morphs of the colonial ascidian *Polyclinum constellatum*. UNCW Center for Marine Science Graduate poster session.
9. **Surprenant M**, Jarvis J, López-Legentil S (2022) Ascidian abundance and diversity in NC seagrass meadows. UNCW Center for Marine Science Graduate poster session.
10. **Lindsay C**, **Surprenant M**, López-Legentil S (2022) Genetic diversity of the pleated sea-squirt in the Masonboro Channel. UNCW CSURF Undergraduate Research Showcase (April 9, 2022).
11. **Ormond T**, López-Legentil S (2022) Genetic diversity over time: Has the population of the sea squirt *Styela plicata* at the UNCW Center for Marine Science docks remained stable since 2007? UNCW CSURF Undergraduate Research Showcase.
12. **Surprenant M**, Jarvis J, López-Legentil S (2022) Ascidian diversity and relative abundance in North Carolina seagrass meadows. Benthic Ecology Meeting, Portsmouth, NH (USA).
13. **López-Legentil S**, Palanisamy SK, Smith KF, McCormack GP, Erwin PM (2022) Biogeographic patterns in the microbiomes of introduced ascidians. Benthic Ecology Meeting, Portsmouth, NH.
14. **Hutchings B**, **Stiles E**, López-Legentil S (2022) Swept away by the storm: Impact of Hurricane Florence on ascidian communities in North Carolina harbors and marinas. Benthic Ecology Meeting, Portsmouth, NH.
15. **Hutchings BT**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2022) Functional redundancy in the ascidian microbiome: A metagenomic comparison of *Eudistoma capsulatum* microbiomes from marina and reef habitats in North Carolina. The North Carolina branch of the American Society for Microbiology (Boone, NC).
16. **Dey C**, **Surprenant M**, López-Legentil S (2021) Population genetic structure of the solitary sea-squirt *Styela plicata* over time at Masonboro Sound. Undergraduate Research Showcase. UNC Wilmington (virtual).
17. **Surprenant M**, Jarvis J, López-Legentil S (2021) Ascidian abundance and diversity in North Carolina seagrass meadows. Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (virtual).
  - Ms. Surprenant received a Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation award for her presentation.
18. **Watson N**, López-Legentil (2021) Genetic barcoding of unknown animal samples to identify an invasive species. CSURF Undergraduate Research Showcase (virtual).
19. **Evans JS**, Erwin PM; Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2019) Invasion of the sea squirts: characterizing the microbial communities of introduced ascidians. Global Marine Sciences Submit, UNCW Wilmington NC (USA).
20. **Hutchings B**, López-Legentil S (2019) Swept away by the storm: A comparative study of the recovery ability of native and non-native ascidian species along NC's coast following Hurricane Florence. Undergraduate Research Showcase. UNC Wilmington (USA).
21. **Hutchings B**, López-Legentil S (2019) Swept away by the storm: A comparative study of the recovery ability of native and non-native ascidian species along NC's coast following Hurricane Florence. Undergraduate Research Showcase. UNC Wilmington (USA).
22. **Evans JS**, Erwin PM, Pawlik JR, López-Legentil S (2019) Detection and ecological relevance of distinct genetic clusters within the Caribbean barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. Benthic Ecology Meetings, St. Johns, Newfoundland (Canada).
  - Mr. Evans was awarded an honorable mention for his oral presentation.
23. **Stefaniak L**, López-Legentil S (2019) Moving to the reef: historical and present observations of the worldwide introduced species *Styela plicata* in the Northwest Atlantic continental shelf. Benthic Ecology Meetings, St. Johns, Newfoundland (Canada).

24. Erwin PM, Miloslavic M, López-Legentil S (2019) Distance-decay relationships in sponge microbiomes: A global perspective. Benthic Ecology Meetings, St. Johns, Newfoundland (Canada).
25. Evans JS, López-Legentil S, Pawlik JR, Turnbull IG, Erwin PM (2019) Hidden in plain sight: do cryptic lineages of the giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta* possess different microbial communities? Global Marine Sciences Submit, UNC Wilmington (USA).
26. Evans JS, Erwin PM; Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2019) Invasion of the sea squirts: characterizing the microbial communities of introduced ascidians. Global Marine Sciences Submit, UNC Wilmington (USA).
27. Evans JS, Erwin PM; Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2019) Make new friends, or keep the old? Introduced and native sea squirts may use different strategies for sourcing microbial symbionts. Global Marine Sciences Submit, UNC Wilmington (USA).
28. Thomas PA, Lopez-Legentil S, Wilbur AE, Kinsey ST (2019) Effects of air Exposure on markers of oxidative damage in an invasive tunicate (*Styela plicata*) and a native shellfish (*Crassostrea virginica*). Society of Integrative and Comparative Biology, Tampa FL (USA).
29. Stiles E, López-Legentil S (2019) Growth and recovery of ascidians in North Carolina harbors after Hurricane Florence. Undergraduate Research Showcase. UNC Wilmington (USA).
30. Madison-Cooper E, Lopez-Legentil S (2019) Assessing the genetic identity of the widely distributed ascidian *Molgula manhattensis* in North Carolina. Undergraduate Research Showcase. UNC Wilmington (USA).
31. Thomas P, Kinsey ST, López-Legentil S, Wilbur A (2019) Effects of air exposure on markers of oxidative damage in an invasive tunicate (*Styela plicata*) and a native shellfish (*Crassostrea virginica*). Annual Meeting of the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, Tampa, FL (USA).
  - Abstract published in Integrative and Comparative Biology 59: E421
32. Evans JS, Erwin PM, Sihalofo HF, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S (2018) Color morphs of *Distaplia bermudensis* represent cryptic lineages with distinct microbiomes that remain structurally and functionally equivalent across different environments. International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
33. Goddard-Dwyer M, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2018) Microbiome shifts across the native and invasive range of the ascidian *Clavelina oblonga*. International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
34. Webb J, Counts B, Nydam M, López-Legentil S (2018) Two lineages of *Polyandrocarpa zorritensis* co-exist in the US southeastern Atlantic. International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
  - Ms. Webb was awarded a UNCW undergraduate CSURF travel Award to assist to the conference.
35. Counts B, Turon X, López-Legentil S (2018) The Bahamas remain pristine: No introduced ascidians detected in reef and mangrove habitats. International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
36. Webb J, Counts B, Nydam M, López-Legentil S (2018) Two lineages of *Polyandrocarpa zorritensis* co-exist in the US southeastern Atlantic. Spring UNCW Showcase of Student Research and Creativity, Wilmington NC (USA).
37. Easson C, Thacker RW, Turon X, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2017) Temporal dynamics of sponge microbial communities. International Sponge Conference, Galway (Ireland).
38. Riesgo A, Pérez-Portela R, Taboada S, Pita L, Erwin PM, Melis P, Xavier JR, López-Legentil S (2017) Genetic structure patterns in Atlanto-Mediterranean sponges: environmental factors and biological features driving connectivity in scenarios with mass-mortalities. International Sponge Conference, Galway (Ireland).
39. López-Legentil S, Evans JS, Shenkar N, Erwin PM (2017) Introduced and native ascidian microbiomes from artificial versus natural habitats. 9th Tunicate International Meeting, New York (USA).
40. Stefaniak L, López-Legentil S (2017) Moving to the reef: historical and present observations of the worldwide introduced species *Styela plicata* in the Northwest Atlantic continental shelf. 9<sup>th</sup> Tunicate International Meeting, New York (USA).
41. Sihalofo H, Evans JS, Lambert G, López-Legentil S (2017) Color variation in an introduced ascidian reveals two distinct genetic lineages. 9<sup>th</sup> Tunicate International Meeting, New York (USA).
42. Gewing M-T, López-Legentil S, Shenkar N (2017) Anthropogenic factors influencing invasive ascidian establishment in natural environments. 9<sup>th</sup> Tunicate International Meeting, New York (USA).
43. Evans JS, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2017) Comparing the efficiency of two common DNA extraction kits in the characterization of microbial symbiotic communities from ascidian tissue. American Society for Microbiology – North Carolina Branch Annual Meeting, Raleigh NC (USA).

44. **Brown D, Keidel A, López-Legentil S, Frampton AR** (2017) Virus hunting in ascidians (sea squirts). State of North Carolina Undergraduate Research & Creativity Symposium, Campbell University NC (USA).
45. **Garcia E, Posey M, López-Legentil S** (2017) Juvenile permit size-class structure and population connectivity in Belize. 6<sup>th</sup> BTT International Symposium. Weston, FL (USA).
46. **Evans JS, Erwin PM, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S** (2017) A comparison of microbial symbiont community structure and host specificity in introduced and native ascidians from artificial versus natural habitats. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Myrtle Beach SC (USA).
47. **Gantt S, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM** (2017) Hard rock! Stable sponge microbiome in a heavy metal polluted environment. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Myrtle Beach SC (USA).
48. **Sihaloho HF, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S** (2017) Symbionts as taxonomic tools: Cryptic lineages of the of the colonial ascidian *Distaplia bermudensis* host unique microbial communities. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Myrtle Beach SC (USA).
49. **Counts B, Turon X, López-Legentil S** (2017) The lesser-known Caribbean ascidians: molecular and morphological identification of Bahamian species. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Myrtle Beach SC (USA).
50. **Pineda MC, Lorente B, López-Legentil S, Palacín C, Turon X** (2016) Spatial heterogeneity, temporal homogeneity: genetic structure in harbor populations of the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata*. XIX Iberian Symposium on Marine Biology Studies. Porto, Portugal.
  - Abstract published in *Frontiers in Marine Science*, doi: 10.3389/conf.FMARS.2016.05.00185
51. **Evans JS, López-Legentil S, Shenkar N, Erwin PM** (2016) Aiding and abetting: characterizing the diversity, host-specificity, and potential function of microbial symbionts in introduced North Carolina ascidians. Meeting of the North Carolina Branch of the American Society for Microbiology. Wilmington NC (USA).
52. **Gantt S, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM** (2016) Indifferent to pollution: Stable microbial communities in the sponge *Crambe crambe* from inside and outside a Mediterranean harbor. Meeting of the North Carolina Branch of the American Society for Microbiology. Wilmington NC (USA).
53. **Gewing M, López-Legentil S, Shenkar N** (2016) Assessing which biotic and abiotic factors contribute to non-indigenous ascidians establishment on natural substrates. ParrotNet training school (EU COST actions). Marseille (France).
54. **Lopez-Guzman M, López-Legentil S, Hirose E, Erwin** (2016) Biogeography and host-specificity of cyanobacterial symbionts in colonial ascidians. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Portland MN (USA).
55. **Villalobos S, Lambert G, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S** (2016) Distribution and population dynamics of key ascidians in North Carolina harbors and marinas. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Portland MN (USA).
56. **Evans JS, Erwin PM, Shenkar N, López-Legentil S** (2016) Diversity and host-specificity of microbial symbionts in ascidians from North Carolina harbors. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Portland MN (USA).
57. **Deignan LK, López-Legentil S, Pawlik JR** (2016) Fine-scale spatial and size-structured genetic relatedness of the Caribbean giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. Benthic Ecology Meetings, Portland MN (USA).
58. **Kharkevitch C, Villalobos S, Evans JS, Lopez-Legentil S** (2016) Genetic analysis reveals two distinct lineages within the introduced species of the colonial ascidian *Distaplia bermudensis* in North Carolina. UNCW Spring Showcase of Student Research and Creativity, Wilmington NC (USA).
  - Biology and Marine Biology Best Non-Honors Research Poster Award
59. **Villalobos S, López-Legentil S** (2015) Morphological and genetic characterization of introduced ascidians and their distribution patterns in North Carolina harbors and marinas. 10<sup>th</sup> UNCW Spring Student Research and Creativity Showcase, Wilmington NC (USA).
60. **Deignan LK, Pawlik JR, White JW, López-Legentil S** (2015) Testing the Janzen-Connell hypothesis with fine-scale spatial and genetic analyses of the distribution of Caribbean giant barrel sponges. Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting, Baltimore MD (USA).
61. **Cañete JI, Turon X, Sellanes J, López-Legentil S, da Rocha R** (2015) Distribution of native and exotic ascidians in two areas of Chile with contrasting oceanographic features and human activity record. 3<sup>rd</sup> International Symposium on the effects of Climate Change on the World's Oceans, Santos City (Brazil).

62. **Villalobos S**, Lambert G, López-Legentil S (2015) Morphological and genetic characterization of introduced ascidians and their distribution patterns in North Carolina harbors and marinas. Benthic Ecology Meeting, Quebec (Canada).
63. **López-Legentil S**, Lambert G, Stefaniak L (2014) Ascidian rapid assessment survey of North Carolina marinas July 2014. V International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
64. **López-Legentil S**, **Legentil ML**, Erwin PM, Turon X (2014) Harbor networks as introduction patchworks: Contrasting distribution patterns of native and introduced ascidians. V International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
65. Turon X, Cañete JI, Sellanes J, López-Legentil S, **Rocha RM** (2014) Distribution patterns of native and exotic ascidians in two areas of Chile with contrasting oceanographic features and human activity record. V International Invasive Sea Squirt Conference, Woods Hole MA (USA).
66. **Steindler L**, **Burgsdorf I**, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S, Cerrano C, **Haber M** (2014) Biogeography rather than association with cyanobacteria structures symbiotic microbial communities in the marine sponge *Petrosia ficiformis*. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology, Baltimore MD (USA).
67. **Pita L**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Riesgo A (2014) Microbial activity insights derived from metatranscriptomics. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology, Baltimore MD (USA).
68. **Zhang F**, **Pita L**, Erwin PM, **Abaid S**, López-Legentil S, Hill RT (2014) Stability and host specificity in symbiotic Archaea community structure associated with marine sponges. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology, Baltimore MD (USA).
69. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2014) Life history of the introduced ascidian *Styela plicata*: Pathway to a holistic understanding. XVIII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, Gijon (Spain).
70. López-Legentil S, **Legentil ML**, Erwin PM, **Turon X** (2014) Native and introduced ascidians in harbors of the NE Iberian Peninsula: distribution, diversity and abundance. XVIII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, Gijon (Spain).
71. **Schreiber L**, Kjeldsen KU, Tegetmeyer H, Funch P, López-Legentil S, Dubilier N, Schramm A (2014) A tunicate-specific *Endozoicomonas*-lineage, and comparative genomics and physiology of the symbiotic *Endozoicomonas* clade. 15<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Microbial Ecology, Seoul (South-Korea).
72. **Riesgo A**, López-Legentil S, Leys SP, Giribet G (2013) Molecular machinery of germ line, sex determination, and vitellogenesis of sponges. 9<sup>th</sup> World Sponge Conference, Fremantle (Australia).
73. **Riesgo A**, Blasco G, Erwin PM, Pérez-Portela R, López-Legentil S (2013) Tools for conservation of marine species subjected to population decimation in the Mediterranean: Optimization of microsatellite loci in the sponge *Ircinia fasciculata*. 9<sup>th</sup> World Sponge Conference, Fremantle (Australia).
74. **Pita L**, Erwin PM, Turon X, López-Legentil S (2013) Till death do us apart: Stable sponge-bacteria associations under thermal and food shortage stresses. 9<sup>th</sup> World Sponge Conference, Fremantle (Australia).
75. **Pita L**, Turon X, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2013) You've got a friend in me: High stability of *Ircinia*-associated bacterial communities over time and space. 9<sup>th</sup> World Sponge Conference, Fremantle (Australia).
76. **Riesgo A**, Maldonado M, López-Legentil S, Giribet G (2013) Molecular evolution of the lysosomal cysteine proteases in sponges (Porifera). II Iberian Congress of Biological Systematics, CISA, Barcelona (Spain).
77. **Riesgo A**, López-Legentil S, Leys SP, Giribet G (2013) The molecular machineries of germ line, sex determination, and vitellogenesis of sponges. ICREA Conference on the Evolution of Multicellularity, Barcelona (Spain).
78. **Pineda MC**, Turon X, Pérez-Portela R, Lopez-Legentil S (2013) Life beyond death: Renewal of *Styela plicata* introduced populations after die-off episodes in North Carolina, USA. 7<sup>th</sup> International Tunicate Meeting, Naples (Italy).
79. **Legentil ML**, Turon X, Erwin PM, **Lopez-Legentil S** (2013) Introduced ascidians in Catalan harbors (NE Spain). 7<sup>th</sup> International Tunicate Meeting, Naples (Italy).
80. Erwin PM, **Pineda MC**, Webster N, Turon X, **Lopez-Legentil S** (2013) Deep sequencing of the ascidian microbiome. 7<sup>th</sup> International Tunicate Meeting, Naples (Italy).
81. **Hirose E**, Turon X, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, Hirose M (2012) Caribbean *Prochloron* and their host ascidians. 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Zoological Society of Japan, Osaka (Japan).

82. **Rius M, Pineda MC**, McQuaid C, Turon X, López-Legentil S, **Ordoñez V** (2012) Abiotic factors mediating dispersal: An analysis of stress sensitivity across multiple life-history stages. 10<sup>th</sup> International Larval Biology Symposium. Berkeley CA (United States).
83. López-Legentil S, Erwin PM, **Velasco M**, Espluga R, **Turon X** (2012) Relationship between host life-cycle and bacterial symbiont diversity in the Mediterranean ascidian *Didemnum fulgens*. XVII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, San Sebastián (Spain).
84. **Turon X, Pita L, González-Pech R, Pujals-Paunero A**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2012) A faithful marriage: Temporal and spatial stability of host-specific bacterial symbionts in three sympatric *Ircinia* spp. (Porifera). XVII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, San Sebastián (Spain).
85. **Pineda MC**, McQuaid CD, **Turon X**, López-Legentil S, **Ordóñez V**, Rius M (2012) Tough adults, frail babies: Sensitivity to abiotic factors across multiple life-history stages of widely introduced marine invertebrates. XVII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, San Sebastián (Spain).
86. **Casado C, Kersting DK**, López-Legentil S, Linares C (2012) Reproductive study of the Mediterranean coral *Cladocora caespitosa* (Anthozoa, Scleractinia). XVII Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, San Sebastián (Spain).
87. **Pineda MC**, Webster N, Turon X, López-Legentil S (2012) Not so lower: Bacterial diversity in ascidians from the Great Barrier Reef. International Workshop on Lower Invertebrates Symbiosis with Microorganisms, Tel Aviv and Eilat (Israel).
88. **Erwin PM**, López-Legentil S, **Pita L**, Turon X (2012) A specific mix of generalists: What shapes the unique structure of the sponge microbiota? International Workshop on Lower Invertebrates Symbiosis with Microorganisms, Tel Aviv and Eilat (Israel).
89. **Pita L**, López-Legentil S, Erwin PM (2012) Assessing the fidelity of sponge-bacteria relationships: Spatial and host-specific structure of bacterial communities in *Ircinia* hosts. International Workshop on Lower Invertebrates Symbiosis with Microorganisms, Tel Aviv and Eilat (Israel).
90. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Rius M, McQuaid C, Turon X (2011) A threat around the corner? Factors involved in the invasive potential of an introduced ascidian. VII International Conference in Marine Bioinvasions, Barcelona (Spain).
91. **Valero C**, Pérez-Portela R, López-Legentil S (2011) Coming and going: Temporal genetic variability of the introduced sea squirt *Styela plicata*. VII International Conference in Marine Bioinvasions, Barcelona (Spain).
92. **López-Legentil S**, Turon X, Song B (2011) Ascidian photosymbionts: Do we know who's hiding in the tunic? 6<sup>th</sup> International Tunicate Meeting, Montreal (Canada).
93. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Rius M, McQuaid C, Turon X (2011) Crossing the thin line between introduced and invasive species: Factors shaping the distribution and invasive potential of the solitary ascidian *Styela plicata*. 6<sup>th</sup> International Tunicate Meeting, Montreal (Canada).
94. **Pita L**, Erwin PM, López-Legentil S (2011) Spatial variation and host-specificity of bacterial assemblages in Caribbean sponges. 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology, Würzburg (Germany).
95. **Erwin PM**, López-Legentil S, **Pita L**, Turon X (2011) Host-specificity and environmental structuring of bacterial symbionts in Mediterranean *Ircinia* spp. 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology, Würzburg (Germany).
- Reviewed by Taylor et al. (2011) Marine Biotechnology 13(6): 1057-1061.
96. **Erwin PM**, López-Legentil S, **Pita L**, Turon X (2011) Host-specificity and environmental structuring of bacterial symbionts in Mediterranean *Ircinia* spp. 4<sup>th</sup> Internal Symposium at the Center for Advanced Studies of Blanes (Spain).
97. **Loh T-L**, López-Legentil S, Song B, Pawlik JR (2010) Investigating the growth and color morphs of the Caribbean sponge *Mycale laevis*. VIII World Sponge Conference, Girona (Spain).
98. **López-Legentil S**, Erwin PM, Pawlik JR, Song B (2010) Ammonia oxidizing Archaea in bleaching barrel sponges: Diversity, distribution and ammonia monooxygenase expression. VIII World Sponge Conference, Girona (Spain).

99. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2010) Introducciones y expansiones: Diferenciación genética y patrones filogeográficos en la ascidia solitaria *Styela plicata*. XVI Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, Alicante (Spain).
100. **López-Legentil S**, Song B, Pawlik JR, Turon X (2010) Ascidian-cyanobacteria symbiosis. XVI Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, Alicante (Spain).
101. **Pineda MC**, **Muntadas-Olivé A**, **Espluga-García R**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2010) Ciclo reproductor de la ascidia invasora *Styela plicata* en el Mediterráneo noroccidental. XVI Simposio Ibérico de Estudios de Biología Marina, Alicante (Spain).
102. **Pineda MC**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2010) Global phylogeography of the solitary ascidian *Styela plicata*. International Invasive Sea-squirt Conference III, Woods Hole MA (United States).
103. **Loh T-L**, López-Legentil S, Song B, Pawlik JR (2010) Phylogenetic analysis of the sponge genus *Mycale* (Demospongiae; Poecilosclerida): How valid is the current classification? The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, Seattle WA (United States).
  - Published in Integrative and Comparative Biology (2010), Volume 50(1): E260
104. **López-Legentil S**, Erwin PM (2009) From marine biotechnology to valuation studies: The value of the sea for anti-cancer drug discovery. Marine Biotechnology Workshop, UNC Wilmington (United States).
105. **López-Legentil S**, Song B, DeTure M, Baden D (2008) Isolation and localization of a non-ribosomal peptide synthetase / polyketide synthase complex from the toxic dinoflagellate *Karenia brevis*. Microbial Genomics & Metagenomics Workshop, Walnut Creek CA (United States).
106. **López-Legentil S**, Pawlik JR (2008) Genetic structure of the giant barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta* in northern Caribbean. 11th Coral Reef Symposium, Fort Lauderdale FL (United States).
107. **Pawlik JR**, Henkel TP, Loh T-L, López-Legentil S, McMurray SE, Rohde S (2007) Testing an hypothesis on sponge chemical defenses using the wreck of the USS Spiegel Grove. 5<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Marine Natural Products, Ischia (Italy).
108. Bontemps-Subielos N, Simon-Levert A, López-Legentil S, **Banaigs B** (2007) Pyridoacridine alkaloids within purple morphs of *Cystodytes* spp. (Ascidiacea: Polycitoridae). 5<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Marine Natural Products, Ischia (Italy).
109. **Song B**, López-Legentil S, Pawlik JR (2007) Genetic investigation of archaeal nitrification in the Caribbean barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. American Society for Microbiology Conferences, Quebec (Canada).
  - Published in Abstracts of the General Meeting of the American Society for Microbiology (2007), Volume 107: 434-435.
110. **López-Legentil S**, Song B, McMurray S, Pawlik JR (2007) Using molecular tools to examine bleaching and stress in the Caribbean barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta*. 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Benthic Ecology Meetings, Atlanta GE (United States).
111. **López-Legentil S**, Henkel TP, Pawlik JR (2007) Troubling taxonomy: The genus *Callispongia* in the Caribbean. 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Benthic Ecology Meetings, Atlanta GE (United States).
112. **Pawlik JR**, Henkel TP, Loh T-L, López-Legentil S, McMurray SE, Rohde S (2007) Insight into sponge ecology from the wreck of the *USS Spiegel Grove*. 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Benthic Ecology Meetings, Atlanta GE (United States).
113. **López-Legentil S**, Song B, McMurray S, Pawlik JR (2006) Applications of QRT-PCR: Quantification of stress levels associated with bleaching in the giant barrel sponge. XIV Iberian Symposium on Marine Biology, Barcelona (Spain).
114. **Schupp P**, López-Legentil S, Turon X (2006) Chemical and physical defenses against predators in *Cystodytes* (Ascidiacea). Gordon Research Conferences - Marine Natural Products, Ventura CA (United States).
115. **López-Legentil S**, Turon X, Bontemps-Subielos N, Banaigs B (2005) Adjusting the budget: Is temporal variation on defense production related to other biological parameters? 4<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Marine Natural Products, Paris (France).
116. **López-Legentil S**, Turon X, Schupp P, Bontemps-Subielos N, Banaigs B (2004) Seasonal variation and anti-predatory properties of ascididemin, the major alkaloid of the ascidian *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*. XI International Symposium of Marine Natural Products, Sorrento (Italy).

117. Dieckmann R, López-Legentil S, Turon X, von Döhren H (2004) Direct rapid chemotyping of minute samples from tunicates, marine sponges and associated bacteria with MALDI-TOF Mass Spectrometry. XI International Symposium of Marine Natural Products, Sorrento (Italy).
118. Bontemps-Subielos N, López-Legentil S, Jamme F, Long C, Banaigs B (2004) Intraspecific variability in the pyridoacridine composition of the ascidian *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*. XI International Symposium of Marine Natural Products, Sorrento (Italy).
119. López-Legentil S, Dieckmann R, Turon X (2004) The usefulness of genetics and secondary chemistry in assessing intraspecies variability: The colonial ascidian *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*. XIII Iberian Symposium on Marine Benthos, Canary Islands (Spain).
120. Simon-Levert A, Hellio C, Marechal JP, López-Legentil S, Bontemps-Subielos N, Clare A, Banaigs B (2003) Antifouling activity of two ascidians (*Aplidium* aff. *densum* & *Cystodytes dellechiaiei*) extracts and metabolites on the tropical barnacle *Balanus amphitrite*. Symposium of Marine Biology and Ecology, Athens (Greece).
121. López-Legentil S, Grémare A, Vétion G, Roussiez V (2002) Biochemical characteristics of particulate organic matter. Temporal changes and comparison between sediment traps and surface sediments. XII Iberian Symposium on Marine Benthos, Gibraltar-La Línia (Spain).
122. Roussiez V, Grémare A, Vétion G, López-Legentil S (2002) Consequences of two types of brief events on the biochemical characteristics of sedimenting and sedimented organic matter. XII Iberian Symposium on Marine Benthos, Gibraltar-La Línia (Spain).
123. López-Legentil S, Turon X, Tarjuelo I (2002) Variability of the gene Cytochrome Oxidase I in ascidians: From population genetics to phylogeny. XII Iberian Symposium on Marine Benthos, Gibraltar-La Línia (Spain).
124. Tarjuelo I, López-Legentil S, Codina M, Turon X (2002) Relationships of defense mechanisms of larvae and adults of colonial ascidians: Patterns of palatability and toxicity. V International Larval Biology Meetings, Vigo (Spain).
125. Grémare A, Amouroux JM, Charles F, Gili JM, Naudin JJ, Sardá R, Jordana E, López-Legentil S, Medernach L, Rossi S, Roussiez V (2001) Short and long-term effect of resuspension events on benthic communities in the Gulf of Lions. 36th European Marine Biology Symposium, Maó (Spain).
126. Caralt S, López-Legentil S, Tarjuelo I, Turon X (2001) Comparative biology of *Clavelina lepadiformis* (Ascidacea) populations from inside and outside harbors in western Mediterranean. 36th European Marine Biology Symposium, Maó (Spain).

## AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & HONORS

1. **Making a difference in students' lives** (Yearly since 2015), UNCW.
2. **BaMB Teaching Release Award** (Fall 2019 and Spring 2024), UNCW.
3. **Inducted into the James F. Merritt Million Dollar Club** (2022), UNCW.
4. **Discere Aude award for outstanding mentoring** (2019-2020), UNCW.
5. **CAS Research Reassignment Award** (Fall 2020), UNCW.
6. **Two new ascidian species named after my Lab (*Pyura imesa*) and myself (*P. lopezlegentilae*)**. Rocha & Counts (2019) *Zootaxa* 4564: 491-513.
7. **MBA Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement** (2009) UNCW.
8. **Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society** (2009), School of Business, UNCW.
9. **Boyd Robinson Most Value-Added Award** (2008), School of Business, UNCW.
10. **Business of Marine Biotechnology Fellowship** (2007-2009) UNCW.
11. **Fulbright Fellowship** (2006-2007) US Department of State and Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.
12. **FPU Pre-Doctoral Fellowship** (2002-2005) Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.
13. **Graduate Student Travel Award** (2005) Association Lapervenchelif, France.
14. **Visiting Research Assistantship Award** (2002-2004) Awarded 3 times, by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science, and/or the French doctoral institution ED305.
15. **Graduate Student Travel Award** (2000-2004) Awarded 5 times, different destinations. U Barcelona, Spain.





16. **Undergraduate Research Scholarship** (2000-2001) Spanish Ministry of Education and Science.
17. **Erasmus Mundus Scholarship** (2000-2001) European Union.

## UNCW SERVICE

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### DEPARTAMENTAL SERVICE

- **Committee Service** (most relevant only): (1) Chair advisory council (twice), (2) Advancement and student relations, (3) Scholarship, (4) Peer-evaluation of teaching, (5) Summer school, (6) Undergraduate curriculum, (7) Ad-hoc SPARC performance review, (8) Long-range planning, (9) Ad-hoc PTR review, (10) Graduate advisory council, (11) Equipment, and (12) Master in biotechnology program development.
- Served in 7 faculty search committees (2 as chair).

### COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY

- **Committee Service** (most relevant only): (1) Provost's advisory council (under Sheer in 2019-2020 and Winebrake 2020-2021), (2) Faculty senate research, (3) International programs advisory (several years), (4) University F&A review, (5) Investigating panel, (6) CSURF Faculty Advisory Board, (7) Marine science facilities and infrastructure, (8) Marine sciences policies, procedures and membership, (9) Center for Marie Science small boat committee, (10) La Conexión.
- Established a new partnership between the Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR) in Brazil and UNCW within the frame of a CAPES-PRINT program (Capes-PRINT738088P) to facilitate student and faculty interchange and hosted Dr. R. da Rocha UFPR in my lab (January 14 to February 1, 2020).
- Established UNCW participation in the Program 'Collaboration with Latinoamerica' by ECUSA and LASPAU (2016-2017).

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Appointed a member of the newly formed New Hanover County (NHC) Hispanic/Latino Commission (link) by the NHC Board of Commissioners (April 2023 to April 2024).
  - Addressed the Board of Commissioners during the Hispanic Heritage Proclamation (September 18th, 2023). NHC Historic Courthouse.
- Worked at the Registration Table for FaithAction ID Drive (April 30 and October 21, 2023, January 27, 2024) to provide ID cards to individuals who do not currently have access to government issued forms of ID, including new immigrants and refugees, homeless and elderly individuals, and those recently returning from jail.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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### MOST RELEVANT

- **Editorial Board Member** for: (1) Scientific Reports (Nature Publishing Group), (2) Thalassas (Springer), and (3) Taxonomy (MDPI).
- **Article Reviewer** for: (1) PLoS ONE, (2) Molecular Ecology, (3) Heredity, (4) Diversity and Distributions, (5) Biochemical Systematics and Ecology, (6) Molecular Ecology Resources, (7) Marine Biology, (8) Zoologica Scripta, (9) Coral Reefs, (10) Marine Ecology Progress Series, (11) Journal of Chemical Ecology, (12) Microbial Ecology, (13) Contributions to Zoology, (14) Biological Invasions, (15) Cahiers de Biologie Marine, (16) Hydrobiologia, (17) Marine Drugs, (18) The ISME Journal, (19) Comparative Biochemistry and Physiology, (20)

Proceedings of the Royal Society B – Biological Sciences, (21) Polar Biology, (22) Journal of the Marine Biological Association UK, (23) FEMS Microbiology Ecology, (24) International Journal of Molecular Sciences, (25) Aquatic Microbial Ecology, (26) Frontiers in Marine Science, (27) F1000Research, (28) Invertebrate Biology, (29) PeerJ, (30) Frontiers in Microbiology, (31) Zookeys, (32) Scientific Reports, (33) Biotechnology Advances, (34) Marine Pollution Bulletin, (35) Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology, (36) Aquatic Invasions, (37) Symbiosis, (38) Environmental Toxicology & Chemistry, (39) Journal of Zoological Systematics & Evolution, (40) Systematics and Biodiversity, (41) Biofouling, (42) Thalassas, (43) Environmental Science and Pollution Research, (44) Mediterranean Marine Science, (45) Marine Ecology, (46) Genomics, (47) Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science, (48) Diversity, (49) Marine Environmental Research, (50) iSCIENCE, (51) Journal for Marine Science and Engineering, and (52) Genes.

- **Grant Reviewer** for: (1) The Spanish National Agency of Evaluation and Prospective, (2) The German Research Foundation, (3) The Israel Science Foundation, (4) National Science Foundation, (5) Woods Hole Sea Grant, (6) Dutch Research Council, and (7) several UNCW grants (e.g., Cahill and CSURF Awards, CMS Pilot Grants). Served as a panelist for NSF Integrative Organismal Systems (IOS) program: Symbiosis, Defense and Self-Recognition in 2015 and for NSF MRI Division of Biological Infrastructure in 2023.
- **Conference Organization:** (1) Executive committee member, XIV Iberian Symposium on Marine Biology 2006, Barcelona, Spain, (2) Executive committee member, 8<sup>th</sup> World Sponge Conference 2010, Girona, Spain, (3) Organizing committee, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Sponge Microbiology in 2014, (4) Co-Chair and organizer, 49<sup>th</sup> Benthic Ecology Meeting (cancelled 1 month before the start because of COVID-19), Wilmington NC, (5) Co-Chair and organizer, American Society for Microbiology – NC Branch, Wilmington NC.
- **Workshop Organization:** (1) Ascidian Taxonomy Workshop in Alijo Viejo, CA (June 5 to 9, 2023), currently organizing (2) equivalent workshop in Myrtle Beach, SC (scheduled June 24 to 28, 2024).
- **International PhD Committee Member/Expert/Oponent** for: (1) L. Behrendt (2013), University of Copenhagen, Denmark; (2) T.M. Morganti (2016), University of Barcelona, Spain; (3) M. Casso (2020), Center for Advanced Studies of Blanes, Spain; (4) K. Steffen (2022), Uppsala University, Sweden; and (5) C. Galià-Camps (2024), University of Barcelona, Spain.

## RESEARCH VESSEL EXPEDITIONS

1. **R/V Walton Smith**, University of North Carolina Wilmington (2 weeks in July 2010) – The Bahamas  
*Diversity and spatial variation of microbial symbionts in Bahamian sponges and ascidians*
2. **R/V Seward Johnson**, University of North Carolina Wilmington (2 weeks in June 2008) – The Bahamas  
*Molecular phylogeny of Bahamian ascidians*
3. **R/V Seward Johnson**, University of North Carolina Wilmington (2 weeks in June 2007) – The Bahamas  
*Population genetics and phylogeography of the barrel sponge *Xestospongia muta**  
*Chemical and physical defenses against predators in *Cystodytes* species (Ascidacea)*
4. **R/V Aitor**, PharmaMar SA (1 week in July 2002) – Eivissa & Formentera Islands, Spain  
*Genetic characterization of bioactive ascidians*
5. **R/V Aitor**, PharmaMar SA (1 week in July 2002) – Eivissa & Formentera Islands, Spain  
*Microbial symbionts in the aplidin producer ascidian *Aplidium albicans**
6. **R/V Aitor, PharmaMar SA** (1 week in October 2001) – Eivissa & Formentera Islands, Spain  
*Ascidian sampling and identification*
7. **R/V Aitor, PharmaMar SA** (1 week in July 2001) – Mallorca Island, Spain  
*Sampling and identification of ascidian and sponge from caves*

## OUTREACH

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### MOST RELEVANT/RECENT (<5 YEARS)

- Exhibition of current research during: (1) the CMS Open House (October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023; October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022; September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019; September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017; 300-750 visitors each year); (2) Femme in STEM (September 16, 2023), Fort Fisher Aquarium, Kure Beach; (3) The NC Science Festival – Full STEAM Ahead with an informative table, touch-tank, kids activities related to STEM, etc. (April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023).
- Interviewed and filmed by NC STEM Explorers as part of a “fouling communities” episode (December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022).
- Elected faculty advisor for UNCW’s Woman in Science and Engineering (WISE) organization (2002). Presented ‘What it means to be a woman in STEM’ (2021). Women in Science and Engineering organization. UNC Wilmington.
- Mentor in the program organized by Women in ECUSA (MECUSA) and Career Development and Advisory (CDA) for Hispanic PhD students interests in STEM career options in the USA. Organized by Spanish Scientists in the USA (ECUSA, [www.ecusa.es](http://www.ecusa.es)). Led two workshops of 1.5h each (15 and 22 March, 2022).
- Participated in the MI CASA Youth Mentoring Program (Mentors Initiating Community Action and Advocacy), aiming to recruit Hispanic high school students (November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022; November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017).
- Regular posting on the Integrated Molecular Ecology of Sponges and Ascidiens (iMESA) Lab website (> 3,000 visits yearly) and the Lab’s X (@iMESALab; >275 followers) and Instagram (imesalab; >160 followers) accounts to inform the general public of research progress and student accomplishments. Curator of the “Ascidian Gallery” with over 300 downloadable pictures of ascidians I have photographed and identified (scientific name provided) over the years. Current photos are from NC, Puerto Rico, Spain, Australia and other Pacific Islands.