

SEA Semester®



Environmental Studies in Woods Hole & at Sea

Sea Education Association | SEA Semester • P.O. Box 6 • Woods Hole, MA 02543 • 800.552.3633 • [www.sea.edu](http://www.sea.edu)

February 19, 2014

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## 2014 SPRING LECTURE SERIES | MARCH 2014

For more information, contact:

Jennica Deely, Marketing Coordinator, SEA | [jdeely@sea.edu](mailto:jdeely@sea.edu) | 508-540-3954 x523

**March 16 – May 18, 2014 | 1pm**

Sea Education Association

**James L. Madden Center Lecture Hall**

171 Woods Hole Road, Falmouth, MA

**508-540-3954**

**Free and open to the public**

**March 16 | Dr. Amy NS Siuda, *Drifting Oases of Life on the Deep Blue Sea***

**April 13 | Dr. Chuck Lea, *Deep Sea Fish and Squid and the Open Ocean Environment***

**May 18 | Captain Elliot Rappaport, *Leadership Training in the Marine Environment***

**Upcoming March Lectures:**

### **Drifting Oases of Life on the Deep Blue Sea**

**By Dr. Amy NS Siuda**

**WHEN:**

March 16, 2014 at 1pm

**WHERE:**

Sea Education Association

James L. Madden Center Lecture Hall

171 Woods Hole Road, Falmouth, MA

**508-540-3954**

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### **Presentation Summary**

The North Atlantic subtropical gyre (Sargasso Sea), Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico host two species of the brown seaweed, *Sargassum*, that are unique in life history strategy and ecological function. Unlike other species of seaweed, *S. natans* and *S. fluitans* drift at the ocean surface and are never attached to the seafloor. Individual *Sargassum* plants are forced by ocean currents into aggregated mats that can resemble small islands. Ecologically and economically important organisms, including sea turtles, eel larvae and game fish, use *Sargassum* aggregations as nursery and feeding sites in the nutrient-poor open ocean. *Sargassum* also supports a specialized community of inhabitants, from fish to crabs, that have adapted to 'hide' within the weed. As a result, these drifting oases have been identified as biodiversity hotspots and are the focus of a new policy initiative to make the Sargasso Sea a high-seas Marine Protected Area. This lecture will introduce us to the *Sargassum* community and share how decades of

scientific observations recorded during SEA Semester cruises are informing the management effort in the Sargasso Sea region.

### **About the Lecturer**

Dr. Amy NS Siuda is Associate Professor of Oceanography at Sea Education Association (SEA) in Woods Hole, MA. A graduate of Middlebury College (BA Biology and French) and an alumna of SEA Semester, Dr. Siuda earned her PhD in Oceanography from the University of Connecticut. Her research interests span organismal, population and community ecology of plankton. Dr. Siuda is currently involved in several research projects, including: studies of plankton diversity in the Sargasso Sea; understanding the distribution patterns of the drifting macroalgae, *Sargassum natans* and *S. fluitans*; and investigating selective grazing by copepods of microplastics contaminated with persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic (PBT) substances. Dr. Siuda also has extensive experience in undergraduate instruction and curricular development. Her teaching interests range from building scientific foundation and research skills to scientific communication and the intersection of science and policy. Dr. Siuda is Program Director and co-developer of the SEA Semester: Marine Biodiversity and Conservation program, an integrated problem-based science and policy curriculum to address real-world conservation challenges.

### **About Sea Education Association/SEA Semester®**

*Creating Ocean Scholars, Stewards & Leaders Since 1971*

Sea Education Association (SEA) is an internationally recognized leader in undergraduate ocean education. For more than 40 years and over one million nautical miles sailed, SEA has educated students about the world's oceans through its fully accredited study abroad program, SEA Semester®.

SEA Semester® is the leading off-campus Environmental Studies program focused on the oceans. SEA Semester creates environmentally literate leaders who are prepared to address the defining issue of the twenty-first century: the human impact on the environment. SEA looks for motivated students of all majors who are passionate about learning, willing to seek out new challenges, and eager to become part of a unique learning community.

SEA/SEA Semester® is based on Cape Cod in the oceanographic research community of Woods Hole, Massachusetts and has two research vessels: the SSV *Corwith Cramer*, operating in the Atlantic Ocean, and the SSV *Robert C. Seamans*, operating in the Pacific.

For more information on SEA Semester® programs, please visit [www.sea.edu/programs](http://www.sea.edu/programs), or contact one of our Admissions Counselors at 800-552-3633 x770 or [admissions@sea.edu](mailto:admissions@sea.edu).

*For more information on the lecture series and specific lectures/lecturers, please contact Jennica Deely, Marketing Coordinator with SEA.*

[jdeely@sea.edu](mailto:jdeely@sea.edu)

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