

## A Citizen Science Collective To Conduct Plankton Survey-Style Transects

The Neuston Net Research Collective unites the academic world and the international yachting community in an effort to conserve and understand our oceans through scientific research. This unique collective spans a wide range of research topics with one common theme: they all utilize Neuston Nets.

The fine mesh nets towed behind boats collect samples of neustonic organisms, algae, plastics, plankton, seawater, and more. Our unique access to vessels allows us to pair proposed or ongoing projects at locations around the world to collect samples from a wide geographic range.

Comprehensive onboard kits provided by SeaKeepers allow yacht crews and owners to conduct plankton survey-style transects related to one of our partnered research projects. Continue reading to learn more about our current projects.

Find out if you can participate in our Neuston Net Research Collective by clicking the button below and contacting our team at [Programming@SeaKeepers.org](mailto:Programming@SeaKeepers.org)



*Sample collection undergoing filtration from a Neuston Net tow .*



*Sample from a Neuston Net Collection containing marine life and sea grass*

## Get Involved

Scan this QR Code to visit our website and learn more about the Neuston Net Research Collective.



# Meet Our Research Collaborators

## DR. MIKE PARSONS



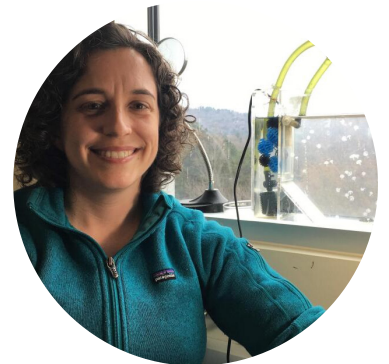
Dr. Mike Parsons is a professor of Marine Science in the Water School at Florida Gulf Coast University and the Director of FGCU's Vester Field Station. From samples collected by SeaKeepers' DISCOVERY Yachts, Dr. Parsons and his team at the Vester Field Station will examine the role of floating Sargassum in distributing transporting

Gambierdiscus dinoflagellates around the Greater Caribbean region. This is important to study because several Gambierdiscus species produce toxins (called ciguatoxins) that can move through a coral reef food web and toxify reef fish. Sargassum species are found throughout tropical areas of the world.

## DR. REBECCA HELM

Dr. Rebecca Helm is an Assistant Professor at Georgetown University. She studies the ecology and evolution of life on the ocean's surface layer. From photos of samples collected by SeaKeepers' DISCOVERY Yachts, Dr. Helm will determine the geographic range and presence of certain neustonic organisms, including the Blue

Button Jellyfish (*Porpita porpita*) and By-the-Wind Sailors (*Velella velella*). The neustonic organisms of interest are found Great Pacific Garbage patch and other floating patches of garbage around the world.



## DR. SARAH NELMS



Dr. Sarah Nelms is a lecturer at the University of Exeter's Center for Ecology and Conservation in England. Her research focuses on the issue of plastic pollution within marine and coastal environments, and its impacts on marine vertebrates such as turtles, seabirds and marine mammals. With support from SeaKeepers'

DISCOVERY Yacht, the Killigrew, samples are collected in Falmouth Harbour. With the samples, Dr. Nelms can assess the abundance and distribution of microplastic pollution in Falmouth Bay. This will help assess the microplastics' impact in the seawater off two of Falmouth's main beaches.