



# CMIL MURP INTERNSHIP

## Gem Murillo



### Our Project: Nudibranch Distribution and Palatability

My name is Gem Murillo. I attend Mesa College and my mentor was the lovely Sara Rosenblatt. We had two projects. First was our project regarding the presence of nudibranchs between Ocean Beach and Bird Rock, and our second project was a prey-choice experiment.

For our first experiment we spent early mornings at the tidepools in La Jolla at Bird Rock as well as Ocean Beach. There, my partner Seth and I would conduct transect surveys and document how many nudibranchs we could find. This was a great hands on experience for me considering I had never done any field work prior to this internship. I'm ecstatic that I'm able to say that I conducted field surveys this summer. Our second experiment was run in lab, with our navanax as the predator and the prey being a bubble snail, an opalescent nudibranch, and a sorcerer's nudibranch. I really enjoyed the anticipation I got for each trial we ran, it felt like Christmas morning.







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Not only did I learn how to conduct transect surveys in the field, I also learned how to run trials for an experiment in lab. This was my first time using a proper data sheet in which we kept track of all the information needed for each trial, including starting dates and times, as well as sizes of the enclosure and the species. This was fun to document, it felt so official. Another important factor going into this experiment was learning how to properly handle the animals. Prior to my time at the CMIL lab I was pretty inexperienced with handling marine life, but this internship gave me great education and experience to properly identify and handle the species in the lab.

The weekly workshops were very informative! I learned a lot from them and it was great hearing all the different experiences and advice from everyone. Each workshop was beneficial, however the one that stood out to me most was the grad-school one, since grad school has been on my mind for a while now. I'm still an undergrad, so I have a while to think about it however hearing everyone's different grad-school stories was great, as I didn't get just one perspective, and they were all realistic about their experience which I appreciated. That workshop definitely encouraged me to keep aiming for grad school, but I know it's not necessary for all careers either as stated in the workshop.

