

CMIL 2026 MURP Summer Internship

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This summer I had the opportunity to intern in the Hovel Lab with Shoshana as a researcher intern through Coastal and Marine Institute Laboratory (CMIL). Throughout my internship, I participated in laboratory and field work, from setting up trials, to going out and setting up traps and handling live California spiny lobsters. This experience allowed me to see many different sides of research and scientific process while exploring what I want to pursue in my future career. I learned how planning, organization and teamwork goes into designing an experiment.

With my mentor, we investigated whether warming ocean temperature affects predation behavior of the California spiny lobster (*Panulirus interruptus*). Lobsters are predators that help balance the kelp forest ecosystem, so by studying how warming water changes their feeding behavior, we hoped to better understand why increasing temperature might affect predation rates on the California spiny lobster.

During this experiment, lobsters were set in two different tanks; ambient (16°C) or warm (22°C). Each lobster had three different prey types, purple sea urchin, mussels, and wavy turban snail. We ran 48 hour feeding trials and monitored the tanks using GoPros taking pictures every 60 seconds. After each trial, the prey that was eaten was counted to determine feeding activity and prey preference, and we compared predation rates between trials and based on the site we collected the lobsters.

One of my favorite parts of working in the lab was how hands-on the whole process was. I got to be out on the boat helping pull traps, measuring all the prey and seeing if they ate anything. It's so different to read about the research beforehand, and completely different to be the one collecting the data trial by trial.



(Collecting lobsters from the traps)

More than anything, this internship gave me a much better understanding of what a career in marine science actually looks like day to day. Having this opportunity also made me realize how different hands on research is. I came into this summer not knowing much about lobsters, or even what I wanted out of my career in science. I leave with both a real appreciation for these spiny creatures, and a much clearer sense of what kind of work I want to keep doing.