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Shoals Marine Lab Welcomes New Director

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DURHAM, N.H. – William E. Bemis, professor of biology at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, has been named as director of the Shoals Marine Laboratory.



William E. Bemis
Director of the Shoals Marine Laboratory

that the Shoals Marine Laboratory provides as part of our marine programs at UNH.”

The [Shoals Marine Laboratory](#), operated through a partnership between the University of New Hampshire and Cornell University, has built an international reputation for excellence in providing rigorous, hands-on marine science field experience for undergraduates. Bemis’s appointment will be effective June 1, 2005. He succeeds James G. Morin, who held the post for seven years.

“We are very excited to have Willy Bemis join us as director of the Shoals Marine Laboratory and we look forward to working with him to continue to strengthen the exceptional partnership that UNH and Cornell have established at Shoals,” said Jonathan Pennock, director of the UNH Marine Program. “Willy’s energy and enthusiasm for marine science education and inquiry is contagious and our students and faculty will benefit immensely from his leadership and the unique opportunities

As director, Bemis will take over leadership of the SML program, which annually supports more than 150 undergraduates, numerous graduate and undergraduate researchers, 90 adult education students, 50 faculty and teaching assistants, and a \$1 million education program. His faculty appointment will be as professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at Cornell University.

“I have many colleagues and friends at UNH so I am absolutely delighted to be joining the UNH community,” Bemis said. “There is a long history of productive ties between UNH and Cornell, and I see many opportunities to strengthen these links. I am especially looking forward to working with SML Associate Director Jessica Bolker and with Jonathan Pennock, director of Marine Programs at UNH. I also am interested in finding ways to partner with other marine

laboratories, such as the [Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Alabama](#), to deliver even broader experiences to our students.”

In addition, Bemis said he will work to increase the diversity of students served by SML. “Opportunities also exist to grow the research mission of SML to better serve Cornell and UNH students and faculty as well as society in general,” Bemis said. “A growing research profile can play an important role in the future of SML. And of course SML has an important stewardship role in preserving the environment and record of human history on Appledore Island.”

Bemis earned his bachelor’s degree in biological sciences at Cornell University, his masters in zoology at the University of Michigan, and his Ph.D. in zoology at University of California, Berkeley. After conducting postdoctoral research at the University of Chicago, he joined the UMass-Amherst faculty in 1984. He is founding director of the Organismic and Evolutionary Biology Graduate Program at UMass and recently concluded an appointment as program director in systematic biology at the National Science Foundation.

As author of nearly 50 academic publications, Bemis focuses his research on the morphology and systematics of basal actinopterygian fishes. His research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the Whitehall Foundation and others. Bemis and his wife, Betty McGuire, a lecturer in biological sciences at Smith College, have two children, Kate, 11, and Owen, 8.

Editors: A photo of Willy Bemis is available at:
<http://www.unh.edu/news/img/marine/bemis.jpg>