

Live oyster counts and shell heights (grouped by size class) for 4 field sites in Bogue Sound, North Carolina from 2015.

Website: <https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/720191>

Data Type: Other Field Results

Version: 1

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Project

» [Microbial Regulation of Greenhouse Gas N₂O Emission from Intertidal Oyster Reefs](#) (Oyster Reef N₂O Emission)

Contributors	Affiliation	Role
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Abstract

Live oyster counts and shell heights (grouped by size class) for 4 field sites in Bogue Sound, North Carolina from 2015.

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Coverage

Spatial Extent: Lat:34.710129 Lon:-76.867882

Temporal Extent: 2015 - 2015

Dataset Description

Live oyster counts and shell heights for 4 field sites in Bogue Sound, located in coastal North Carolina. All data is grouped by size class.

Acquisition Description

At each site, a total of four 1/16 m² quadrats were randomly tossed on the oyster reef, two on the crest and two on the landward side of the reef. Oysters were excavated to the sediment surface. Live oysters were counted and shell heights were recorded. The 4 field sites are sites of oyster reef and salt marsh restoration. Identified in data as UNC Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS), Carrot Island (Carrot), NOAA Beaufort (NOAA), and Army Marsh (Army). All sites located in Bogue Sound near Morehead City, NC.

Processing Description

Data have been grouped into size classes based on biological relevance.

BCO-DMO Data Processing Notes:

- reformatted column names to comply with BCO-DMO standards
- replaced all blank cells with nd

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Parameters

Parameter	Description	Units
Site	Site where data were collected	unitless
Bucket_Num	Bucket ID number	unitless
Lengths_greater_than_25mm	Number of oysters greater than 25mm	count
Total_Num_greater_than_25mm	Total number of oysters greater than 25 mm	count
Num_Spat	Number of oyster recruits	count
Total_Num_Spat	Total number of oyster recruits	count

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Project Information

Microbial Regulation of Greenhouse Gas N₂O Emission from Intertidal Oyster Reefs (Oyster Reef N₂O Emission)

Extracted from the NSF award abstract: Oyster reefs are biogeochemical hot spots and prominent estuarine habitats that provide disproportionate ecological function. Suspension-feeding eastern oysters, *Crassostrea virginica*, are capable of improving water quality and diminishing eutrophication by filtering nutrients and particles from the water and depositing them in the sediments. Remineralization of these deposits may enhance sedimentary denitrification that facilitates nitrogen removal in tidal estuaries. However, the scientific underpinning of oyster reef function has been challenged in various studies. In addition, recent studies of filter feeding invertebrates reported the production of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a greenhouse gas, as an end product of incomplete denitrification by gut microbes. *C. virginica* could be another source of N₂O flux from intertidal habitats. Preliminary work indicated substantial N₂O production from individual oysters. The estimated N₂O production from high density oyster reefs may exceed the N₂O flux measured from some estuaries. With the new discovery of N₂O emission and uncertainty regarding eutrophication control, the ecological value of oyster reef restoration may become equivocal. This project will quantify N₂O fluxes to understand the factors controlling N₂O emission from oyster reefs. Sedimentary N processes will be examined to develop an oyster reef N model to estimate N₂O emission from tidal creek estuaries relative to other N cycling processes. The PIs hypothesize that intertidal oyster reefs are a substantial source of N₂O emission from estuarine ecosystems and the magnitude of emission may be linked to water quality. If substantial N₂O flux from oyster reefs is validated, ecological benefits of oyster reef restoration should be reevaluated. This interdisciplinary research team includes a microbial ecologist, a biogeochemist, an ecologist and an ecosystem modeler. They will utilize stable isotope and molecular microbiological techniques to quantify oyster N₂O production, elucidate microbial sources of N₂O emission from oysters and sediments, and estimate seasonal variation of N₂O fluxes from oyster reefs. Measurements from this study will be integrated into a coupled oyster bioenergetics-sediment biogeochemistry model to compare system level rates of N cycling on oyster reefs as a function of oyster density and water quality. Modeling results will be used to assess the relative trade-offs of oyster restoration associated with N cycling. They expect to deliver the following end products: 1) estimation of annual N₂O flux from oyster reefs as an additional source of greenhouse gases from estuaries, 2) a better understanding of the environmental and microbial factors influencing N₂O and N₂ fluxes in tidal estuaries, 3) transformative knowledge for the effect of oyster restoration on water quality enhancement and ecosystem function, 4) direct guidance for oyster restoration projects whose goals include water quality enhancement, and 5) a modeling tool for use in research and restoration planning.

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Funding

Funding Source	Award
NSF Division of Ocean Sciences (NSF OCE)	OCE-1233327

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