

Guidelines for posts on *Short Stories About Long Term Research*

The purpose of the blog:

To connect graduate students in the LTER network in an informal and fun way through the sharing of stories about our research experiences. These broadly accessible posts can also be shared with the public (i.e., high schoolers or undergraduates interested in science research, or family and friends with limited to no background in science).

Who runs the blog? LTER graduate students. The idea for a blog began with the student reps at the CCE, MCR, and SBC sites, who are currently moderating the site, but we had lots of interest from students throughout the LTER network. We are thrilled to have already received posts from students belonging to a variety of LTER sites and are eager to see more.

Who is the audience for this blog? Other LTER graduate students AND the public, including teachers and students. So try and make your blog posts interesting and accessible for non-scientists.

What are you aiming for in the posts?

Below we have outlined the details of what we would like to see in submitted posts. There is also a list of some ideas for posts that were brainstormed during working groups at the 2015 ASM to give you inspiration to get started writing. Most importantly, the writing and stories should be accessible to non-scientists, as a wide variety of LTER students in varied fields as well as the public will be reading the blog. Check the site for examples of great posts. Also, note that content will be monitored and edited by the moderators to make sure nothing considered inappropriate will appear on the site.

What if your site already has a blog, Facebook page, Twitter, etc.? Cool! This is not meant in any way to replace those fantastic tools you're already using but rather an opportunity to further the connection between students at LTER sites and help us get to know more about what other LTER students are researching. If your site does have a blog, please forward that information to us so we can provide a link to it on our LTER links page.

Who can contribute to this blog? All LTER graduate students, post docs, and REU students (as co-authors with a graduate student mentor).

What to send us with your post:

1. A short **bio** and a **picture of you** to go at the end of the post. The bio should be just a few sentences on who you are, where you do your research, and what that research is.
2. A blog **post with high quality pictures**. Please do not send your pictures embedded in a pdf file since that makes it impossible for us to add high quality images to your post.
3. A **catchy title** for your post, your **site affiliation**, and any important **keywords** you would like to be tagged.
4. **Email** your post and info to ssalterblog@gmail.com and we will be in touch with you. We will contact you before posting your contribution to make sure you approve of the final product.

Blog email: ssalterblog@gmail.com

Please send post submissions and questions/comments to this address. ****If you are interested in helping maintain the blog and edit content, please reach out to us at ssalterblog@gmail.com****

Current moderators:

Stella Swanson - Moorea Coral Reef LTER stella.swanson@lifesci.ucsb.edu

Ali Freibott - California Current Ecosystem LTER afreibott@ucsd.edu

Christie Yorke - Santa Barbara Coastal LTER christie.yorke@lifesci.ucsb.edu

Some ideas for blog post topics:

- How did you choose your field?
- Reality of how much work it takes to create a graph (or other tool) to communicate your science
- Experiment you just got working? Small accomplishments?
- Top questions you are asked about your research
- Common misconceptions you often clarify
- Special training for your sites (specifically arctic, etc.)
- Weird field gear (with pics!) - Field Fashion
- Home depot stories – Creative solutions to budget limitations, or equipment that doesn't exist
- Strangest plant/animal/thing you've found
- How to deal with tough research situations - Mass die-offs of study organism, field experiment interference
- What would your experiment look like if you had an unlimited budget vs. what you can actually do
- What's your daily field experience like?
- Expectations vs. reality
- Dangers of field science?
- What makes your research worthwhile?
- How do we learn to be teachers when we start as scientists?
- What type of food do you eat when in the field? Have you eaten your study organism?
- Adventures in coding and modeling
- Questions to never ask a grad student
- Getting over the hurdle of public speaking
- Common names vs. scientific names - what are we all talking about?
- Creative science tools