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Journal of Coastal Research, an International Forum for the Littoral Sciences, is dedicated to all aspects of coastal research. These include geology, biology, geomorphology (physical geography), climate, littoral oceanography, hydrography, coastal hydraulics, environmental (resource) management, engineering, and remote sensing. Although each field functions effectively within its own purview, the cross-disciplinary nature of coastal studies requires familiarity with other fields as well. Hence, the scope of topics is necessarily broad in order to address the complexity of coastal biophysical and socio-economic interactions. Because of the wide range of interrelated topics, the journal invites original contributions and manuscripts dealing with theory, methodology, techniques, and field or applied topic studies on interdisciplinary coastal issues.

The journal encourages the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of the coastal zone by promoting cooperation and communication between specialists in different disciplines. Natural scientists, for example, are encouraged to collaborate with professionals in other fields to prepare contributions relating to the coastal zone that foster increased appreciation of coastal environments and processes. By means of this journal, with its scholarly and professional papers, systematic review articles, book and symposia reviews, communications and news, and special topical issues, an international forum for the development of integrated coastal research is provided.

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Christ of the Abyss Statue, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Key Largo, Florida, U.S.A. Resting at approximately 8 m below the water's surface, the *Christ of the Abyss* statue is one of the most iconic dive sites in the world. With arms outstretching towards the rising sun, the 1800 kg submerged bronze sculpture was placed on the ocean floor in August of 1965. Created by Italian sculptor, Guido Galletti, it was originally made for Egidio Cressi, the famous scuba diving equipment manufacturer, and was later donated by the Cressi family to the Underwater Society of America. The statue's final resting place lies along the Florida Reef Tract, offshore of Key Largo, within John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

The Florida Reef Tract (FRT) is a pronounced shelf-edge barrier coral reef system extending offshore of Miami-Dade County southwards to the Florida Keys. Exposures to the Miami Limestone in this region, which formed during the Sangamonian high sea-level stand (OIS 5e substage), affected the morphology of the underlying bedrock along the southeast Florida continental shelf. This phenomenon contributed to the formation of submerged lithified paleoshorelines, interreefal sand channels, paleomarine abrasion surfaces, and ultimately aided in the formation of the FRT, which is currently known as the third-largest barrier reef chain in the world at approximately 270 km long. This complex barrier reef system includes geomorphological features such as patch reefs, inter-reefal sand flats, and hardground rock reef areas, and serves as essential colonization substrate for a multitude of hard and soft coral species. (Photograph taken July 2017 by Chris Makowski, Coastal Education and Research Foundation (CERF), Coconut Creek, Florida, U.S.A.)

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Dr. Charles W. Finkl is President and Executive Director of the Coastal Education and Research Foundation [CERF], publisher of the JCR. Charlie, a founding editor of the *Journal of Coastal Research*, has served as Editor-in-Chief for the past 34 years. He is a Research Professor in the Department of Geosciences at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. He received his Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from Oregon State University and the Ph.D. from the University of Western Australia. He is a member of more than 20 professional societies and has published more than 200 professional papers, books, and reports. He is a Chartered Marine Scientist (CMarSci) [Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology], Certified Professional Geological Scientist (CPGS) [American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG)], Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSSc) [American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils], and a Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS) [Society of Wetland Scientists]. Charlie has field experience in parts of the USA, Caribbean area, Brazil, Honduras, Russia, South Africa, Western Europe, Australasia, and South Pacific islands. He is also the Series Editor of the Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences Series that is published by Springer (Germany). There are more than twenty-eight volumes in the Series and about twenty-five are available online. Charlie also serves on the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Environmental Studies* (Routledge) and is an occasional peer reviewer for many other professional journals.

Charlie has interests and expertise in the general areas of surficial geology, coastal and marine geomorphology (including coastal classification), coastal/marine biophysical environments, exploration geochemistry, soils and weathering (regolith geology), coastal zone management and engineering applications or impacts on natural systems (including erosion control and shore protection), coastal hydrology including submarine freshwater and mineralized seeps, subaerial and marine structural geology, natural hazard mitigation in coastal zones, marine environments and coastal wetland protection and restoration, and remote sensing (e.g., land cover classification in coastal wetlands, advection-diffusion turbidity plumes in coastal waters, delineation of bottom types and sand resources), effluent disposal and pollution of wetlands and estuaries, water resources mapping and conservation, time series studies of wetland hydroperiod and soil moisture.

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The International Coastal Symposium (ICS) was originally set up by Per Bruun (deceased) and Charlie Finkl as the official meeting of the Coastal Education and Research Foundation (CERF), with one of the first meetings being held in Hilton Head, South Carolina, in 1993. After the repeated success of these meetings, CERF moved the ICS to the international scene holding these conferences in conjunction with local sponsors in Australia, Brazil, Iceland, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Poland, and Portugal. The ICS brings together delegates from all over the world to collaborate and discuss the most current coastal research studies and projects. During the ICS 2014, which was held in Durban, South Africa, a grand celebration took place to mark the 30th Anniversary of CERF and the JCR. Our next ICS meeting is scheduled for May of 2018 in Busan, South Korea. For more information, please visit www.cerf-jcr.org.

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Because CERF is concerned with broad environmental issues, our efforts concentrate on significant problems such as maintenance of good quality (potable) water with adequate supply, and hazards associated with potential beach erosion, flooding, and susceptibility of developed shorelines to storm surge and wave attack. By focusing attention on these potential man-made and natural hazards, it is hoped that our research efforts will help others improve the quality of life in diverse coastal areas. CERF thus aims to stimulate awareness of coastal (marine and freshwater shorelines) land and water problems; initiate and foster research and innovation to promote long-term coastal productivity; establish an educational forum for the debate of contentious coastal issues; and develop new principles and approaches for enlightened coastal management, and encourage their adoption and use.

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CONTENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- The Impact of Sand Nourishment on Beach Safety **John Fletemeyer, John Hearin, Brian Haus, and Andrea Sullivan** 1

RESEARCH ARTICLES

- Beach Evolution Adjacent to a Seasonally Varying Tidal Inlet in Central Vietnam **Anh T.K. Do, Sierd de Vries, and Marcel J.F. Stive** 6
- The Longshore Transport Enigma and Analysis of a 10-Year Record of Wind-Driven Nearshore Currents... **Carolina Burnette and William R. Dally** 26
- Combining Remote Sensing and Field Mapping Methods to Study the Vegetation Dynamics within a Coastal Wetland and Determine the Habitat Effects of a Threatened Bird Species (*Emberiza schoeniclus witherbyi*) .. **Luis Carrasco, Pablo Vera, Eduardo J. Belda, and Juan S. Monrós** 42
- Analysis of Variance of Flood Events on the U.S. East Coast: The Impact of Sea-Level Rise on Flood Event Severity and Frequency..... **John R. Schedel Jr. and Angela Luzier Schedel** 50
- Importance of Site History and Environmental Setting on Soil Properties in Restored Louisiana Back-Barrier Island Salt Marshes **Laura C. Feher, Jonathan M. Willis, and Mark W. Hester** 58
- Numerical Simulation of Louisiana Shelf Circulation under Hurricane Katrina **Mohammad Nabi Allahdadi and Chunyan Li** 67
- Quantifying the Effects of Climate Variability and Direct Human Activities on the Change in Mean Annual Runoff for the Bahe River (Northwest China)..... **Shuhong Mo, Zilong Li, Kui Gou, Lin Qin, and Bing Shen** 81
- Short-Term Changes in Two Tropical Coastal Lagoons: Effects of Sandbar Openings on Fish Assemblages..... **Ellen M. Camara, Érica P. Caramaschi, Fabio Di Dario, and Ana C. Petry** 90
- Effects of *Spartina alterniflora* Invasion on the Diet of Mangrove Crabs (*Parasesarma plicata*) in the Zhangjiang Estuary, China..... **Xueqin Gao, Mao Wang, Hao Wu, Wenqing Wang, and Zhigang Tu** 106
- Impact of Model Resolution on Radar Imaging of Underwater Sand Waves..... **Peng Yu, Xiaojing Zhong, and Yunxuan Zhou** 114
- Remote Sensing of a Shallow, Fringing Reef Platform for Analysis of Island Sector Susceptibility and Development of a Coastal Vulnerability Index..... **David L. Moffitt and Lalit Kumar** 122
- The Effect of Rock Collapse on Coastal Cliff Retreat along the Chalk Cliffs of Northern France..... **Jamal El Khattabi, Erick Carlier, and Barbara Louche** 136
- Numerical Study on the Unsteady Hydrodynamic Performance of a Waterjet Impeller... **Jie Gong, Chun-Yu Guo, Tie-Cheng Wu, and Ke-Wei Song** 151
- The Effects of Coastal Dune Volume and Vegetation on Storm-Induced Property Damage: Analysis from Hurricane Ike **Jacob M. Sigren, Jens Figlus, Wesley Highfield, Rusty A. Feagin, and Anna R. Armitage** 164
- Composition and Spatial Distribution of Mesozooplankton along Confinement and Anthropogenic-Impact Gradients in the Gulf of Vlorë (Albania). **Genuario Belmonte, Salvatore Moscatello, Edmond Hajdëri, Irene Vaglio, and Francesco Denitto** 174
- Stratification and Rheological Properties of Near-Bed Cohesive Sediments in West Lake, Hangzhou, China **Wenyu Yang, Meixin Yu, and Guoliang Yu** 185
- Redefining the Seasons in the Términos Lagoon Region of Southeastern México: May Is a Transition Month, Not a Dry Month **Jesús J. Guerra-Santos and Jonathan D.W. Kahl** 193
- Effect of Riverbed Morphology on Lateral Sediment Distribution in Estuaries **Zhongyong Yang, Heqin Cheng, Zhenyi Cao, Xingjie Guo, and Xiaotao Shi** 202
- Faecal Indicator Bacteria Present in Sand at South Port Beach, South Australia **Harriet Whiley, Jasmine Austin, Graziela Miot da Silva, and Kirstin Ross** 215

TECHNICAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Development of a MODIS Data–Based Algorithm for Retrieving Gage Height in Nearshore Waters along the Louisiana Gulf Coast **Jiao Wang and Zhiqiang Deng** 220
- Open Channel Flow Friction Factor: Logarithmic Law **Hak Soo Lim** 229
- Numerical Simulation of the Potential Flow around a Submerged Hydrofoil with Fully Nonlinear Free-Surface Conditions **Jian Hu, Lei Guo, and Shili Sun** 238

BOOK REVIEWS

- Ain't There No More: Louisiana's Disappearing Coastal Plain* by C.A. Brasseur and D.W. Davis **Charles W. Finkl** 253

CORRIGENDUM

- Corrigendum to: Shi, Z., 1992. Application of the 'Pejrup Approach' for the Classification of the Sediments in the Microtidal Dyfi Estuary, West Wales, U.K. ... 254
- Corrigendum to: Shi, Z.; Pethick, J.S., and Pye, K., 1995. Flow structure in and above the various heights of a saltmarsh canopy: A laboratory flume study... 254



VOL. 34, NO. 1, January 2018

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