

WESTERN FLYER FOUNDATION

Monterey Bay Advanced Cohort

March 12, 2026

FARMS Advanced students embarked on the Western Flyer and spent the day conducting research. They learned about the connection between agricultural fields and our watersheds.

→ During our boat ride, students were surrounded by professionals and expected to interview everyone on board. They learned what they do for a living, what career path they took, and what they enjoy about their work. Students collected phytoplankton and zooplankton samples and later examined them under the microscope.

→ Students also analyzed water samples for temperature and color, and used a refractometer. Furthermore, students were asked to consider the weather conditions when collecting samples.

→ We had an in-depth discussion about water runoff from agricultural fields that ends up in the ocean. Scientists can trace illnesses in phytoplankton that are transmitted up the food chain due to certain chemicals ending up in our ocean waters.

→ We ended the field day exploring the Western Flyer Foundation fossil collection. Rials piqued the students' interest in fossils. Students asked a variety of questions and left the field day curious.

A highlight of the field day was seeing a whale up close!



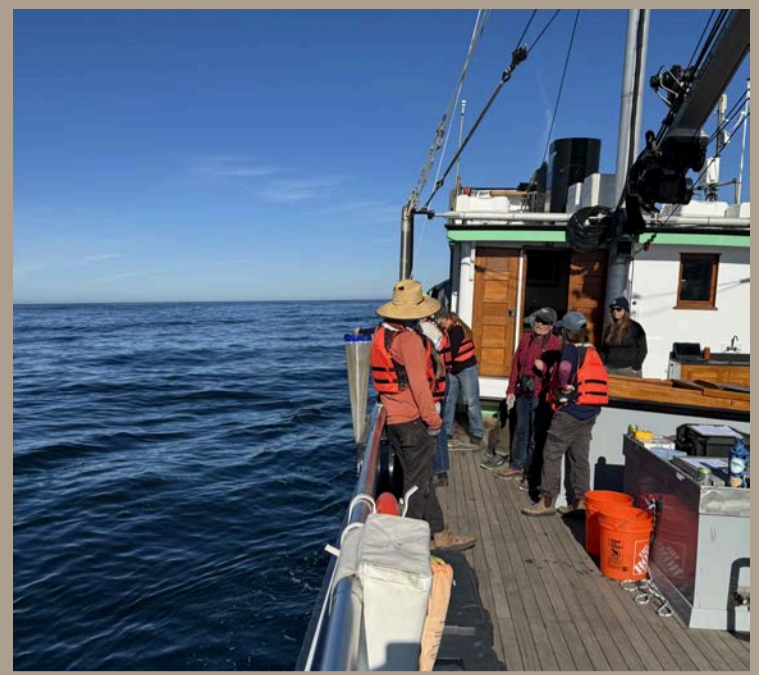
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Thank you to Rials Christensen for putting together such a fun and informative field day!



Students were collecting phytoplankton and zooplankton on the Western Flyer.



Students were analyzing the water samples.



After the boat docked, students started analyzing the samples with a microscope.



After the boat ride, students explored the fossil collection and took a few souvenirs home.

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