



Research News

Sea lions may inspire 'strokes' of genius

Engineering the swimming maneuvers of sea lions could advance underwater robotics



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A sea lion swimming at the National Zoo.

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Megan Leftwich and her students at George Washington University are conducting a comprehensive field study on the high-performance swimming of sea lions. With support from NSF, the mechanical engineer aims to describe mathematically, the unique style of these agile swimmers. Using data on sea lions at the Smithsonian National Zoo, they design and test robotic flippers in the lab to better understand the flow of water around the flippers. The team's discoveries in fluid dynamics could improve propulsion for all sorts of submerged objects, from ships to underwater drones.

-- NSF Public Affairs, (703) 292-7090 media@nsf.gov (<mailto:media@nsf.gov>)



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