MEM Summer Placement 2015 – Counting Lobsters on the Isle of Arran

I have worked in marine conservation overseas many times before, but never had the opportunity to work in the UK. That all changed with my MEM Summer placement when I travelled north to work with the Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST), in Scotland.

COAST is a fantastic, community led organisation with an impressive track record for getting marine conservation done – so I was very excited to work with them! My project was a continuation of ongoing research investigating how Scotland’s first No-Take-Zone (NTZ) is benefitting decapod crustaceans like the European lobster.

My time was split between conducting field research aboard a local creeling vessel, analysing data in the office and volunteering with COAST at their numerous community outreach events… if I am unlucky, a video of me as Ollie the Oyster Catcher (narrating a children’s puppet show) will surface on YouTube!

I feel this varied and challenging experience has bolstered my C.V. and given me plenty of valuable research skills to take with me on my career.

With my masters drawing to a close, the next step will be working with York lecturer Bryce Stewart, to help publish the crustacean surveys and hopefully get my name into some reference lists.

However, it wasn’t all hard work – there was plenty of time to explore the island and pretend to be a Viking!

~ Brian Christie