

Questions to think about:

For organisms in the intertidal zone, are tides more likely to affect survival or fecundity? Does this vary predictably by life history characteristics?

How common is it for organisms that spend the majority of their lives outside of the intertidal zone to be affected by tides?

Are long term cycles (such as the monthly or 18.6 year lunar cycles) likely to have an effect on species distributions or population sizes? How could we test for such an effect? Could these long term cycles matter for short-lived organisms?

Do tidal cycles (both daily and long-term) matter more for plants than animals?

What would be the effect on tidally-influenced ecological communities if (in order to increase saltmarsh sparrow reproduction, for example) we blew up the moon?

What role does sediment exchange and turnover have in a saltmarsh?

Is an increased sediment influx a positive or negative change?

Could sediment, chemically contaminated or uncontaminated, be considered a pollutant in saltmarshes?

At your own field sites, have you noticed any observable changes in sediment balance?

Saltmarsh sediments are characteristically depleted in oxygen. Is this reduced environment hospitable for ecological processes? For evolutionary processes? How does this environment contribute to the low diversity / high productivity characteristics of saltmarshes?