

Fish collection moves into the digital age

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University of California-San Diego scientists say the same technology used to image brain tumors is taking the field of marine biology to new dimensions.

Researchers from the university's Keck Center for Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography have been awarded a National Science Foundation grant to create a high-resolution, three-dimensional MRI online catalog of fishes from Scripps's Marine Vertebrate Collection.

"This project will ... (use) a new tool and a new way to present information about fishes," said Philip Hastings, professor and curator of the Scripps collection. "It's part of our general effort to make the collection more available to a wider audience."

The five-year, nearly \$2.5 million project supports development and application of new MRI technology that penetrates soft body tissue to provide 3-D images of physiological structures.

The Scripps' collection is among the largest and most comprehensive collections of its kind in the world, containing 90 percent of all known families of fishes.

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