

Master's Opportunity at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CA: The impacts of parrotfish corallivory in the Caribbean.

The Ruttenberg Lab at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (<http://www.marine.calpoly.edu/faculty/benjamin-ruttenberg>) has funding for a master's student to work on a project examining the impacts of parrotfish corallivory in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, to begin Fall 2017. The student would be based in San Luis Obispo, CA, with some travel to St. Croix required. The team also includes collaborators based in Santa Barbara (UCSB and SB City College). More information about the Cal Poly Biology Graduate Program is available here: <http://bio.calpoly.edu/content/grad-degrees>

The primary goals of the project are to understand the impacts of parrotfish corallivory relative to the potential positive indirect impacts of herbivory in St. Croix, including some observational and experimental field work and analyses of video data. There will also be opportunities to explore additional questions of the student's interest related to these issues. Funding for the project includes in-state tuition and all costs related to field work and travel; the student will be able to obtain a stipend as a teaching assistant/lab instructor in the Biology Department at Cal Poly.

This is a specific project, and therefore the ideal student would have many/all of the following qualifications:

1. Research dive certification and/or extensive dive experience, ideally in the Caribbean.
2. Knowledge of coral reef species, including fish (especially parrotfish), corals and algae; ideally from the Caribbean.
3. Experience managing students/assistants.
4. Minimum 3.0 undergraduate GPA (higher strongly preferred).
5. Experience/skills with statistics and data analysis; experience with software packages such as R preferred but not required.
6. Experience conducting field work from and handling small boats; small boat certification (e.g. MOCC or equivalent) preferred but not required.
7. Availability to participate in fieldwork in St. Croix during July/August 2017. This is critical since we will be conducting a significant part of the fieldwork during that timeframe.
8. CA residency advantageous (but not required) since tuition funds only cover in-state tuition (but out-of-state tuition waivers are available for strong candidates)

Interested candidates should email Dr. Benjamin Ruttenberg with a **brief** description of his/her qualifications, interest in the Cal Poly MS program, and the project, as well as a short CV as a **single** PDF file (with the title 'LastName_Firstname'). Please include GPA, GRE scores, diving certifications/experience (i.e. number of research and total dives, AAUS certification, etc), boating experience/certification (e.g. MOCC), data analysis experience and skills, etc. Application deadline for Cal Poly is Feb 1.

