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CARIBBEAN CORRESPONDENCE

Association of Marine Laboratories of the Caribbean Monthly Note to Members

Please continue to send education and research updates to be featured in upcoming issues as well as opportunities for collaboration to communications.amlc.carib@gmail.com.



What's New in AMLC

The AMLC would like to thank Sarah Manuel, Senior Marine Conservation Officer at the Bermuda Department of Conservation Services, for her service to the AMLC as the Membership Director from 2011 until 2015. The AMLC is looking for a replacement for this position as well as for volunteers to serve on the Membership committee. The AMLC Board of Directors will meet on December 4th to review Institutional Membership applications and to discuss the upcoming 2017 Scientific Meeting.

Research Highlight

The Bracken-Grissom lab at Florida International University is interested in the conservation and evolutionary biology of species that inhabit anchialine pools and blue holes throughout the Caribbean and Bahamas. These areas represent a mysterious realm, ripe with novel life forms and undiscovered biodiversity. The anchialine habitat consists of tidally fluctuating surface pools and submerged cave passages that contain marine or brackish water. Biotic assemblages include a variety of unique and rare species, often endemic, and extremely relevant for studies in conservation and evolutionary biology. Their research is focused on several critically endangered shrimp (*Barbouria cubensis*, *Parhippolyte stereri* and *Naushonia* sp.) that inhabit these pools. This research is led by Robert Ditter, a PhD student in the Bracken-Grissom lab (featured to the right). Their goals are to improve the knowledgebase of the species distribution, genetic diversity, how populations are connected among the different islands and the role of epigenetic markers. Findings from this study will provide insight into the conservation of these often rare and endemic species and the fragile habitats in which they reside.



AMLC and Education



In 2014-2015, the Glover's Reef Research Station in Belize, owned and operated by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), hosted several undergraduate groups, among them tropical field biology students from Rice University, University of Central Florida, St. Mary's College, University of Northern Kentucky, and Wellesley College. Ecology Project International (EPI) brought a group of students from Berkeley High School and Bret Harte Union High School in California to the Station for a week to learn data collection techniques and the importance of data in informing conservation action.

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