

BioVision

Biogeographic Variation in Interaction Strength and Invasions at the Ocean's Nearshore



Graduate Assistantships Available

Two graduate assistantships are available in the lab of Dr. Amy Freestone at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Graduate students will assist with the BioVision Project (Biogeographic Variation in Interaction Strength and Invasions at the Ocean's Nearshore), an NSF-funded collaborative project led by Dr. Freestone, Dr. Greg Ruiz (Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Edgewater, MD) and Dr. Mark Torchin (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Panama City, Panama).

Students will be enrolled and based at Temple University, with strong interactions with the other collaborating labs. This research will examine how species interactions influence marine communities across a latitudinal gradient, from the tropics to the arctic, and the implications of these interactions for biological invasions. We will be conducting extensive experiments testing the relative influence of predation and competition on species diversity, community assembly and invasion success, using subtidal sessile marine invertebrate communities in coastal bays of the West Coast of North and Central America, specifically Alaska, Northern California, Mexico and Panama. We will use additional experiments to quantify spatial and temporal variation in the predator community, sessile invertebrate recruitment, and the abiotic environment to test for effects on interaction outcomes.

The graduate students will be part of a travelling field team composed of a postdoctoral fellow and undergraduate students who will collect data from our large-scale experiments, under the supervision of the PIs and project partners. Therefore, students will have the opportunity for extensive travel, including to Spanish-speaking countries. Students will also be expected to develop independent projects that complement the larger research initiative as part of their graduate theses.

The successful applicants will receive up to five years of guaranteed support, including stipend, tuition remission, and benefits. The students will receive support via Research Assistantships for up to three years with the remaining support offered via Teaching Assistantships. Successful applicants will have completed a BS or MS in biology, ecology, marine science, or related field. Preference will be given to applicants with a strong background in marine invertebrate zoology and identification, marine ecology, community ecology, and/or invasion ecology. Positions will begin early summer 2015.

Prospective students should contact Dr. Amy Freestone (amy.freestone@temple.edu) with a cover letter that describes their background and research interests, a current CV, transcripts from prior academic studies (unofficial is acceptable), GRE scores, and contact information for three references. Review of applications will begin immediately. Prospective students will also need to submit a completed graduate application to the Department of Biology at Temple University by January 15 for US applicants and December 15 for international applicants.

Questions on the positions can be directed to Dr. Amy Freestone. Temple University is located in the heart of historic Philadelphia, and is the sixth largest provider of graduate school education in the USA.

