

BLAKE RAMSBY

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PhD candidate 2014 to 2017
supervised by:
Dr. Nicole Webster (AIMS)
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Blake completed a BSc in Biology at the University of Richmond (Virginia, USA). As an undergraduate, he investigated the effects of elevated temperature on bio-eroding sponges of the Florida Keys under the supervision of Dr. Malcolm Hill.

Blake recently completed a M.Sc. degree at the University of Mississippi under the supervision of Dr. Tamar L. Goulet, where he conducted experiments to test the effects of elevated temperature on photosynthesis in Caribbean octocorals. In particular, he measured photochemical efficiency, oxygen evolution, and light absorption of octocorals under ambient and elevated temperatures.

Blake's PhD project will investigate the hypothesis that under climate change, the rate of sponge bioerosion will exceed the rate of coral calcification. If true, faster bioerosion may make it more difficult for corals to maintain reefs under climate change.

Controlled experiments will be used to determine how sponge reproduction and fitness are affected by predicted climate change conditions. These data will be used to develop models to predict sponge fitness; sponge-coral competition; reef erosion patterns; and overall reef resilience under climate change scenarios.

