

**Subject:** Master's opportunity at Cal Poly in parrotfish corallivory

The Ruttenberg Lab at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

(<http://www.marine.calpoly.edu/faculty/benjamin-ruttenberg>) may have funding for a master's student to work on a project examining the impacts of parrotfish corallivory in St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. 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 direct negative 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 be opportunities to explore additional questions related to these issues.

Funding for the project is pending, but if granted would include in-state tuition and 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. Knowledge of Caribbean fauna, including fish (primarily parrotfish), algae, and corals.
2. Research dive certification and/or extensive dive experience, ideally in the Caribbean.
3. Experience conducting field work from and handling small boats; small boat certification (e.g. MOCC or equivalent) preferred but not required.
4. Experience managing students/assistants.
5. Minimum 3.0 undergraduate GPA (higher strongly preferred).
6. Availability to participate in fieldwork in St. Croix during July/August 2016.
7. CA residency advantageous (but not required) since tuition funds would only cover in-state tuition

Interested candidates should email Dr. Benjamin Ruttenberg

([bruttenb@calpoly.edu](mailto:bruttenb@calpoly.edu)) with a \*brief\* description of his/her qualifications, interest in the Cal Poly MS program, and the project, as well as a short CV. Application deadline for Cal Poly is Feb 1.