

**From:** Max Castorani  
**Subject:** Grad student opportunities in coastal ecology at University of Virginia

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The Castorani Lab at the University of Virginia is recruiting 1–2 graduate students (MS or PhD) to study the population and community ecology of coastal marine ecosystems. Students will be advised by Max Castorani (<http://maxcastorani.weebly.com/>) and join UVA's highly interdisciplinary Department of Environmental Sciences (<http://www.evsc.virginia.edu/>). Potential systems for field studies include coastal lagoons, salt marshes, and seagrass meadows in Virginia, kelp forests in southern California, and estuaries in northern California. Students will have the opportunity to contribute to highly collaborative long-term ecological research in the Virginia Coast Reserve LTER (<https://www.vcrlter.virginia.edu/>) and Santa Barbara Coastal LTER (<http://sbc.lternet.edu/>).

Applicants should have strong interests in population dynamics, spatial ecology (dispersal, landscape ecology, metapopulations), or community ecology (biodiversity, species interactions, foundation species, invasive species), especially in the context of ecological disturbances. Ideal applicants will also have some or all of the following qualifications (or a strong desire to learn these skills): (1) Experience in experimental field ecology, ideally in coastal ecosystems; (2) Experience with data management or analysis, ideally in the R programming language; (3) Interest in the ecology of marine plants, algae, invertebrates, or fishes; (4) Experience with the collection or analysis of remotely-sensed imagery using unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) or satellites. Although research in the Castorani Lab is primarily motivated by fundamental ecological questions, there are opportunities for applied research related to coastal habitat restoration (eelgrass) and aquaculture (oysters and clams).

Field resources include access to boating, laboratory, and mesocosm facilities at the Anheuser-Busch Coastal Research Center (<https://www.abrc.virginia.edu/>) located at the Virginia Coast Reserve, a highly dynamic coastal barrier landscape comprising tidal marshes, coastal bays, and barrier islands. There are also opportunities for scuba-based research in kelp forests located near Santa Barbara, California, as well as field work at Point Reyes National Seashore near San Francisco.

UVA has a strong interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Environmental Sciences (<http://www.evsc.virginia.edu/academics/graduate/>), offering training and conducting research in ecology, geosciences, hydrology, and atmospheric sciences. Graduate students accepted into the program are typically supported through a mixture of teaching assistantships and research assistantships that support full stipend, tuition, and health insurance.

Those interested should send (1) a CV with academic and professional experience (including GPA); (2) a brief description of their background, career goals, motivations for pursuing a graduate degree, research ideas, and why they are specifically interested in joining the Castorani Lab; and (3) contact information for 2–3 references to Max Castorani ([max.castorani@ucsb.edu](mailto:max.castorani@ucsb.edu)). The application deadline is January 15, 2018 for enrollment in Fall 2018, however applicants should send an email expressing their interest as soon as possible.