

BIOGEOGRAPHY BRANCH

CENTER FOR COASTAL MONITORING & ASSESSMENT
NATIONAL CENTERS FOR COASTAL OCEAN SCIENCE



Sea Floor Characterization of the U.S. Caribbean 2011 Field Season Day 14: April 10, 2011

Do You Want to Do This for a Living?

If you are a current student or recent graduate and would like to know how you can get your foot in the door with NOAA (besides getting lost in a sea of applications on USAJobs.gov) and do what we do, here are some opportunities to consider:

Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program: This scholarship is designed to increase undergraduate training in oceanic and atmospheric science, research, technology, and education and recruit and prepare students for public service careers with NOAA and other natural resource and science agencies, or as teachers and educators in oceanic and atmospheric science. For more information go to: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/Hollings_info.html

The National Sea Grant College Program Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship
The Knauss fellowship matches highly qualified graduate students that have an interest in marine policy with "hosts" in the legislative and executive branch of government located in the Washington, D.C. area, for a one year, paid fellowship. I just completed this fellowship a few months ago and it's a great experience to learn about how high level marine policy decisions are made and just how the federal government functions. There are also additional training workshops, and opportunities to see a lot of the Capitol. For more information go to: <http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/knauss/index.html>

National Academy of Science/National Research Council Research Associateship Program
NRC Associateships provide advanced training for highly qualified postdoctoral and visiting scientists, while enhancing the research conducted in federal laboratories. For more information go to: <http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGRAP/index.htm>

This is just a small sample of opportunities. For some others, visit NOAA's Office of Education website: http://www.oesd.noaa.gov/noaa_student_opps.html

And don't forget about the **NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps** – the uniformed service of NOAA. They operate NOAA's research vessels, but they also fly aircraft, lead mobile field parties, conduct diving operations, manage research projects, and serve in staff positions throughout NOAA. For more information go to: <http://www.noaacorps.noaa.gov/recruiting/>



A queen triggerfish trapped in a derelict trap



Large colony of what we think is yellow pencil coral



Creole wrasse as far as the eye can see

Today's Agenda

Despite a later than usual start this morning, a combination of good weather and great teamwork resulted in a record-breaking day for small boat operations. The team uses previously collected multibeam data to identify habitat types with unique characteristics. Then the team pre-selects coordinates to visit with either drop cameras from small boats, or transects to travel using the ROV equipped with video and a still camera, in order to groundtruth the multibeam data. Tim Battista says that on average they have been able to visit close to 30 points a day with the drop cameras. Well, today they got to 47, which is amazing, but this likely means that we will have to spend less time on small boat and ROV operations and more on multibeam mapping.



Tim Battista and Marty Schnure returning from small boat operations with ENS Jamie Park and John Hoisington



Adult gray angelfish are usually found in pairs



Gray snapper appear to be lining up for their picture



Two remoras take shelter under this spotted eagle ray

For the ROV operations, we didn't break any records for numbers of dives, but we did see plenty of cool species. On the bad side, we saw many derelict traps. I counted 19 today, including a string of 4 tied together. But on the good side, we one of the largest colonies of yellow pencil coral that anyone on the team has seen. We also saw plenty of fish – lots more squirrelfish, a large school of creole wrasse, plenty of gray angelfish, some barracuda, and an impressive number gray snapper, though none were very big. We also only saw one lionfish today. It would be interesting to figure out what was different about the habitat or maybe physical oceanographic processes in the area that we visited today that may explain why there were relatively fewer lionfish compared to yesterday. One of the highlights was a spotted eagle ray that had two hitchhiking remoras swimming under cover.

Stay tuned for more about what happens during the nightshift . . .