

Web Update

Day 5: 02/29/2008

Describe your role in the project?

My role in this project is to coordinate the collection of /in situ/ seafloor data. This data is used by scientists to groundtruth benthic habitat maps created from remotely sensed multibeam data. Since most of the places we are mapping are relatively deep (>30m) we use a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) to collect video and pictures of the seafloor. A lot of my time is spent planning where the ROV should collect data and interpreting what we see. I frequently speak with the map makers, chief scientist and ROV operators to ensure useful data is collected.

How did you start working with NOAA or other background info?

I started working for NOAA four years ago. My first projects involved mapping and monitoring fish distributions. I was hired because of my experience with spatial ecology, statistics and geographic information systems.

How/why did you get involved in marine science?

I got involved in marine science in graduate school. I started working on the ecology of plankton in lakes which slowly evolved into the ecology of tropical corals and fish.

What do you like most about being out at sea?

For this project, I enjoy working with a ROV and getting to observe rarely seen habitats and organisms.

If you were a reef-associated animal, what would you be and why?

Octopi are the most amazing creatures. We haven't seen one yet with the ROV, but I have my fingers crossed.

What do you like most about your job?

I like the diversity of projects I get to work on and the constant learning. Over the past four years I have developed a monitoring protocol for reef fish, characterized the seabirds of Vieques Puerto Rico, collected data using an ROV and assisted with marine management decisions. For each of these projects I learned a new skill set and met some great scientists.



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