

Tropical Research and Education Center

M.S. or Ph.D. Position in Sponge Restoration and Biogeochemistry

A M.S. or Ph.D. Research Assistantship is available at The University of Florida in the School of Natural Resources and the Environment to study how sponges contribute to water quality improvement in the Florida Keys and Biscayne Bay. The student will be co-advised by Drs. Ashley Smyth and Joshua Patterson and based at the Tropical Research and Education Center in Homestead, FL. The student will join an interdisciplinary project team to better understand methods for sponge restoration success along with filtration and nutrient cycling rates associated with various sponge species. Students will also work closely with Florida Sea Grant and have opportunities to participate in outreach and extension activities.

Applicants from various backgrounds will be considered, including environmental science, marine biology, restoration ecology, or biogeochemistry. Experience in aquatic and coastal ecosystems, and analytical chemistry is preferred. Preference for Ph.D. positions will be given to students that have completed a M.S. degree by the project start date. A competitive stipend, benefits, and tuition waiver will be provided over the project's duration. The expected start date is Fall 2026 but a Summer 2026 start date is possible.

Interested candidates should send a statement of research interests and CV to Dr. Ashley Smyth (ashley.smyth@ufl.edu) and Dr. Joshua Patterson (joshpatterson@ufl.edu) with the subject line: "Graduate Position- Sponges" by 12/5/2025 for consideration. More information about the program can be found here: <https://snre.ifas.ufl.edu/academics/graduate/how-to-apply/how-to-apply-graduate/>.