

Kendall Johnson

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Professional Preparation/Education

08/2016-Present: PhD student, Marine Biology, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
 Dissertation: Uncovering Evolutionary Links and Transformative Genes in Adaptive Radiations of Marine Reef Fishes Using Targeted Gene Capture

08/2012-05/2016: Bachelor of Science in Marine Science and Biology, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, University of Miami

08/2008-05/2012: High school diploma, Riverview High School, Sarasota, FL

Research Experience

08/2016-Present: Laboratory Research Assistant (paid)

Serve as lab coordinator for the Fish Systematics and Conservation Laboratory at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. In charge of organizing specimens, preparing them for shipment to other facilities, and keeping records; overseeing DNA extraction and amplification.

09/2014-08/2016: Research Assistant, Dept. of Marine Biology & Ecology, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (unpaid)

Research examines *Fundulus heteroclitus* whole mitochondrial genomes to determine any effects of variable microhabitats within a local environment on the mitochondria, as well as patterns of change along the latitudinal cline of the North American eastern seaboard. Research involves processing Next Generation Sequencing data and population genetic analyses. Additional research includes developing and testing a modified GBS protocol to obtain informative SNPs from degraded DNA. Experience in genomic DNA isolation, PCR, development of primers for PCR, gel electrophoresis, and making buffers, genotyping by sequencing (GBS), DNA barcoding, and RFLP analysis.

06/2015-08/2016: Research Project, Microhabitat adaptation in the mitochondrial genome of *Fundulus heteroclitus*

Research Project 06/2015-08/2016: Changes in the whole mitochondrial genome of *Fundulus heteroclitus* along the eastern North American Seaboard

Research Project 01/2016-05/2016: A Modified GBS Protocol to Obtain Informative SNPs from Highly Degraded DNA

06/2014-08/2014: Intern at Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (unpaid)

Analyzed passive acoustic recording of spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) spawning aggregations in Bunces Pass. Participated in field work to capture spotted seatrout and snook (*Centropomus undecimalis*). Took fin clip samples from snook. Took mercury plugs and retrieved otoliths from a variety of fish. Analyzed scallop spat traps and processed samples. Took dimensional measurements of bay scallops and oysters. Prepped recruitment arrays for deployment. Constructed spat collectors.

International experience

Jan-April 2015: Study Abroad in the Galápagos

Lived with a Spanish-speaking host family for 3 months. Participated in extensive fieldwork ranging from interviews of members of the local community to surveys of species among the islands. These surveys included identification and counts of terrestrial plants and birds, as well as underwater surveys of damselfish algae gardens and counts of fish diversity.

June-August 2017: Research Abroad in China

Participated in a research project at Shanghai Ocean University, Shanghai, China for two months as part of the 2017 EAPSI award.

Presentations

Indo-Pacific Fish Conference (2017): 15 minute oral presentation

Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (2018): 15 minute oral presentation

Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Marine Science Graduate Student Organization Annual Research Forum (2019): 15 minute oral presentation

Awards/Scholarships

Scholarships:

- *George W. Jenkins Scholarship* – \$250,000, University of Miami (2012-2016)
- *Science and Engineering Graduate Scholarship* – \$1,000.00, Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (2016, 2017)
- *Dr. Carl R. Beaver Memorial Scholarship Fund* – \$100, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, (2017-2018)
- *Laboratory Assistantship*, College of Science & Engineering, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, \$22,000 (2016-2020)

Grants:

- *Texas Public Education Grant (TPEG)* - \$2,000.00 Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (2016, 2017).
- *Small Undergraduate Research Grant Experience (SURGE)* for \$1,500 to fund attendance to the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB) 2016 conference.
- *East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes for U.S. Graduate Students (EAPSI)*, National Science Foundation, (2017) to participate in research in Genomics Lab of Dr. Chenhong Li, Shanghai Ocean University, Shanghai, China.

- Lerner-Gray Grant for Marine Research - \$2,000 American Museum of Natural History (2018)
- Grants-In-Aid of Graduate Research - \$2,500 Texas Sea Grant (2019)

Activities

STEM FYE Summer Bridge Program – Peer Leader (June 2015-July 2015)

Served as peer leader during intensive six-week First Year Experience program, a collaborative effort between Laboratory of Marine Genomics at the University of Miami and Miami Dade College. Guided students through project on the population structure of marine gastropods using the COX1 gene barcode region and bioinformatics. Our group's project was awarded second place at the program's closing event.

Community Garden Volunteer (January 2015-March 2015)

Worked with Intercultural Outreach Initiative to create an educational garden that featured native and endemic plants for the community of Puerto Villamil in Isabela, Galápagos, Ecuador. Removed invasive plants, created flower beds and pathways, and planted seedlings obtained from the National Park greenhouse.

Mote Marine Aquarium Volunteer (May 2011-August 2013)

Responsibilities included educating visitors about the exhibits and activities at Mote Marine, as well as conservation and research efforts.

Sarasota County Special Olympics, Sarasota, Florida (2009 – 2015)

Class A Volunteer. Completed Protective Behaviors Training. Provide direct one-to-one support to athletes in both the Aquatics and Bowling Programs from June – August yearly. Assist at County and Area games.

Texas State Aquarium Volunteer (Fall 2017 – Summer 2018)

Worked as a guest ambassador to welcome guests and assist them with general information about the aquarium as well as to conduct surveys, and as a naturalist to provide information about the aquarium's animals and exhibits.

Membership

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (2018-Present)

Student Member