



Program 2 Seminar

Does reef substratum composition influence benthic carnivorous fishes' activity and distribution?

Presented by: João Paulo Krajewski, Visiting PhD student

João Paulo Krajewski is originally from Brazil, where he gained his BSc and MSc degrees at Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp). João has been studying reef fish behavior and ecology since 2002 and his main research interests are reef fish foraging and feeding associations. Currently he is a PhD candidate at Unicamp and is interested on the feeding of benthic carnivorous reef fishes. The aim of this study is to verify if there is a relationship between the feeding activity and distribution of benthic carnivorous fishes with the substratum composition. This research has been primarily conducted in Fernando de Noronha, a volcanic archipelago off Northeastern Brazil. Recently João has received a scholarship to spend one year at James Cook University, under the supervision of Prof. Geoffrey Jones, to analyze his data and write scientific articles related to his PhD.

Where: ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies Conference Room, JCU. Video linked to Centre for Marine Studies Conference Room, UQ.

When: Thursday 8th November, 4.00pm

Abstract: Benthic carnivorous fishes are ubiquitous inhabitants of coral and rocky reefs. These fishes are well known for their critical influence on the structure and composition of habitat and fauna associated to reefs and soft sediments nearby reefs. As the activity (e.g. foraging, resting) of most benthic carnivorous reef fish species is highly related to the reef bottom, substratum composition may strongly influence several aspects of reef fish's ecology and behavior. In my PhD research I explore the hypothesis that the activity and distribution of carnivorous fishes may be correlated to reef substratum composition. More specifically, I address the hypothesis that benthic carnivorous fishes will be more abundant on reefs where there is a higher relative abundance of their preferred foraging substratum. The study has been conducted at the Fernando de Noronha, a volcanic archipelago 350km off Northeastern Brazil. I have studied the foraging substratum selection, abundance and behavior of five abundant benthic carnivorous species at the study site as well as the substratum composition of several reefs on the archipelago. During this talk, I will present the results of my research to date, especially those related to reef fish foraging substratum selection. Further, I will discuss my expected outcomes for this research and present future research plans to the present study.

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