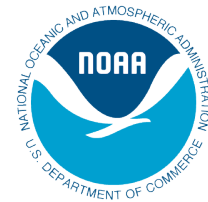


Georgia Coastal Management Program

Brownbag Presentation



Please join us for the following presentation at the Susan Shipman Environmental Learning Center located in the Northeast corner of the parking lot at DNR's Coastal Regional Headquarters in Brunswick Georgia. Please feel free to bring your lunch. For questions contact Kelly Hill at (912) 264-7218.

Presentations Begin at Noon

June 19th, 2018

Quantifying the effects of white pox disease and bleaching in elkhorn coral in the Florida Keys from 1994-2014

Brett Berry, GADNR Environmental Protection Division



Bleaching events and disease outbreaks have contributed to major losses of coral worldwide in recent decades. A long term dataset from 1994 to 2014 in the Florida Keys was used to determine risk factors for elkhorn coral (*Acropora palmata*) colony mortality. The status and fate of individual coral colonies through time were tracked to see the influence of stressors such as bleaching and white pox disease on survival. Although counter intuitive, our results clearly show that corals surviving the initial bleaching or disease event, may

exhibit delayed whole-colony mortality compared to non-diseased colonies. The statistical significance of the pattern and its repeated expression at multiple sites and times on reefs throughout the Florida Keys, suggests that future studies of disease and bleaching should take into account survival mechanisms observed during this study.

Brett graduated from the University of Georgia with a B.S. and M.S. in Ecology in 2016. His studies were primarily focused on the effects of a bacterial parasite on endangered elkhorn coral in the Florida Keys using predictive disease modeling. He moved to Brunswick in August, 2017 and currently works at the EPD Coastal District. He enjoys spending his free time traveling and being outdoors and is looking forward to exploring all that coastal Georgia has to offer.