

Ph.D. position in seagrass biodiversity at Univ. of Virginia / VCR LTER

The Castorani Lab at the University of Virginia is recruiting one Ph.D. student to study the patterns and drivers of seagrass biodiversity at the Virginia Coast Reserve Long Term Ecological Research project (VCR LTER; <https://vcrleter.virginia.edu/>). The Virginia Coast Reserve is home to the world's largest successful seagrass restoration, which has been studied for over two decades by an interdisciplinary group of researchers at UVA and beyond (<http://seagrass.virginia.edu/>). The student will undertake new field studies and analyze existing long-term data to understand spatial and temporal patterns in the biodiversity of seagrass-associated invertebrates and fishes. The student will be advised by professor Max Castorani (<https://castorani.evsc.virginia.edu/>) and join UVA's Department of Environmental Sciences (<https://evsc.as.virginia.edu/>).

At the time of enrollment, highly-qualified applicants will have an undergraduate or master's degree in biology, ecology, oceanography, fisheries, or a related field. Ideal candidates will have strong interests in community ecology and marine ecology; experience in field ecology (especially in marine or aquatic ecosystems); and demonstrated quantitative skills, such as data analysis or scientific programming (or strong motivation to acquire such skills).

UVA has a highly interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Environmental Sciences (<https://evsc.as.virginia.edu/prospective-graduate-students>), offering training and conducting research in ecology, geosciences, hydrology, and atmospheric sciences. Graduate students accepted into the program are typically supported through a mixture of teaching assistantships and research assistantships that provide a competitive stipend, tuition, and health insurance.

The Castorani Lab is committed to creating an inclusive, equitable, and diverse research environment. Applicants will be considered regardless of age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political affiliation, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, and family medical or genetic information.

Those interested should send the following items, as a single PDF, to Dr. Max Castorani (castorani@virginia.edu): (1) a brief description of their background, career goals, motivations for pursuing a graduate degree, research ideas, and why they are *specifically* interested in joining the Castorani Lab; (2) a CV with academic and professional experience (including GPA); (3) contact information for 2–3 references; and (4) a writing sample, if available.

The application deadline is January 15, 2021 for enrollment in Fall 2021, however serious applicants should express their interest as soon as possible.

