

Sitara Palecanda

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
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EDUCATION

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
Honolulu, HI

August 2015-Present

PhD in Marine Biology (in progress). PI: Dr. Megan Porter. Ecology Evolution and Comparative Biology specialization.
Thesis: "Visual ecology of larval stomatopods (Crustacea, Stomatopoda)"

University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, CA
B.A. in Integrative Biology. *GPA*: 3.5

August 2009–May 2013

PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Publications:

- Palecanda SP, Pakes MJ (in prep) "In situ behavior of a blind cave crustacean (*Speleonectes tulumensis*)"
- Palecanda SP, Feller KD, Porter ML (in prep) "Larval diversity of mantis shrimp (Crustacea, Stomatopoda) in Eastern Australia"

Poster presentations:

- "Shifts in Opsin Expression During the Larval to Adult Transition in *Pullosquilla thomassini*". SICB conference, New Orleans, LA. January 2017
- "Shifts in opsin expression during embryonic and larval development in *Pullosquilla thomassini*". Larval Biology Symposium, Honolulu, HI. August 2017

Oral presentations:

- "Shifts in Opsin Expression During the Larval to Adult Transition in *Pullosquilla thomassini*" Testers Symposium, Honolulu, HI. April 2017; SICB conference, San Francisco CA, January 2018
- "Investigation of Ultraviolet Opsins in Larval Stomatopods" Testers Symposium, Honolulu HI. April 2018
- "Planktonic Estimates of Stomatopod Diversity" International Crustacean Congress, Washington DC. May 2018

GRANTS & AWARDS

The Crustacean Society

Fellowship in Graduate Studies. May 2018

Amount: \$1000

UH Mānoa Graduate Student Organization

Awarded to fund attendance of the 9th annual Larval Biology Symposium. August 2017

Amount: \$380

UH Mānoa Graduate Student Organization

Travel award to attend the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology conference. January 2017

Amount: \$968

Hawaii Conservation Conference Student Scholarship

Awarded to attend the 2018 Hawaii Conservation Conference. June 2018

UH Mānoa Tester Symposium

Best rapid-fire talk honorable mention. April 2018

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Research: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

August 2015–Present

PI: Megan Porter

Investigation of opsin protein expression in larval and adult stomatopods using transcriptomic methods. Comparative estimates of diversity of larval and adult stomatopods using genetic methods.

Research Assistant: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

August 2016–January 2016

Performed RNA and DNA extractions. Downloaded, assembled, and performed analysis on already sequenced RNA and DNA data from the NCBI database. Funded by NSF grant DEB1556819.

Research Assistant: University of California at Berkeley

January 2012–May 2013

PI: Roy Caldwell

Observed and marked behavior of remipede crustaceans using the program Fiji. Created excel spreadsheets and organized data. Began individual project under mentorship to compare remipede behavior observed in caves to behavior in laboratory studies. Used JWatcher to score and analyze behavioral data. Fed stomatopod crustaceans and cephalopods. Cleaned and changed water in tanks. Noted molts or unusual behavior. Preserved dead animals.

Animal Care Assistant: The Marine Mammal Center

October 2008-June 2009

Fort Cronkhite, CA

Worked with sick and injured seals and sea lions. Prepared food. Tube fed and restrained animals. Helped administer medicine.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant: University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

August 2015–Present

Taught lab sections for introduction to biology (BIOL 171L), cell and molecular biology (BIOL 275L), and genetics (BIOL 375L). Graded papers, lectured, led in class exercises.

Instructional Support (Lab Assistant): University of California at Berkeley

January-May 2014

Provided support for classes including ordering and preparing specimens, helping students in lab, helping with course prep and planning. Set up and maintained aquaria for temperate marine invertebrates. Helped plan and execute major outreach events.