

Sponge Restoration

Shelly Krueger

Florida Sea Grant Agent

University of Florida IFAS Extension, Monroe County

Outline

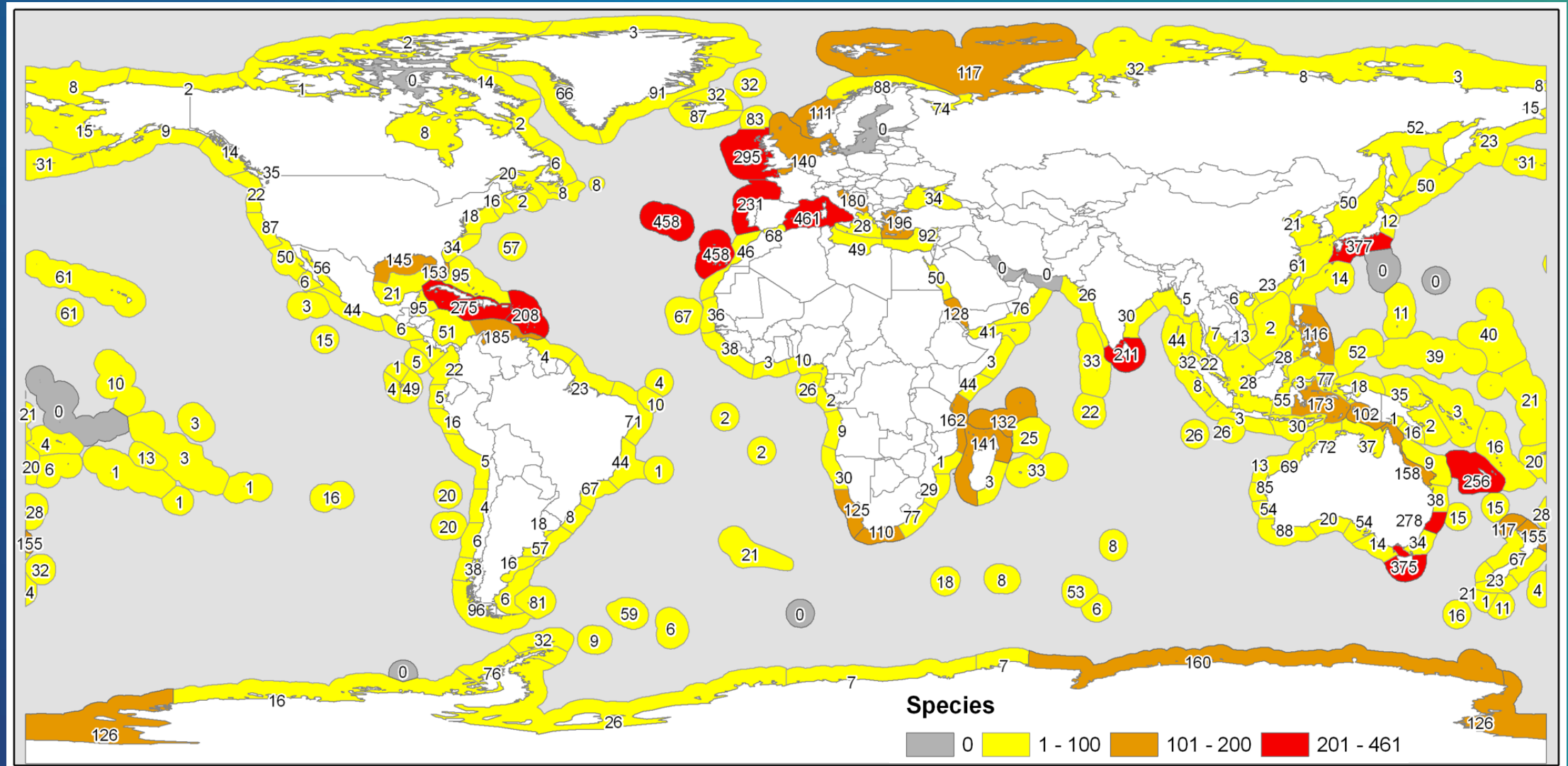
- Intro to sponges
- Economy
- Threats
- Sponge restoration



Loggerhead sponge in the Florida Keys

*Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion
University (ODU)*

Sponge Distribution

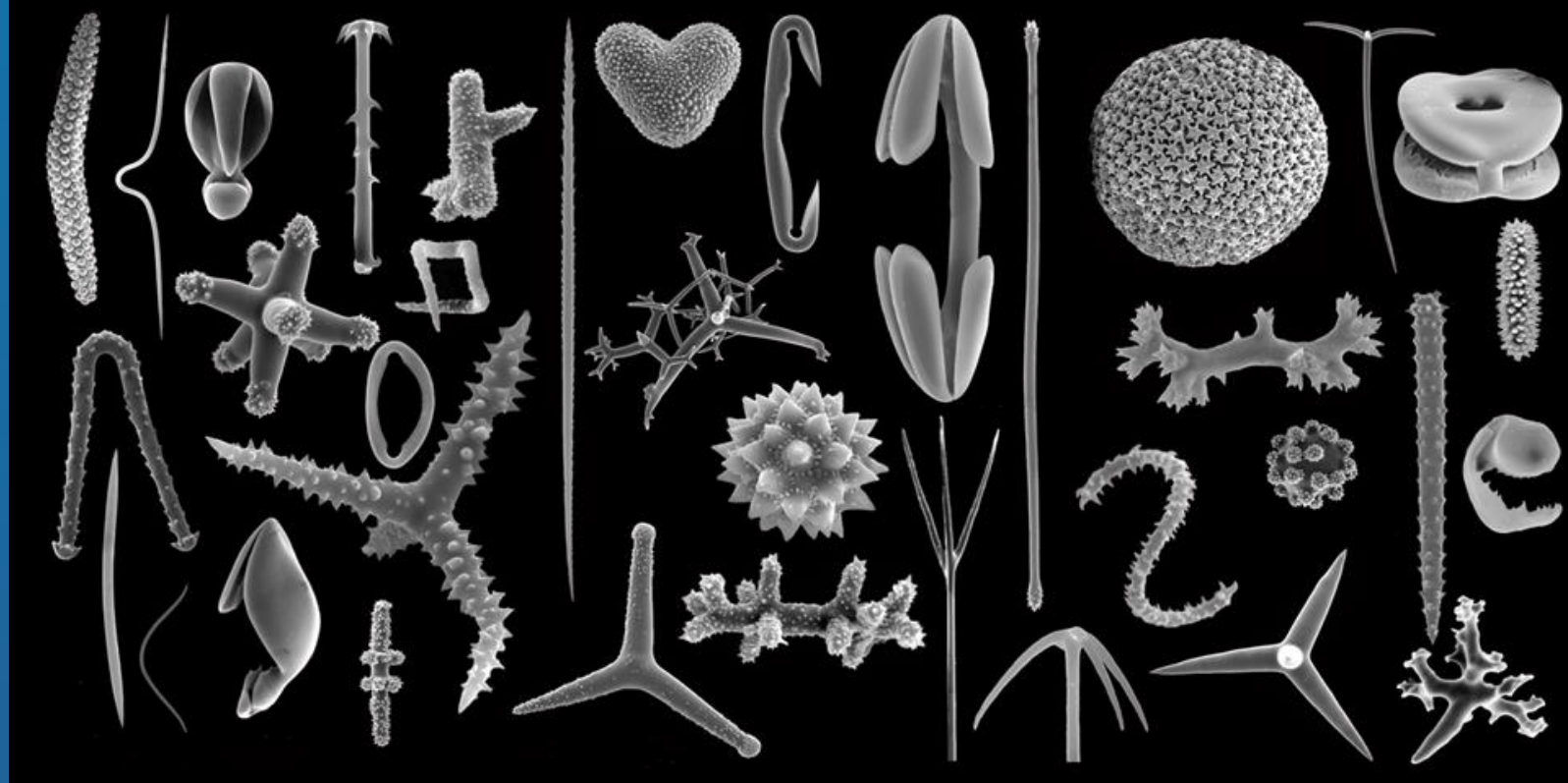


The global distribution and diversity of sponges (Phylum Porifera).

Source: Van Soest et al. 2012. PLoS ONE

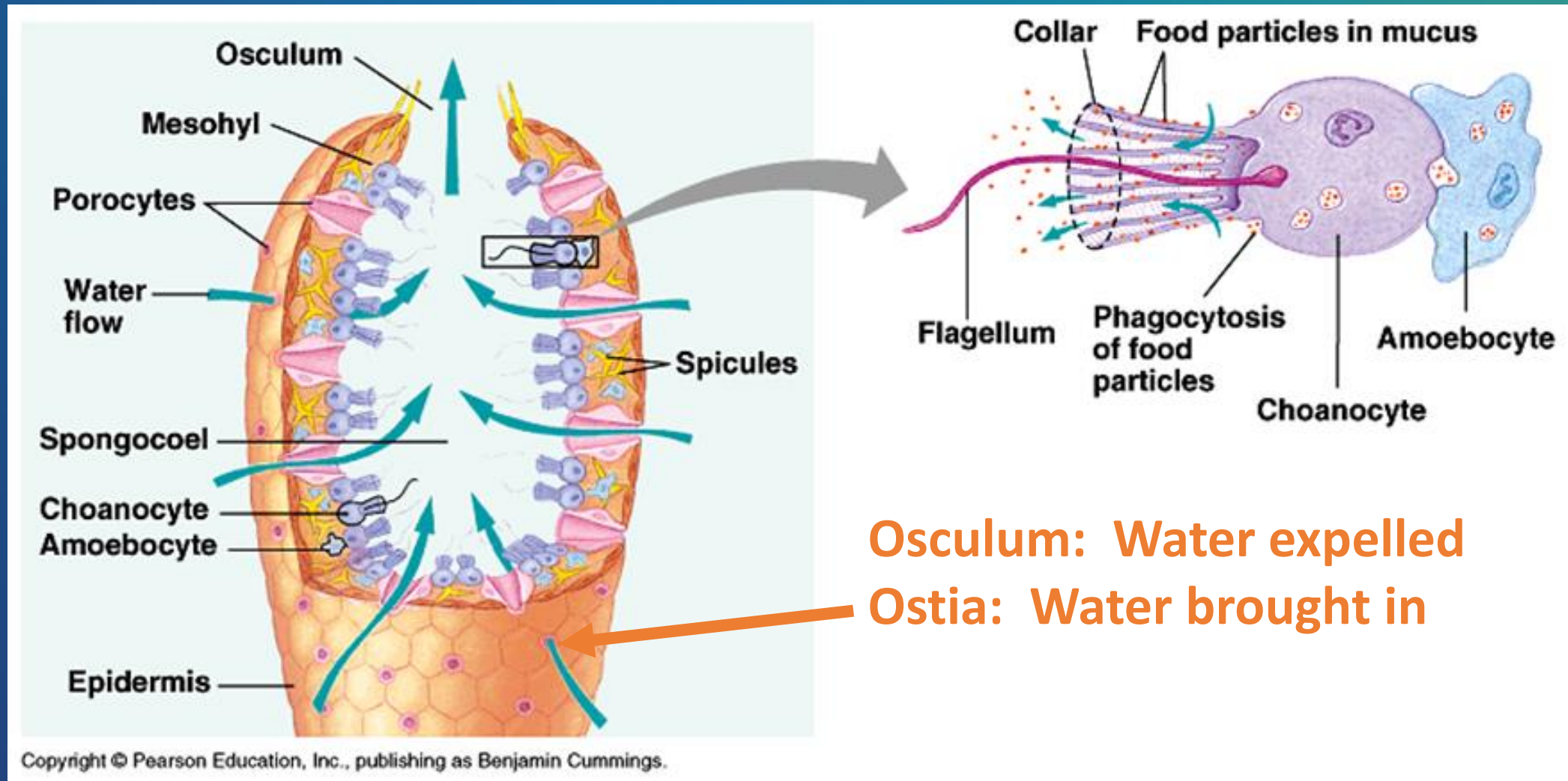
Sponge Taxonomy

- Phylum Porifera
 - Class Calcarea
 - Class Hexactinellida
 - Class Demospongiae
 - Class Homoscleromorpha
- Spicules – Ca or Si
- 8,553 described species
- ~24 bath sponge spp.
- Spongin



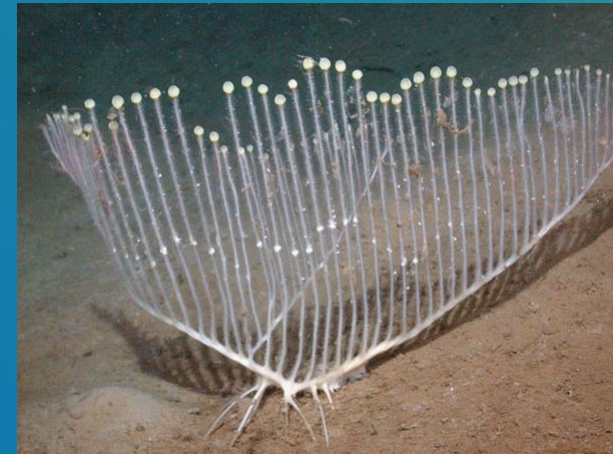
Sample of spicule formations from sponges.
Sources: Taylor et al. 2007; Van Soest et al. 2012

Sponge Organization



General body organization of a sponge.
Source: Pearson Education Inc., Benjamin Cummings

Sponge Morphology



Sources: Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, Florida Sea Grant, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Mark Butler (ODU), J.R. Pawlik (UNCW), and Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute

Sponge Predators

- Hawksbill turtle
- Starfish
- Butterfly fish
- Angelfish
- Trunkfish
- Cowfish
- Nudibranchs



Bahama star *Oreaster reticulatus* in Florida Keys

Source: Shelly Krueger, UF/IFAS

Miracles from the Sea

“More novel bioactive compounds are obtained from members of this phylum each year than any other marine taxon” ~Shaala et al., 2015

1969: Cytarabine = first marine derived drug from a sponge for leukemia

Breast cancer, prostate cancer, antimalarial drugs, herpes medications



Tectitethya crypta.

Source: The Sponge Guide

Ecological Importance



Snapping shrimp, *Synalpheus* species
Source: Arthur Anker, Wikimedia Commons



Juvenile spiny lobster hiding under loggerhead sponge
Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University

Water Quality: Sponge Filtration Rates

Sponge Common Name	Scientific Name	Filtration Rate (ml of water per hour per ml of sponge biomass)	Filtration Rate (gallons per hour)
Sheepswool	<i>Hippospongia lachne</i>	34.37	594
Loggerhead	<i>Spheciospongia vesparium</i>	17.6	304
Brown branching	<i>Ircinia species</i>	25.1	432
Vase/basket	<i>Ircinia campana</i>	28.83	498
Grass	<i>Spongia graminea</i>	18.26	316
	Average	24.8	429



Commercial Sponge Fishery

TODAY IN KEYS HISTORY



Photo from the Scott DeWolfe Collection

Sponges on Greene Street dry in the sun on this day in 1900. If the weather and water condition were satisfactory a sponger could make a good living.



The history and culture of the sponge fishery in Florida is of interest to many.

Sources: Scott DeWolfe Collection and dglobe.com

Threats

- Algal/cyanobacteria blooms
- Diseases
- Dredging
- Freshwater runoff
- Poor water quality
- Hurricanes



Loggerhead sponges washed ashore after Hurricane Irma.

Source: Martha Meroni

Synechococcus blooms in Florida Bay

- Cyanobacteria
- *Synechococcus* blooms
- “Pea soup”
- Florida Bay



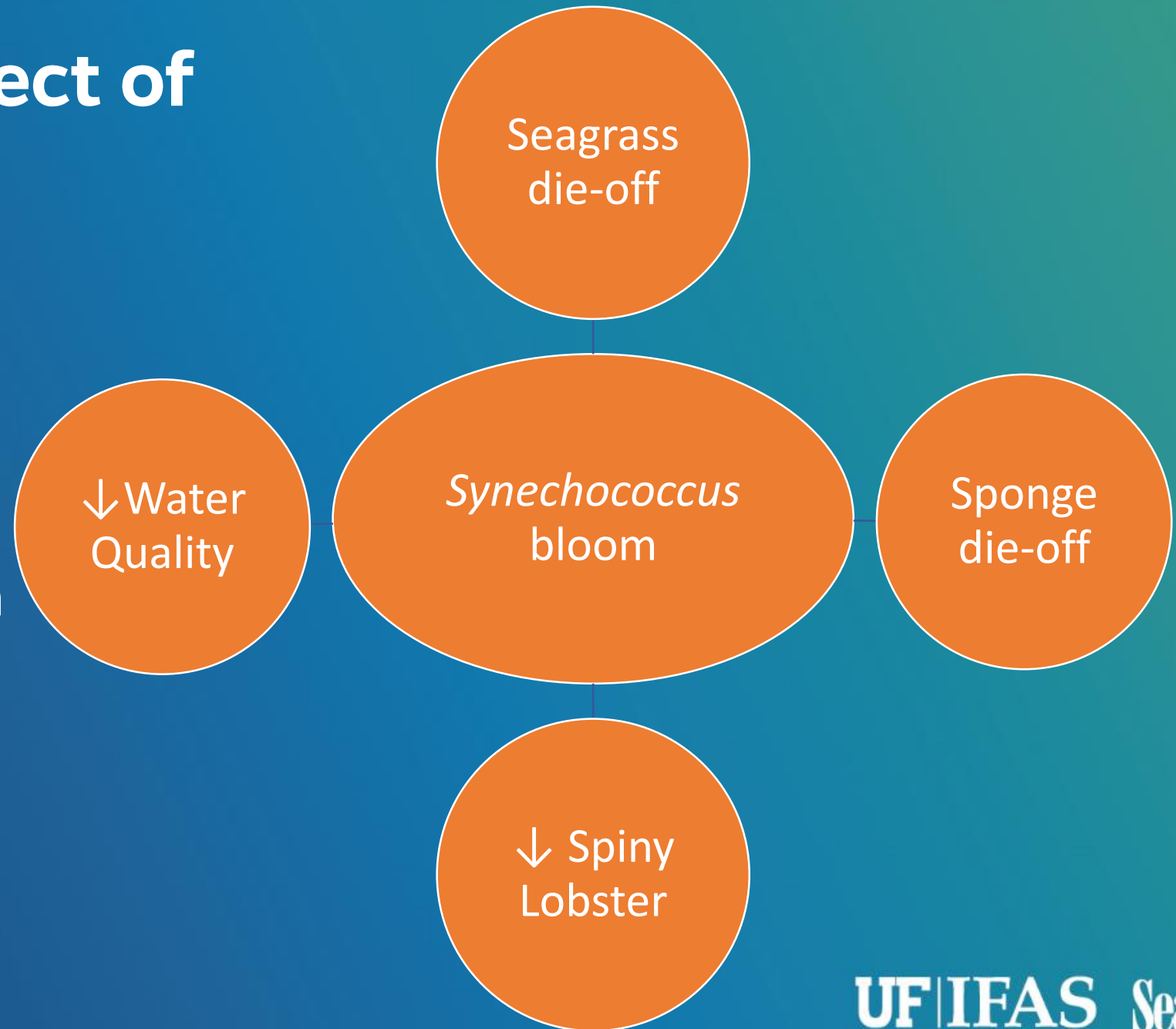
A boater measures water clarity during a bloom.

Source: *Phlips et al., 1995; Phlips et al., 1999; Chanton et al., 2003, Eye on Miami*

Cascading Effect of Blooms

Changes in:

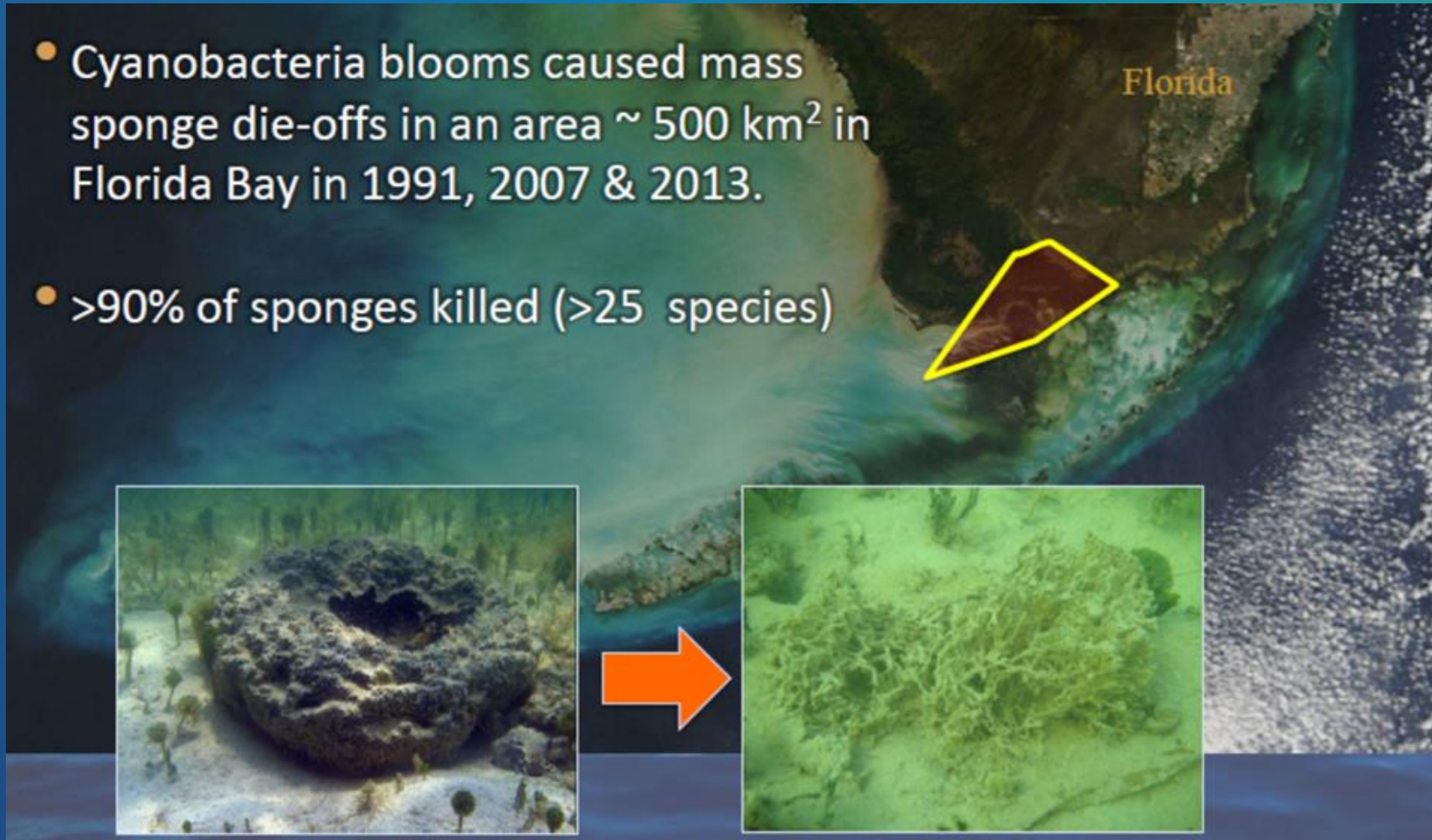
- Rainfall
- Salinity
- Nutrients
- Dissolved oxygen
- Hydrology
- Temperature



Sources: Butler et al., 1995; NOAA Fisheries, 2013; Butler and Dolan, 2017

Consequences of Algal Blooms

- Cyanobacteria blooms caused mass sponge die-offs in an area $\sim 500 \text{ km}^2$ in Florida Bay in 1991, 2007 & 2013.
- >90% of sponges killed (>25 species)



Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University

Loggerhead sponge pre- and post-algal bloom



Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University

Basket sponge pre- and post-algal bloom



Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University

Sponge Restoration



FWC researcher Elliott Hart placing sponges into
sponge nursery, Marathon, Florida

Source: Jennifer Stein

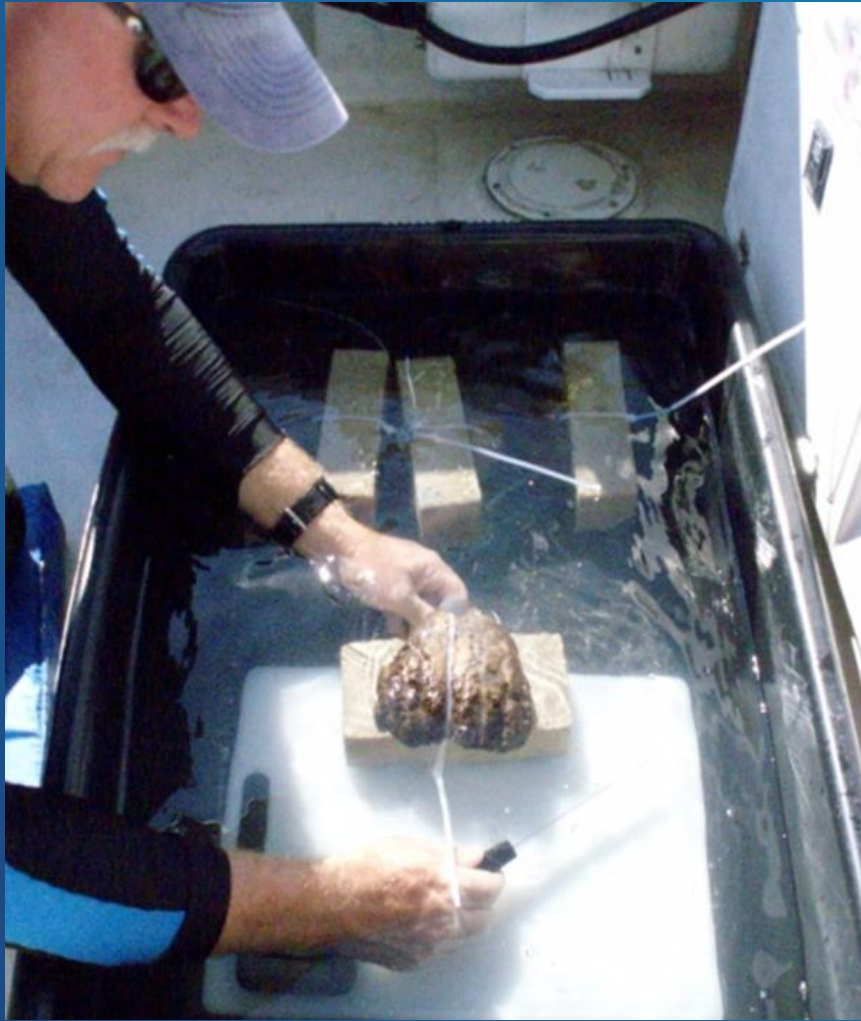
Sponge Species

Clockwise: glove sponge, brown branching sponge, vase sponge, alf sponge, fire sponge, and blackball sponge

Sources: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University; Shelly Krueger, UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant; Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute; and Coralpedia

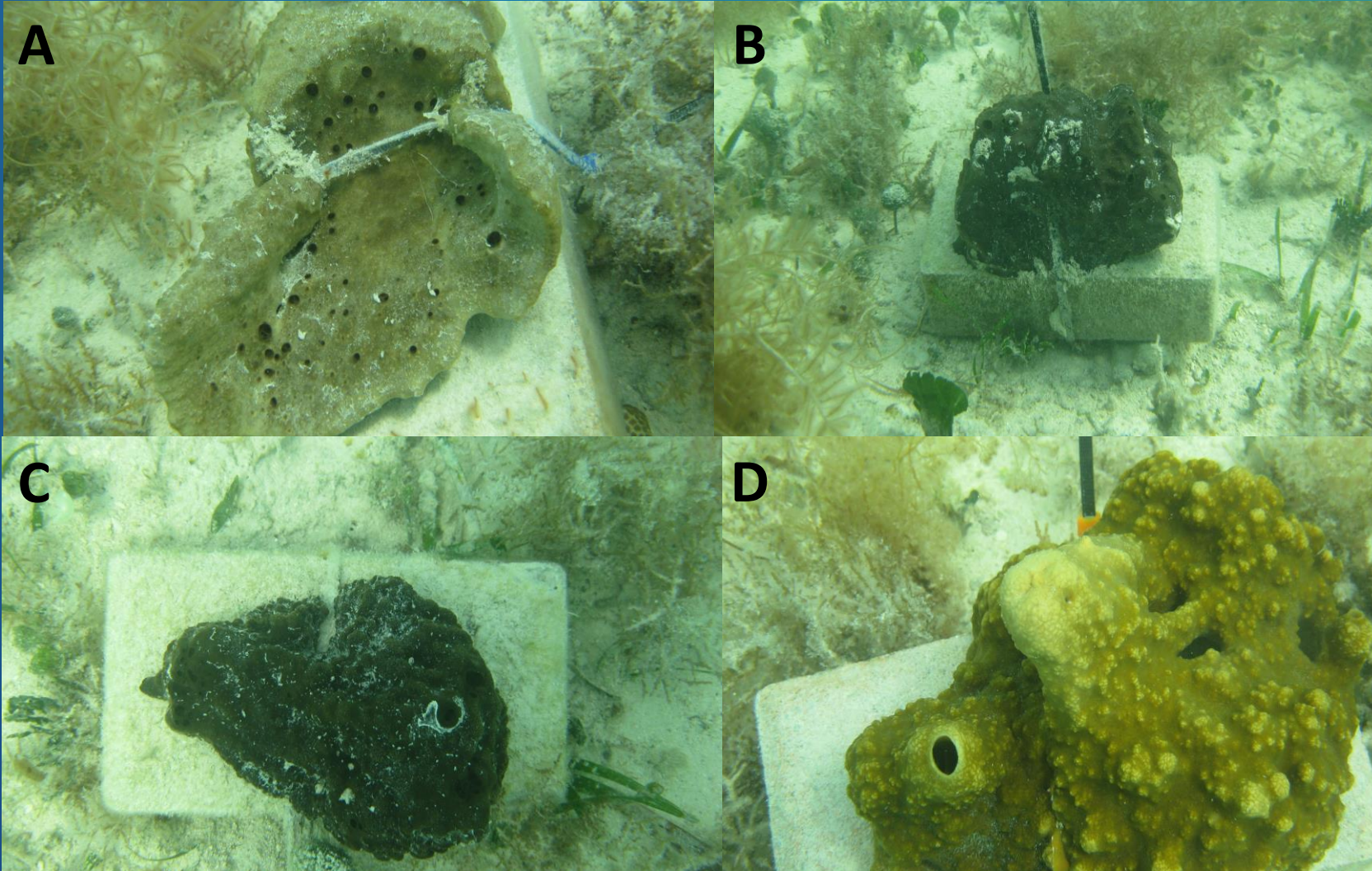


Sponge Propagules (cuttings)



Dr. Mark Butler attaching sponge to brick (left) and sponge cuttings awaiting attachment to bricks (right) Sources: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University and Shelly Krueger, UF/IFAS

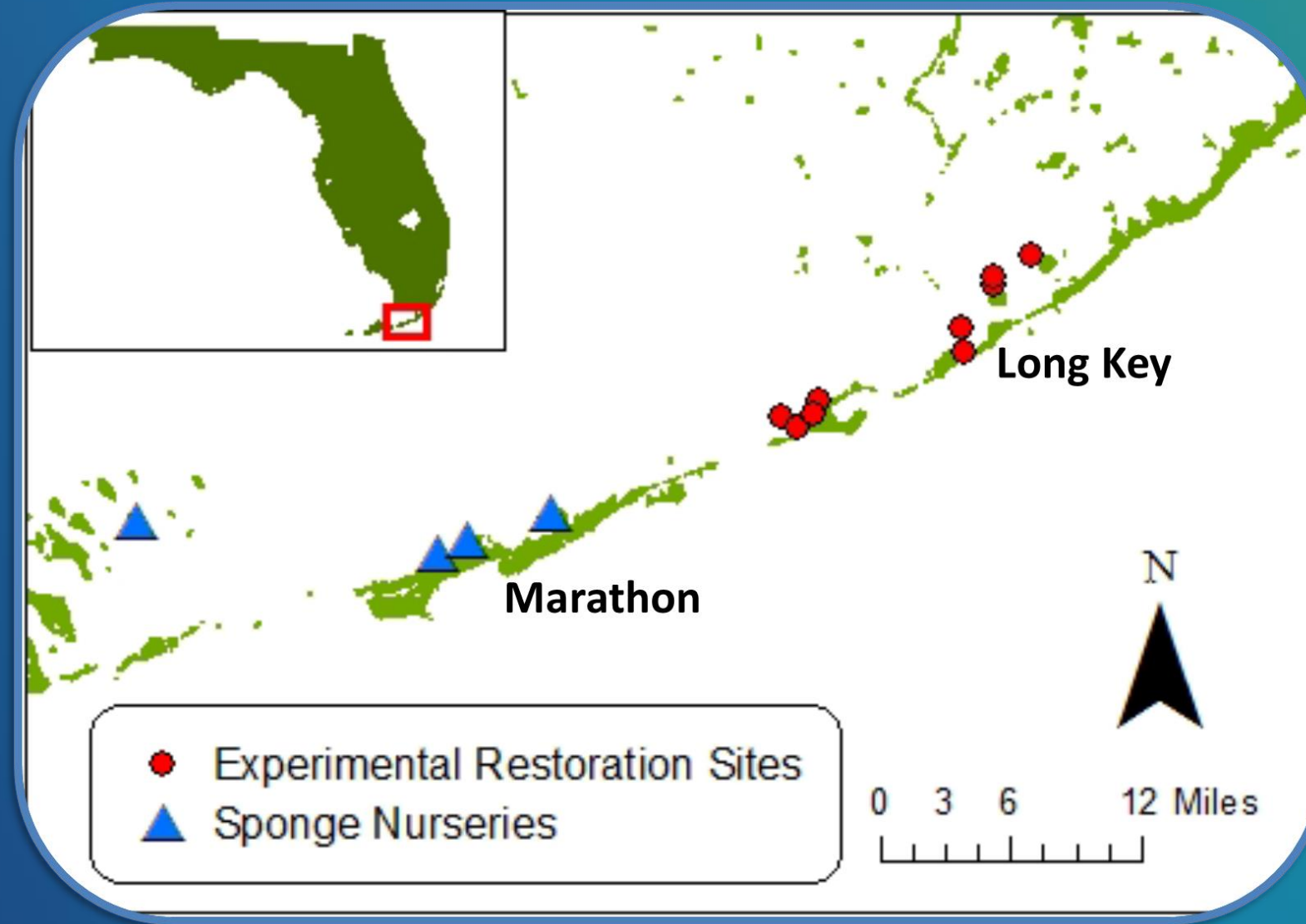
Sponge Propagules (cuttings)



Propagules of four sponge species on bricks in nursery, Florida Keys.

Source: Shelly Krueger, UF/IFAS

FWC Sponge Nurseries and Restoration Sites



Map of FWC sponge nurseries and restoration sites in the Middle Florida Keys.

Source: Elliot Hart, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

Basket Sponge Restoration



Basket sponge *Ircinia campana* propagules (left) and 4 years later

Source: Dr. Mark Butler, Old Dominion University

Sponges: The oysters of South Florida?

Oysters

- Efficient filters
- Large restoration efforts
- Nitrogen removal
- Oyster gardening

Sponges

- Efficient filters
- Restoration efforts
- Nitrogen removal?
- Sponge gardening?



UF/IFAS Florida Master Naturalist Program

- **Marine Habitat Restoration \$175**

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- Savanna Barry, Laura Reynolds

Coral Reef Restoration

- Josh Patterson

Sponge Restoration

- Shelly Krueger

- **Artificial Reefs**

- Scott Jackson

UF/IFAS Florida Master Naturalist Program – a new Marine Habitat Restoration Course



Developed by:

Shelly Krueger, Savanna Barry, Scott Jackson, Shelly Johnson, Josh Patterson, Laura Reynolds, Martin Main

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Questions?

Email:

Shellykrueger@ufl.edu

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Source: Internet Movie Database (IMDB)