

The Coastal Waters Consortium Presents:

Scientist Spotlight



Samantha Setta

What is your educational background?

I attended the University of Texas at Austin and received my Bachelor's degree in Marine and Freshwater Biology.

What inspired you to become a scientist?

I first became interested in science in high school while taking a Marine Science class. After high school I started my undergraduate degree with general biology. I was unsure if marine biology was the focus I wanted for my career. After conducting my own independent research as part of my undergraduate program, I was inspired to start in a career in Marine Biology.

Can you describe what you enjoy the most about conducting scientific research?

My favorite part of scientific research is discovering how the world around me works. I enjoy the field work we do to collect samples; being on the boat and in the salt marsh all day. I'm also very excited about the results we get after collecting the data and we finally answer the question that drove us to conduct our research.



What is your role as a scientist for CWC?

I'm a Research Assistant in the Roberts Biogeochemistry lab. We investigate nutrient cycling, organic matter, greenhouse gas fluxes, and net primary productivity within the Louisiana salt marsh. I help with field work, running experiments, and processing samples in the lab

Can you summarize your oil spill research and describe any surprising findings you have come across?

The research we do in the Roberts lab investigates how biogeochemical processes and net primary productivity are affected by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. We research nutrient cycling in the sediment by microbial populations. We use greenhouse gas fluxes in the field and experiments in the lab to discover how greenhouse gases are affected by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. We also investigate the interannual variation in aboveground and belowground plant biomass.

The Coastal Waters Consortium's mission is to assess the chemical evolution, biological degradation, and environmental stresses of petroleum and dispersant within Gulf of Mexico coastal and shelf ecosystems.