

Global biogeography and trophic ecology of zoanthids and their symbionts

Date 23 Feb (Fri.)

Time 16:00 (UTC+8)

Venue 3N01 & Zoom



You can also email us to require the Zoom link
(check SBS website → NEWS & EVENTS)

Corals are early-branching animals that have diverse microbiomes and strongly rely on symbionts for their nutrition and growth. Most coral groups have a deep genetic divergence among species of the Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific, including in genera of hard corals and hydrocorals. Zoanthids (Hexacorallia: Zoantharia) are an exception to this pattern, as there are phylogenetically closely related zoanthid sibling species between these oceans. Fundamental questions can be addressed in this system, such as how host-associated microbial communities assemble under different geographic and environmental conditions. Surprisingly, zoanthid symbioses have been so far investigated only at small scales. In this presentation, I will reveal global patterns in the diversity of microbes associated with *Palythoa* zoanthids using the most extensive geographical sampling for such a marine system to date. These results help to better understand the evolution of symbiotic interactions across the global marine biogeographical barriers.



About Maria Santos (aka Duda)

I am interested in understanding the processes that shape the origin and distribution of species, especially in face of environmental changes. My research targets mainly hexacorals and their symbionts and combines field surveys with different laboratory techniques, including genetics/ genomics and stable isotope analyses. After receiving my PhD degree at the University of the Ryukyus and working as a postdoc at the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, I recently joined the Baker Lab at HKU. I am also passionate about Brazilian music, good beer, and summertime (even better when combined).

All are welcome!