

## Student Research Assistant Opportunity in Invasion Ecology

**Background:** The invasive tunicate *C. intestinalis* is a key component of biofouling communities around the world. The species is causing significant economic damage in Nova Scotia by reducing aquaculture productivity and increasing operational costs. The pattern of *C. intestinalis* distribution in Nova Scotia is highly variable, and while temperature is known to affect the animals, further work is needed to determine if temperature or other environmental factors are playing a role in its variable success. The main goal of our research is to investigate if abiotic factors such as pH, salinity, temperature and water movement can be linked to the distribution of *C. intestinalis* in Nova Scotia, in order to enhance the ability to form effective management plans.

**Research Assistant (RA) duties:** This project involves an extensive field sampling season extending from May to November, including monthly visits to a number of sites spread all around the coast of Nova Scotia. At each site a range of environmental variables will be measured using data logging equipment, and tunicate abundance will be monitored. The RA will be responsible for helping a graduate student collect and calibrate data loggers, as well as assisting with tunicate monitoring.

**Research opportunities:** There will be opportunities for the RA to carry out additional research, either independently or with the support of the graduate student. The side project topic will most likely involve invasive tunicates, or an aspect of invasion ecology in coastal Nova Scotia, but this is flexible depending on the interests of the selected RA.

**Gain valuable field experience:** This is a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience and exposure to the finer details of research, as well as enhancing your CV and building academic relationships. This position would be useful for any undergraduate student interested in pursuing research, particularly in invasion ecology or field ecology, at Honours or postgraduate level.

**RA requirements:** A full driver's licence is essential. Competitive grades in order to apply for scholarships would be an asset, as would be experience or course work in field biology, aquatic resources, or environmental science.

**Interested?** Contact Dr. Russell Wyeth: [rwyth@stfx.ca](mailto:rwyth@stfx.ca)

Please provide a resume, an unofficial transcript, and brief summary of your driving record, explaining any driving accidents or infractions.