

NMEA News, Due 2/6/09

## Corals in the Classroom and Corals this Summer

By Chris Petrone

Corals are one of the most charismatic animals in the ocean. Humans are drawn to coral reefs because of their shapes, colors, associated fauna and plight in our ever-changing ocean. With help from the Bridge, you and your students can get up close and personal with coral reefs all over the globe!

In the classroom, coral reefs provide a model organism to teach all disciplines of the ocean sciences. In the Bridge Data Analysis Teaching Activity (DATA), *Coral Bleaching: A White Hot Problem*, students assess coral bleaching using water temperature data from the NOAA National Data Buoy Center from the last 4 years.

Depending on your curricular and grade level needs, *Coral Bleaching* can be used for lessons in ecology, chemistry, or biology, practice finding and analyzing real time data, or as an introduction to graphing and Microsoft Excel. Complete with discussion questions and links to additional information, this activity, like all Bridge DATAs, is aligned to the National Science Education Standards.

Are you and your students ready to experience coral reefs in person? Located in the Bridge's Professional Development section, educators will find summer opportunities, including one recently advertised on *Scuttlebutt*, the Bridge's free email discussion list. Scientists and educators at the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS), formerly the Bermuda Biological Station for Research (BBSR), are conducting a coral reef ecology course July 12-August 1 for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as teachers and ocean science professionals.

For students interested in studying coral reefs this summer, the Bridge includes information on programs for learners of all ages, found in the Guiding Students section. Student opportunities can also be found, and posted, on *Scuttlebutt*.

The Bridge has everything you need to plan your ocean science curriculum and summer professional development opportunities, so why not check it out today? And because it is constantly adding new resources and opportunities, we suggest checking back often. Also, we encourage those with new, exciting summer programs or ocean science classroom activities, to send us their website so they can be added to the collection.

The Bridge is a product of Virginia Sea Grant, with funding from the National Sea Grant office. Virginia Sea Grant also conducts educator professional development throughout the summer, so for those in the area, please stay tuned for several spectacular opportunities to learn about coastal and ocean sciences in the classroom and the field.

Have fun this summer and remember to come see us at NMEA 2009 in Monterey!

The Bridge <<http://www.marine-ed.org/bridge>>

*Coral Bleaching: A White Hot Problem*

<[http://www2.vims.edu/bridge/DATA.cfm?Bridge\\_Location=archive0406.html](http://www2.vims.edu/bridge/DATA.cfm?Bridge_Location=archive0406.html)>

*Scuttlebutt* <[http://www.marine-ed.org/bridge/index\\_scuttle.html](http://www.marine-ed.org/bridge/index_scuttle.html)>

Virginia Sea Grant Marine Education <<http://www.vims.edu/adv/ed>>

Photo caption:

VIMS Scientist, Dr. Emmett Duffy (left), extracts a pipefish from an SAV sample for measuring during a Virginia Sea Grant educator workshop. Photo by Margaret Pizer.