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Tropical Fish Study in Tahiti, French Polynesia

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Tropical Fish Study in Tahiti

Miranda K. Brainard

Co-Authors: Caitlyn P. Swango, Paityn M. Houglan, Dr. Richard L. Londrville

In May of 2023, I embarked on an exciting research journey to Moorea, French Polynesia, alongside fellow students and faculty members from the University of Akron and Syracuse University. This expedition was part of the university-sponsored Tropical Vertebrate Biology course, where we delved into the exploration of various tropical species inhabiting the island, including sea urchins, geckos, and my primary focus, the blackspotted rockskipper.

My research team, composed of my co-authors and me, was particularly intrigued by the unique refuge-seeking behavior displayed by blackspotted rockskippers. These amphibious fish are renowned for their remarkable ability to inhabit tide pools and rocky beach jetties, swiftly navigating and jumping across these challenging terrains, especially when confronted with predators. Our curiosity led us to question the rapid decision-making processes involved in their behavior and the factors influencing these decisions.

In our study, we investigated the refuge preferences of blackspotted rockskippers, with a specific focus on their behavior in the presence of conspecifics (members of the same species). Our findings revealed a significant trend in which rockskippers exhibited a preference for solitude.

We are proud to announce that our research findings have been successfully published in the *Journal of Fish Biology*, which holds exclusive rights to our work. For a comprehensive overview of our results and insights, please refer to the following link:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/jfb.15541>