Flo Thomas

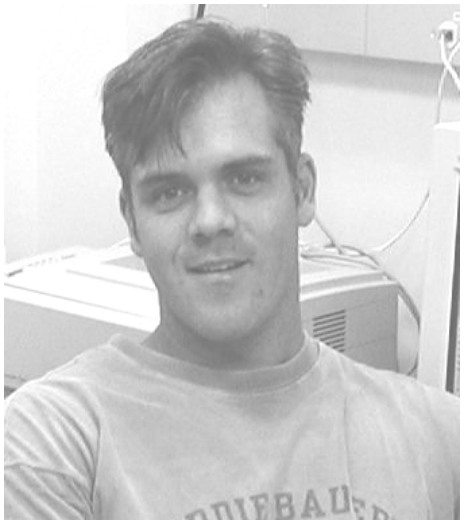
Assistant Professor
Department of Biology
University of South Florida

Ph.D. in Integrative Biology
University of California
at Berkeley

Flo received a B.S. in Biology in 1985 from the University of Washington followed by a M.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Brown University in 1987. She continued her education at the University of California at Berkeley and received her Ph.D. in Integrative Biology in 1992. After graduation, Dr. Thomas continued her research at the University of Hawaii where she was a post-doctoral fellow at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology from 1992-1995. Flo was an Assistant Professor and Senior Marine Scientist at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Dauphin Island, Alabama before joining the faculty at the University of South Florida.

Dr. Thomas' research focuses on the role of physical processes in the evolution and ecology of marine organisms and communities. She is particularly interested in the reproductive biology of marine organisms and in the way community structure affects water flow and chemical transport processes in shallow marine habitats.

She would like students to know that the best part of her job is working outside in tropical and sub-tropical environments. She also likes collaborating with students to figure out how things work. Dr. Thomas would like to share with our audience the joy of observation of how the physical world interacts with their world.



Chris Cornelisen

Research Assistant
Department of Biology
University of South Florida

M.S. in Oceanography/Coastal Zone Management
Florida Institute of Technology

Chris received his B.A. in Biology from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa followed by his M.S. in Oceanography/Coastal Zone Management from the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT). He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Biology (marine ecology) at the University of South Florida. He has a wide variety of work experience including being a science instructor at the Newfound Harbor Marine Institute and John G. Shedd Aquarium in Chicago. Chris has pursued his interest in science and the environment as a geotechnical analyst, coastal cleanup coordinator, and research assistant.

His research interests include the effects of the physical environment on biological processes. Chris researched how the geological and physical aspects of barrier beaches affected marine turtle nesting and is currently interested in how nutrient transport and uptake is affected by water flow.

Chris says the best part of his job is having the opportunity to continually learn about the natural world around us. He enjoys working with interesting and inquisitive people in a field that intellectually challenges him while being able to work outdoors.

He would like students to know that there is plenty of room in the field of marine science for individuals with a passion for marine conservation and dedication to furthering our knowledge of the oceans. The boundaries for scientific research go way beyond the topics on the Discovery Channel and are only limited by one's creativity. Chris also would like to remind students that hard work and dedication will take them where they want to go.