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Collection of gorgonian (*Thesea* spp.) specimens for medical research

Research proposal: As a sub-contractor for the Coral Reef Research Foundation (<http://www.coralreefresearchfoundation.org/>), I plan to collect specimens of marine invertebrates, specifically, gorgonians belonging to the Genus, *Thesea*, for medical research. Collections would support research efforts towards a grant awarded to Dr. Pat Colin of the National Cancer Institute (NCI, <http://www.cancer.gov/>), to screen marine invertebrates for possible anti-cancer compounds.

Methodology: A maximum of 11 lbs of gorgonians will be collected by hand, using SCUBA gear. 3-5 different samples will be collected, with each specimen weighing a maximum of 2 lbs. Only one whole gorgonian (with the base) is required for the taxonomist to identify, the remainder of the samples will be small branches, cut using scissors. A small hand scale and plastic bucket will be used to weigh samples on board after each dive. Specimens will be placed in plastic bags on ice, and frozen upon return to port. The specimens will then be transported back to the Florida Keys in a freezer, for shipping to NCI (on dry ice) at a later date. No hard corals will be collected. Collections will be made at approximately 33°28'N; 77°35'W, in 60-100 feet of water off Morehead City, North Carolina, from July 5-11, 2011. During 2012-2014, collections will be made each year using the same protocol, in the month of July, in Federal waters off Port Canaveral, Florida to the North Carolina/Virginia border. The maximum of 11 lbs of gorgonians will not be exceeded in collections made each year.

Vessel Information:

"In Sea State" (Registration: NC-5472 DC), Captain: Jim Atack; Oak Island, NC; (910) 520-8279

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,



Don DeMaria