

The Vernon Bermuda Workshop – St. George’s Bermuda – May 12-18, 2012

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Vernon Bermuda Workshop: A course in sub-tropical island ecology

ABSTRACT

More than 30 years ago, educators in central Connecticut developed the Vernon Bermuda Workshop as a means of introducing middle- and high-school students to subtropical island ecology. Each year, after months of classroom preparation, approximately 20 top students spend one week at the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (St. George’s, Bermuda) studying the local flora and fauna in both the field and laboratory. The curriculum includes an additional array of activities, ranging from historical and ecological tours to spelunking, and culminates in a series of field-observation-related presentations. I am responsible for the meteorological and oceanographic components of the curriculum. In the field, my students collect time-series of biophysical variables over the course of a day, which they use to interpret diurnal patterns and interactions amongst the variables. I also add remote-sensing and phytoplankton biology components to the curriculum – in previous years, my students have studied time-series of SeaWiFS imagery collected at Bermuda during our trip. I have been an Instructor for this Workshop since 2003. The Workshop provides an outreach activity for GSFC Code 616.