

Ornamental Aquaculture Production and Medicine Externship Rotation

Overview:

The mission of the University of Florida Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory (UF-TAL) is to enhance the understanding of tropical, ornamental aquaculture through research and education. The Laboratory performs applied research, fish disease diagnostic services, and extension education programs and promotes professionalism in Florida's tropical aquaculture industry. Florida is home to as much as 95% of U.S. production of aquarium fish (depending on season) and plants due to its climate, geology, and presence of international shipping hubs. While production is spread throughout the state, the heaviest concentration of farms is in the southern half, particularly near the Tampa Bay region. Current production includes over 800 varieties of freshwater fish; 200 varieties of freshwater plants; and a growing number of marine fish, invertebrates, and live rock on over 200 certified farms. With a 2005 farm-gate value of \$33.2 million for tropical fish and \$17.6 million for aquatic plants, Florida ornamentals represent one of the largest segments of U.S. aquaculture. The UF-TAL also works closely with natural resource agencies, state game fish hatcheries, and food fish and baitfish aquaculture industries.

Research is very important to the mission of the UF-TAL. The research programs provide support for statewide extension programs in ornamental aquaculture as well as the science information needs of industry, agency, and public stakeholders. Lab researchers are responsive to the UF-TAL Advisory Committee and work closely with the Research Committee of the Florida Tropical Fish Farms Association, the Division of Aquaculture of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and other stakeholders in developing research priorities. Research at the UF-TAL is conducted in four core topic areas: ornamental aquaculture production and management, aquatic animal health, ornamental fish reproduction, and non-indigenous aquatic species ecology and management.

Because the Lab is in the heart of the aquarium fish industry, our veterinary externship allows for full engagement with ornamental (aquarium fish) and other aquaculture producers, including assistance with on-farm and laboratory diagnostics, fish health management recommendations, and extension outreach programs. Externs spend time working one-on-one with farmers, faculty, and staff and gain direct exposure to aquaculture production techniques, non-native species, and regulatory concerns. The UF-TAL has a USDA-APHIS Veterinary Medical Officer for aquaculture on site, who also works closely with the industry. For more information on the UF-TAL, please visit our website: <http://tal.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Extern Responsibilities:

Veterinary externs are expected to assist faculty and staff with all fish health, aquaculture, and non-native species related activities at the laboratory, including assistance with extension and research.

Educational opportunities and responsibilities will include developing an understanding and basic proficiency in:

- Obtaining a thorough case history
- Testing and interpreting water chemistry
- Fish necropsy and microbiology techniques
- Non-lethal fish examination techniques
- Histological sampling
- Medical case interpretation
- Developing medical and management recommendations
- Client interaction both in the diagnostic lab and on farm and facility site visits
- Common ornamental aquaculture fish health management methods and chemotherapeutics
- Basic ornamental aquaculture production and husbandry techniques, including system design and management
- Common fish reproduction strategies and techniques, including induced spawning methods
- Common aquarium fish families and species, as well as their general husbandry and production methodology
- Field work with staff at one or more local facilities, both ornamental fish farms and state fish hatcheries

Oral examinations/reviews are conducted on a weekly or twice weekly basis to assess the progress of externs. They are provided with an extensive resource set of notebooks and are expected to review this information throughout the duration of the externship. Depending upon the time frame for the externship, externs will be expected to complete a small research or literature review project and present the findings to faculty and staff. Externs will work Monday through Friday and are on-call during weekends and holidays to assist with disease diagnostics, research, and outreach as necessary. A vehicle will be required for travel in the local area.

Application Requirements:

Applications are accepted year-round. Positions fill quickly and up to one to two years in advance, so early application is strongly encouraged. To apply please submit:

- Letter of intent expressing specific interests in aquatic medicine
- Curriculum vitae
- Three (3) signed letters of recommendation on letterhead sent directly from references (via postal or e-mail)
- Official veterinary school transcript (A copy from student may be sent while awaiting official transcript. Official transcript may be submitted to Debbie Pouder only with copies to both Roy Yanong and Debbie Pouder.)
- Preferred rotation dates (minimum four-week blocks)

Please submit all application materials to:

- Dr. Roy Yanong (rpy@ufl.edu) **and** Debbie Pouder (dbpouder@ufl.edu)
University of Florida
Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory
1408 24th Street SE
Ruskin, FL 33570

Contact Information:

For more information regarding externship rotation opportunities, please contact:

Dr. Roy Yanong (rpy@ufl.edu)
Associate Professor/Extension Veterinarian
813-671-5230 x104

Debbie Pouder (dbpouder@ufl.edu)
Diagnostic Lab Manager, Coordinator of Research Programs & Services
813-671-5230 x106