PhD student opportunity in Conservation Palaeoecology

A PhD student is sought to participate in an Australian Research Council project investigating changes to Great Barrier Reef soft-sediment communities over the past ~ 6,000 years. You will be based in the Palaeobiology Group, Department of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. There is considerable latitude for you to design and implement a project that is complementary to the larger research program, although preference will be given to projects that take advantage of the sample that are being collected. Suggested areas of investigation include:

1. Time-averaging and stratigraphic order in organisms from the < 2mm size fraction in light of the results of the >4 mm size fraction discussed in Kosnik et al. 2009.
2. The effects of bioturbation and sedimentary processes on the preservation of palaeoecological assemblages.
3. Changes in crustacean / molluscan / diatom / foram communities through time.
4. Latitudinal gradients in molluscan community diversity and predation intensity along the east coast of Australia.

Applicants should have a strong academic record with demonstrated capacity for conducting independent research (Honours [First Class], Masters or publication record) in a relevant discipline such as palaeontology, ecology, invertebrate biology or marine science / geology. You must be able to work within a team and should have high level written and oral communication skills. Previous experience working in marine environments is highly desirable. A current drivers license, experience in handling small boats and research diving would be advantageous.

The candidate must be available to commence no later than 24 December 2011.

Prospective applicants should, in the first instance, submit a cover letter addressing the essential and desirable criteria, a one-page statement of your research interests and goals, a CV that includes contact details for two referees, and an academic transcript to the principal supervisor: Dr Matthew Kosnik, email: matthew.kosnik@mq.edu.au.

For more information on Conservation Palaeobiology at Macquarie University visit: http://www.bio.mq.edu.au/~mkosnik

In 2010, the MQRES provided a living allowance (stipend) of $22,500 per annum, tax exempt, with a maximum tenure of 3.5 years full time, subject to satisfactory annual progress. Tuition fees will be funded for the scholarship tenure. For more information on Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarships see the MQ website: http://www.hdr.mq.edu.au/information_about/scholarships