

**GULF OF PANAMA CRUISE REPORT  
CORAL DRILLING ON THE R/V URRICA  
06 JUNE 1996 TO 08 JULY 1996**

by

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Rice University cruise participants: Jerry Wellington (University of Houston), David A. Mucciarone and Harry Rowe (Rice University), and Peter Glynn (RSMAS).

**Logistics:**

Harry Rowe, Jerry Wellington and I departed Houston Intercontinental airport (IAH) at 0945 on 6/24/96 via Continental Airlines and arrived in Panamá City, Panamá at 1430. The objective of this trip was to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> International Coral Reef Symposium (ICRS) from 6/25 to 6/29 then participate on a coral drilling cruise on the R/V *Urrica*. We met up with Peter Glynn at the ICRS and later joined him after his ICRS field trip cruise on the R/V *Urrica*. In addition to the cruise I presented a paper on siliciclastic and carbonates of the Belize Barrier Reef system on 6/29 at 1610.

The days prior to departure (6/30 to 7/2) on the R/V *Urrica* were spent gathering supplies and assembling the hydraulic drill unit. All of the drilling equipment was loaded onto the vessel in Jennings LA on 5/30 prior to the ships departure to Panamá. On 7/3 we departed for the R/V *Urrica* at 0530 to fly to Isla de Coiba in the Colfo de Chiriquí. At 0800 we loaded our gear onto the vessel and began our short transit to the drill site. After a final setup of the coral drilling equipment we performed some reconnaissance dives, located, and began drilling off of Punta Felipa on Isla de Coiba. We had a couple of equipment problems at Punta Felipa - blown main power head seal and blown coil on the gas powered water pump. The main seal was repaired with a spare seal kit and the water pump was replaced with a direct drive water pump (we did not have a spare coil). The cores drilled on 7/3 were contaminated with hydraulic fluid as a result of the blown power head seal. The coral cores collected on 7/4 were free of hydraulic fluid contamination. At 1645 on 7/4 we began our transit to Golfo de Panamá.

Daily activities:

- 03 July 1996 Depart Panamá City for Isla de Coiba to meet with the R/V *Urrica* at 0530.  
Begin coral drilling cruise on the R/V *Urrica* at 0800.  
Reconnaissance for coral heads off of Punta Felipa on Isla de Coiba in the Golfo de Chiriquí.  
Drilled 3 cores in *Porities lobata*.  
Blown seal in coral drill power head - made repairs for following day.  
Degreased boat, equipment, tools, and SCUBA gear after hydraulic leak from blown power head seal.
- 04 July 1996 Reconnaissance for coral heads off of Punta Felipa on Isla de Coiba in the Golfo de Chiriquí.  
Drilled 4 cores in *Porities lobata*. Three in one head, one in another.  
Water pump failure on coral drill - installed manual water pump and continued drilling.  
Recover gear, stow on vessel and depart for Golfo de Panamá at 1645

Transit to Golfo de Panamá: The R/V *Urrica* departed the Colfo de Chiriquí at 1645 on 7/4/96 headed for Golfo de Panamá. We arrived at Isla de Caracoles at 1545 on 7/5/96 in time to make some reconnaissance dives. Isla de Caracoles is located 5 nm north of San Miguel on Isla del Rey. Because of high tide we were unable to locate any corals to drill. On 7/6 we made some reconnaissance dives, located, and drilled two cores from two different heads of *Porities lobata*. at Isla de Caracoles. At 1620 on 7/6 we relocated to Isla Saboga Reef to repair a quad Peter Glynn has been studying on 7/7. At 1300 on 7/7 we departed Saboga Reef and arrived at Rodman US Navy Base at 1710. Packed drilling equipment, SCUBA gear, and coral

samples on 7/7. Off loaded all equipment and personal effects from the R/V Urrica on 7/8 and stored drilling equipment at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) in Panamá City, Panamá. Coral cores were shipped back to IAH via Continental Airlines air cargo.

Daily activities:

- 05 July 1996 Complete transit and arrived at Isla de Caracoles, 1545 - made some coral reconnaissance/site survey dives. No coral drilling.
- 06 July 1996 Reconnaissance for coral heads off of Isla de Caracoles in the Golfo de Panamá. Drilled 2 cores in 2 different heads of *Porities lobata*. Recover gear, stow on vessel and relocated to Isla de Saboga Reef in the Golfo de Panamá at 1620.
- 07 July 1996 Repaired coral quad with Peter Glynn. Reconnaissance for coral heads, but didn't find any worth drilling. Collected small samples of various species of corals for Peter Glynn and Jerry Wellington. Recover gear, stow on vessel and departed to Rodman US Navy Base at 1300 and arrived at 1710. Condition drilling equipment for storage at STRI, pack up all gear and coral cores.
- 08 July 1996 Off load all equipment and transport drilling gear at STRI and bring coral cores to air cargo for shipment to Rice. Depart Panamá City, Panamá at 1500 and arrive at IAH at 1830.

Coral Cores collected on R/V *Urrica* cruise from Punta Felipa on Isla de Coiba in the Golfo de Chiriquí:

Location	Position	Core	Sections	Length	Date
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-1A*	6	4.85 ft/147.95 m	07/03/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-1B*	5	3.00 ft/91.55 m	07/03/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-1C*	3	2.83 ft/86.36 m	07/03/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-2A	2	1.56 ft/47.63 m	07/04/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-4A	6	7.71 ft/234.95 m	07/04/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-2A	1	0.23 ft/6.98 m	07/04/96
Isla de Coiba	07° 25.0'N 081° 42.0'W	CI-2A	1	1.67 ft/50.80 m	07/04/96

Coral Cores collected on R/V *Urrica* cruise from Isla de Caracoles 5nm north of San Miguel, Isla del Rey in the Golfo de Panamá :

Location	Position	Core	Sections	Length	Date
Isla del Rey	08° 30.4'N 078° 57.3' W	DR-1A	4	4.66 ft/142.50 m	07/06/96
Isla del Rey	08° 30.4'N 078° 57.3' W	DR-1B	4	3.99 ft/122.00 m	07/06/96
Isla del Rey	08° 30.4'N 078° 57.3' W	DR-2A	3	4.22 ft/129.00 m	07/06/96
Isla del Rey	08° 30.4'N 078° 57.3' W	DR-2B	3	3.55 ft/108.50 m	07/06/96