
Dr Jennifer Donelson



ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies
James Cook University

The 2021 Emerging Leader in Marine Science is **Dr Jennifer Donelson** from James Cook University for her transformative research on transgenerational plasticity in fishes combined with her service and leadership to the marine science community.

Early in her career, Jenni challenged the long held belief that tropical species have limited capacity to adjust to climate change by showing that reef fishes can acclimate to predicted future temperatures through both developmental and transgenerational plasticity. Published in several high-impact journals, her ground-breaking research showed the potential for acclimation of coral reef fishes to climate change and led to transformative studies using cutting-edge genomics methods into the biological processes and cellular mechanisms that enable transgenerational plasticity in fishes. Despite only completing her PhD in 2012, Jenni has already published >45 scientific papers of high quality and significance and has been recognised with numerous awards including the Winston Churchill Fellowship in 2012.

In addition to her research credentials, Jenni has also taken on several leadership roles and is proactive in STEM engagement to strengthen the general public's interest and knowledge of marine science. She shows remarkable ability to energise and mentor research students, including direct supervision, coordination of a professional development writing retreat, and recognition of her strong mentorship skills through her university's Inclusive Practice Award in 2018.