



New 'hot plate' technique for marine study

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Perth researchers have discovered a new method of studying the effects of ocean temperature, which could be integral to examining important marine habitats off WA's mid-west coast.

Researchers from the University of Western Australia conducted the study, which involved placing 'hot plates' into the Swan River, heating the surrounding water.

This allowed researchers to examine the effect ocean warming has on important non-mobile organisms, such as seaweeds, sponges and corals.

It found marine organisms grew more on the warmer plates.

Lead researcher, Dan Smale, is hopeful the findings will aid study of important marine environments off the Ningaloo Reef and the Abrolhos Islands.

"They represent really important habitats and very important ecosystems and they are vulnerable to change, so from that point of view it would be a good place to conduct these kinds of studies to improve our knowledge on how corals for example respond to changes like short term warming," he said.

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