

# SCIENCE FOR LIFE!

SHOWCASING QUEENSLAND MUSEUM SCIENTISTS, THEIR CAREERS AND CURRENT RESEARCH

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### HOW I GOT HERE!

I studied for a **Bachelor of Science with Honours and Master of Science in Zoology**. I continued my studies with a **PhD in Marine Zoology** and undertook two **Postdoctoral Fellowships** at the **Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris** and the **Natural History Museum, London**.

I started my professional biological career as an **Outdoors Education and Science Teacher** at St Leonard's College in Melbourne. I then moved into a curatorial position at the Northern Territory Museum of Arts and Sciences in Darwin.

I joined Queensland Museum as **Senior Curator of Sessile Marine Invertebrates** in 1992, and was subsequently appointed **Program Head** in 1999.

### WHAT I AM WORKING ON!

Formal education and 25 years of experience has developed my knowledge and skills to become an **international authority on**

**sponges**. My specific research interest is in the taxonomy, systematics, biogeography, biodiversity and conservation biology of sponges (Porifera), and biodiversity and marine conservation in general. Since 1982, I have **described over 600 new species**, 10 new genera, two new families and suborders of sponges.

In 1987, I began collaborating with international biodiscovery agencies to **search for new therapeutic pharmaceutical compounds** from marine invertebrates. My collection of over 35,000 specimens, in more than 4,000 species of sponges, most new to science, have more than tripled our previous estimates of this biodiversity. As a bonus, some of these species may become important to the pharmaceutical industry in the future. These collaborations have provided me with opportunities to undertake **extensive field work** to study the reefs across tropical Australia and the Indo-west Pacific islands.