

Quantum yield of photosystem II (Fv/Fm) from an experiment examining the effect of Sr on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification

Website: <https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/866648>

Data Type: experimental

Version: 1

Version Date: 2021-12-10

Project

» [NSFGEO-NERC: An unexpected requirement for silicon in coccolithophore calcification: physiological, ecological and evolutionary implications](#) (Coccolithophore Silicon Requirements)

Contributors	Affiliation	Role
Taylor, Alison	University of North Carolina - Wilmington (UNC-Wilmington)	Principal Investigator
Rauch, Shannon	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI BCO-DMO)	BCO-DMO Data Manager

Abstract

The effect of Sr on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification was assessed over a 10 day period. The quantum yield of photosystem II (Fv/Fm) was determined using a fluorometer by pipetting approximately 1.5 mL of sample from each flask into a cuvette.

Table of Contents

- [Dataset Description](#)
 - [Acquisition Description](#)
 - [Processing Description](#)
- [Related Datasets](#)
- [Parameters](#)
- [Instruments](#)
- [Project Information](#)
- [Funding](#)

Coverage

Temporal Extent: 2019-03 - 2019-03

Acquisition Description

Experiment Overview:

The effect of strontium (Sr) on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification was assessed over a 10 d period. This species of coccolithophore has unusually high levels of Sr in its calcite coccoliths as detected with Energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS), whereas Si levels are undetectable with EDS. The goal of the experiment was to determine whether Sr in seawater plays a significant role in coccolith production and/or coccolith crystal morphology. *S. apsteinii* was acclimated and grown in a range of Sr concentrations (deplete: 0.33 mmol/mol Sr/Ca, ambient: 9 mmol/mol Sr/Ca, and higher than ambient: 36 and 72 mmol/mol Sr/Ca). All treatments had four replicate flasks. Aliquots of cultures for cell counts and Fv/Fm were taken every two days between the start (T0 for cell counts, T4 for Fv/Fm) and end (T10) of the experiment. When cells were at mid-exponential phase (T4-T6) aliquots were collected for scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and EDS analysis to observe morphology and determine Sr incorporation into calcite coccoliths, respectively.

The laboratory experiments were conducted in March 2019 at the University of North Carolina - Wilmington. SEM/EDS analysis was done at the Analytical Instrumentation Facility at NC State from April 19th to May 9th, 2019.

Fv/Fm:

The quantum yield of photosystem II (Fv/Fm) was determined using a fluorometer by pipetting approximately 1.5 mL of sample from each flask into a cuvette. The cuvette was dark adapted at room temperature for 15 minutes. Three measurements for steady state fluorescence (Ft) and Fv/FM per cuvette were taken after gentle inversion to resuspend cells.

Processing Description

BCO-DMO Processing:

- removed units from data columns so values can be typed as numeric;
- replaced "ND" with "nd".

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]

Related Datasets

IsRelatedTo

Taylor, A. (2021) **Cell counts from an experiment examining the effect of Sr on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2021-12-10 <http://lod.bco-dmo.org/id/dataset/866456> [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

Taylor, A. (2021) **Coccolith morphology data from an experiment examining the effect of Sr on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2021-12-10 <http://lod.bco-dmo.org/id/dataset/866738> [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

Taylor, A. (2021) **Energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDS) from an experiment examining the effect of Sr on the coccolithophore *Scyphosphaera apsteinii* calcification.** Biological and Chemical Oceanography Data Management Office (BCO-DMO). (Version 1) Version Date 2021-12-10 <http://lod.bco-dmo.org/id/dataset/866679> [[view at BCO-DMO](#)]

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]

Parameters

Parameter	Description	Units
Sr_Concentration	The Sr concentration of the growth media that <i>S. apsteinii</i> was exposed to. The concentrations were 3.3, 90, 360, and 720 micromole.	micromoles per liter Si (umol/L)
Flask_Replicate	The replicate flask number for each Sr treatment. Each Sr concentration had 4 replicate flasks.	unitless
Sampling_Day	The day the aliquots were taken from flasks and cells were counted	days (d)
Ft	Steady state fluorescence. Any reading below 200 indicated that cell density was too low to reliably measure Fv/Fm, and therefore Fv/Fm was not determined on those days.	relative units
FvFm	Quantum efficiency of photosystem II; a measurement of photosynthetic health.	relative units

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]

Instruments

Dataset-specific Instrument Name	AquaPen AP 100 fluorometer (PSI, Drasov, Czech Republic)
Generic Instrument Name	Fluorometer
Dataset-specific Description	Fv/Fm is a measure of photosynthetic efficiency by measuring the quantum efficiency of photosystem II; a tool for assessing cell health. An AquaPen AP 100 fluorometer (PSI, Drasov, Czech Republic) was used to assess Fv/Fm.
Generic Instrument Description	A fluorometer or fluorimeter is a device used to measure parameters of fluorescence: its intensity and wavelength distribution of emission spectrum after excitation by a certain spectrum of light. The instrument is designed to measure the amount of stimulated electromagnetic radiation produced by pulses of electromagnetic radiation emitted into a water sample or in situ.

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]

Project Information

NSFGEO-NERC: An unexpected requirement for silicon in coccolithophore calcification: physiological, ecological and evolutionary implications (Coccolithophore Silicon Requirements)

NSF Abstract:

Biom mineralization by marine phytoplankton has had a profound impact on our planet. The production of special cell wall material, calcite coccoliths by coccolithophores and silica frustules by diatoms, are major drivers in global biogeochemical cycles, but the underlying cellular processes remain poorly understood. It is widely considered that calcification in coccolithophores occurs through a very different process to silicification in diatoms, however some ecologically important coccolithophore lineages possess diatom-like silicon (Si) transport systems and have an absolute requirement for Si during coccolith formation. Importantly, the abundant bloom-forming coccolithophores such as *Emiliana huxleyi* exhibit no

requirement for Si. There is a clear need to understand how these different physiological requirements for dissolved Si have driven the ecology and evolution of the coccolithophores. The project will yield a more complete understanding of the Si requirements of coccolithophores, its role in the calcification process, and the impacts of Si availability on the biogeography of these important bloom forming phytoplankton. The results are expected to strengthen our ability to predict the responses of coccolithophores to short and long-term environmental change, and therefore the consequences for the marine biogeochemical cycles in which they participate. In addition to the scientific outcomes, the project provides independent research opportunities to a diverse pool of undergraduate students, provide interdisciplinary training for graduate students, and facilitate the professional development of post-doctoral researchers. Public engagement in the research is facilitated through participant involvement in regional science festivals, public outreach events, production of educational resources, and targeted K-12 summer camp activities.

Calcification in coccolithophores appears to represent a distinct process from silicification in diatoms, another major group of biomineralized phytoplankton. The apparent absence of a requirement for silicon (Si) in coccolithophores has been proposed to play a critical role in their ability to out-compete the otherwise dominant diatoms in areas of low dissolved Si availability. However, the investigators recently demonstrated that some globally important coccolithophores possess diatom-like Si transporters and exhibit an obligate requirement for Si in the calcification process. This discovery has important implications both for phytoplankton ecology and for the evolution of biomineralization. Using a range of physiological, molecular and computational approaches the project will 1) Establish Si requirements of ecologically important coccolithophore groups; 2) Determine the physiological role of Si in coccolithophores; 3) Determine the evolutionary events leading to the differing requirements for Si in calcification; 4) Examine the ecological distribution of Si-requiring coccolithophores, and 5) Determine the impact of the Si requirement on coccolithophore ecology. This project therefore integrates the molecular identification of genes (Si transporters), the physiological role of these transporters, and ecosystem scale models in order to examine how the requirement for Si influences ecosystem functioning and coccolithophore biogeography. The results of this work provides essential data that describes the cellular mechanisms of calcification and the range of physiological diversity between major coccolithophore lineages. The research also explores a previously unforeseen aspect of phytoplankton ecology; examining how the differing requirements for Si in calcifying coccolithophores may have shaped competitive interactions with other phytoplankton over both contemporary and evolutionary timescales. Overall, the research provides novel insights into physiology, ecology and evolution of coccolithophores, including information on how and why coccoliths are produced, which is currently poorly understood. This information is vital in order to understand how coccolithophores have been influenced by past changes in the Earth's climate, and their potential responses to future oceans.

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]

Funding

Funding Source	Award
NSF Division of Ocean Sciences (NSF OCE)	OCE-1638838

[[table of contents](#) | [back to top](#)]