BSCI 3228 – Corals, Koalas and Cassowaries Great Barrier Reef and Tropics of Australia

Instructor: Dr. Amanda Benson, Senior Lecturer in Biological Sciences  
Location: Australia  
Dates: May 7 – May 22 at Vanderbilt; May 23 – June 6 in Australia

Explore the most diverse ecosystems in the world: the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and Tropical Rain forests, first hand hiking and swimming through these precious ecosystems. Australia is considered a megadiverse country. It is home to a huge variety of unique organisms: 83% of its mammals, 99% of its birds, and 92% of its plants occur no other place in the world. The course will start off at Vanderbilt for two weeks, studying the research being conducted on biodiversity of Australia: its origin, the threats, and its conservation. Then we will go Down Under, where you will spend half your time in the lush ancient rainforest and the other half on the different islands of the Great Barrier Reef. Experiencing the wonders of these ecosystems first hand and learning about the research efforts to understand the biodiversity and its threats will heighten your awareness of the fragility of our world. You will be snorkeling, hiking, canoeing, Kuku Yalanji Dreamtime walking, canopy surfing, swimming with turtles, and flying from islands to island all to uncover the wonders of the world down under.

FEES: Cost is approximately $12,039.00