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SPOTLIGHT 4 | New England and Corner Rise Seamounts

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Top

First Paragraph

One of the longest seamount tracks in the Atlantic Ocean was formed by the Great Meteor or New England hotspot. This more than 3000-km-long hotspot track formed both the New England and Corner Rise seamounts, with a pause in volcanism 83 million years ago as evidenced by the morphological gap between chains (Figure 1). The New England and Corner Rise seamounts each have more than 35 and 50 major peaks, respectively, with summit reliefs from 400 m to more than 5000 m. Under highly diverse oceanographic settings, these seamounts harbor complex coral ecosystems comprised of host corals and sponges as well as many associate species (Shank et al., 2006; Mosher and Watling, 2009) that are now the focus of intense ecological and evolutionary studies. More than 270 morphospecies have been observed within this region, with ~ 75 morphotypes unique to the Corner Rise and ~ 60 unique to the New England Seamounts (Cho, 2008). Interestingly, a variety of invertebrates are revealing differing levels of specificity to their host corals, ranging from "facultative" to "obligate" (see Shank, 2010). For example, the galatheid *Uroptychus* has been observed only on the antipatharian *Parantipathes* sp., and the ophiuroid *Ophiocreas oedipus* only on the coral *Metallogorgia melanotrichos* (Figure 2).

Top

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Top

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