

**Name:** William J. Foster

**Field:** Earth Sciences

**Current Institution:** Plymouth University

**Host Institution:** Nagoya University Museum, Nagoya University

**Host Researcher:** Professor Tatsuo Oji

**Research Experience Summary:**

The JSPS summer program has been an excellent opportunity to: experience the Japanese culture; collaborate with a leading scientist in my field; and to discover Secret Japan. Listing all of the opportunities this program has given me would be endless, one of the most remarkable would be meeting the Emperor and Empress of Japan.



*Sumo in Nagoya. Every two months in Japan there is a sumo tournament, which moves from city to city. Whilst I was in Japan it was in Nagoya, where I was studying. The sport was exciting to watch and more entertaining than popular sports we watch in the UK. Here, the Grand Champion lost and the crowd went crazy throwing cushions into the air and cheering.*

The key objective of my research in Japan was to collect palaeoecological samples to help improve our understanding on the role of environment in surviving long-term climate change. The JSPS summer program presented a unique opportunity to collect samples from outside the well-studied areas of Europe and North America and to help develop our understanding of the responses of marine fauna to climate change between different global regions. My host Professor Oji arranged the fieldwork and we had an enjoyable time collecting samples and exchanging ideas. In addition to the field, our differences in our techniques in the lab have helped me develop my approach to testing scientific hypotheses. The preliminary data collected from this trip will be used to contribute to future grant proposals and hopefully another opportunity to continue working in Japan.

The research group in the Museum were extremely friendly and organised both a welcome party and seminar to allow me to settle quickly into the group. They were also extremely helpful with any queries I had, and went out of their way to make sure I experienced as much of Japan as possible. This included taking me to an Onsen to ensuring I had the opportunity to hike up Mt. Fuji (Fujisan). I also made friends beyond my research group from many different parts of the world and from a number of different academic fields.

The language, food, weather and hobbies in Japan are very different to the UK. Each of which I fell in love with and will miss.



*The JSPS arranged for us to spend two days with a host family, in my case the Kobayashi's. We have just sat down together to eat breakfast before they took me on a sightseeing trip around Tokyo. Despite my inability to speak Japanese and theirs with English we used our phrasebooks extensively and had a great time. "hai chizu" (Say cheese).*

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