



It's been a month of shark sightings in the Philippines!

The team on the Philippines site have been on tenterhooks the last few months hoping that the whale sharks, that have recently been making their way through Southern Leyte, would make a stop at Napantao. We are very excited to confirm that their prayers were answered and whale sharks have been spotted on our house reef! These are the first whale sharks to be seen in the waters at Napantao by CCC volunteers and staff since 2013 so it's a great sign for Sogod Bay. The evening was spent watching the shark leisurely swim around our reef whilst the sun was setting behind him! The next morning the team were lucky again when another whale shark was spotted during an early morning snorkel! The rest of the week's mornings are going to pale in comparison after a start like that!

The whale shark sighting obviously heralded a good omen for rare and exciting finds this month as Nick Luz (Science Officer) and Alix Green (Project Scientist) later managed to spot a Whitetip Reef Shark resting in a cave within the MPA! As Whitetip Reef sharks are listed as Near Threatened on the IUCN Redlist this is fantastic news for the MPA. The phrase 'it's more fun in the Philippines' has never seemed more apt!



Tracy MacKeracher poses with some of her students.



Sean Smith (Science Officer) shows off one of the wonderful Chameleon models.

Philippines

It's been rather a whirlwind stay for Education Officer, Tracy MacKeracher. Over the past 2 months Tracy has taught over 2500 students at 16 elementary schools and 6 high schools in 4 districts: Pintuyan, San Francisco, Lilo-an, and Sogod. This has consisted of classroom sessions on marine conservation, in addition to helping students to organise their own environmental committees. A fantastic way of empowering each and every one to make a difference within their own Barangay, through local conservation projects. What an amazing effort!

Tracy was very excited to be honoured as the guest speaker at Pintuyan National Vocational High School's Recognition Day. Tracy took the opportunity to highlight the importance of education and how it is key to creating opportunities in life. A sentiment that rings true for all of us, no matter where you're from.

Montserrat

Anyone in the vicinity of Brades library last week may have been a little confused by the number of kids sticking their tongues out, but don't worry they weren't being rude! They were of course 'tasting the air', a lot like the reptiles that they were learning about! The 30 students were an eager bunch and Hazel Thornton (Science Officer) told them all about the reptiles to be found around the world and the conservation issues they face.

After marvelling over the potential age of the Aldabra Tortoise (150 years!) it was the kids chance to get creative and model their favourite reptile out of play dough. Science Officer, Mike Soltysiak's, fantastic model of a chameleon was a particularly popular template of choice. By the end of the session the kids had produced an array of colourful reptiles and snakes to show off. To read more check out [CCC's blog](#).

The Lifesigns Group

Coral Cay Conservation is part of the [Lifesigns Group](#), a group of companies specialising in expeditions, medical training & hostile environment solutions.

Two groups of students from a UK school weren't afraid to get stuck in during Adventure Lifesigns recent 15 day trip to Nepal. The groups were enthusiastic in their task of improving one of the local schools in the Kathmandu Valley. This involved clearing out and rebuilding classrooms, putting up a new gate, and generally sprucing the place up a bit! After all that hard work the students were treated to a 3 day trek during which they were able to experience some of the joys that Kathmandu has to offer. The before and after photos below are a fantastic example of the wonderful successes achieved by the students. Well done all!

Announcing the Winner of our free expedition!

We are very pleased to be able to confirm that the entries to our competition to win a free 4 week expedition were placed in a hat last week and the winner is...(drum roll please!)...James Dibb-Simkin!

We very much enjoyed giving the good news to James and we reckon with this response James was pleased too: "I have never won anything in my life and am thrilled to have broken that on something so big! I am looking forward to days and days of diving, putting my brain to work on conservation (I love learning new things), and the opportunity to do my advanced open water at the same time. Whooo! :D". Congratulations James, we can't wait to welcome you on site!