



Philippines Scholarship Program - Another Success Story!

Each month [Coral Cay Conservation's](#) (CCC) site in the Philippines takes two Filipino Scholars through their PADI Open Water and Advanced Open Water programs, and then through the marine Skills Development Program. The Scholarship Scheme has proven to be a real success story in the Philippines and with 20 Filipinos having taken the training so far this year, our capacity building is going from strength to strength.

We always love hearing about what our scholars get up to once they have completed their scholarship, and were especially happy to hear about ex scholar, Jerome Napala's success with his marine conservation organisation 'Grassroots Responsiveness thru Education on Environmental Needs Inc. (GREEN). Jerome first joined us as a scholar in 2011, whilst he was studying at the Southern Leyte State University (SLSU). Jerome proved to be a real asset to the team so when he approached us for further training we were very happy to help. Jerome continued to undertake his Rescue and Divemaster course with us whilst studying for his Masters in 2013.

Jerome has been working on GREEN alongside his role within SLSU's Marine Biodiversity Management in Sogod Bay Research Team. This work is now coming to fruition and recently Jerome was asked to put together a team to collect data for the Municipal Agriculture and Tourism Offices of Liloan, with an aim to set up a 100-hectare marine park, combining three barangays in the region with Tabugon MPA at its centre. Our aim when we start a project is always to build local capacity so that when we leave there are local people with the skills to continue the work, to watch this happening with our own eyes is such a joy. Our local Community Liaison Officer, Jesse, will be assisting Jerome so we'll be sure to update the [blog](#) with all the news. If you are a local Montserratian or Filipino check out the [scholarship page](#) for all the details on how to join us.



Science Officer, Emma Bolton, teaches the class all about shark finning. Photo courtesy of Rory Graham.



An EST team studies the route which they'll take for their trek.

Coral Cay Conservation

Every couple of weeks the team in Montserrat take the floor in Brades library to teach a subject which they feel the local children will be fascinated by. It's a great opportunity for staff members to share information on conservation issues and species that they are particularly passionate about; in the past volunteers have even chosen to lead sessions.

Sharks have always proven to be a popular subject, and therefore when it came to writing the recent session Science Officer, Emma Bolton, thought threats to sharks, specifically finning, would be a good topic to cover. After explaining what shark finning is, Emma spoke about why it happens and whereabouts in the world it occurs, what species are most affected, the negative impacts it has on the oceans and how we can try and stop it.

The craft session involved making shark masks from paper plates, and as always the children's creations were inspired: from a very pretty tiger shark mask, painted orange and black like a jungle tiger, to a 'guardian of all sharks', whose job it was to save all other sharks from being shark finned. The children said they were excited to wear their masks and tell people about shark finning and why it should be stopped. All the library sessions are aimed at fostering a love of animals and nature in the youngest residents of Montserrat. I think we can call this session a success!

If you would like to read more about what goes on on site, check out the [CCC Blog](#).

Recent Events

The last few weeks have been a non-stop whirlwind of Expedition Skills Training (EST 1) sessions for [Adventure Lifesigns](#). These are held during the run up to a school's expedition to prepare the 'explorers' for their trip.

Mette, our School Programme Coordinator, has been visiting schools throughout the UK to speak to the attendees about the: itinerary, equipment, sleeping arrangements, cooking facilities, and generally prepare them for life on expedition. The explorers also gain training in First Aid and hygiene so they are able to keep themselves fit and healthy during the expedition. With the explorers visiting a number of countries, Zambia, Equador and Cambodia to name a few there is always plenty to discuss and time is also dedicated to introducing the school which they will be working with and what project work they'll be undertaking.

These sessions are one of up to three ESTs which explorers will undertake before their expedition. The second EST is held for long haul expeditions only, as it provides further training for camping and all the daily requirements that go along with living off the land. For these sorts of skills all the meetings and classroom discussions only do so much, we therefore take the opportunity to get the explorers out into the English countryside where they can refine their skills in erecting a tent, build their stamina for any treks that they will be doing and improve on their camp fire culinary skills!

Keep an eye on Adventure's Twitter handle [@AdvLifesigns](#) for updates on how the teams are getting on.

Future Events

At the end of the year Coral Cay will be welcoming two new Field Base Managers (FBMs) to our sites, and the past few months have been dedicated to giving them the additional training they need to undertake the role. One of our new FBMs has been based out on our Philippines site for the past 6 months undertaking our [Marine Expedition Management Scheme](#), so we are particularly excited to get him out into the field.

All FBMs join us with a strong foundation of existing skills so it's just a case of bringing them up to speed with our on-site policies and safety plans, giving them additional medical training and taking them through some very specific courses, such as SCUBA gear technician training. We'll be saying farewell to our current FBMs, Claire Ogg and Susan Robertson nearer the end of the year. Both Claire and Susan have been fantastic representatives for CCC and we are sure that Ben and Gareth will do a great job continuing their work.

Offer of the Month!

The offer this month is for any budding marine biologists out there who are currently part of a University. We will shortly be sending out an email to Biological Societies throughout the UK with an offer which will benefit you and your Society. If you would like the possibility of getting a special price for an expedition and a donation to your University get in touch at info@coralcay.org with your Society's contact details.

Usual CCC expedition [Terms and Conditions](#) apply.