

BLUE & GREEN LAAMU

*The Marine Conservation & Sustainability
Newsletter by the Maldives Underwater Initiative*
JANUARY 2023



SIX SENSES
LAAMU

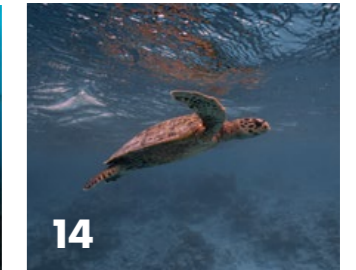
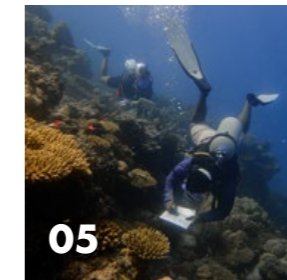


MALDIVES UNDERWATER INITIATIVE by Six Senses Laamu

Moray eel on a colorful Laamu reefscape

WHAT'S INSIDE?

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THE BIG STUFF



562 megafauna surveys were conducted by the MUI and DBD teams



811 sharks were sighted



261 rays were sighted



370 turtles were sighted

OUR EDUCATION



1820 moments of education were shared with guests



271 moments of education were shared with hosts



94 moments of education were shared with the community

SIX SENSES CONSERVATION SOUTH ASIAN NITROGEN HUB MALDIVES PROJECT

MUI are working together with Maldives Resilient Reefs, BLUE and researchers from Edinburgh University to contribute to the South Asian Nitrogen Hub Project (SANH). SANH is a project aiming to further understanding the potential influxes of nitrates and phosphates into the environment. Although people are becoming very aware of plastic pollution and pollution arising from the use of fossil fuels, the potential devastating effects of nitrogen on ecosystems is not a widely known or understood issue. Nitrogen pollution is especially high in South Asia, hence SANH being established to tackle this issue. It brings together researchers from over 32 leading organizations to improve nitrogen use and investigate its ecosystem impacts. Tropical marine ecosystems such as coral reefs are especially vulnerable to nitrogen pollution. Excess nitrogen can increase algal growth and as coral and algae compete directly with each other, this can lead to added stress for coral ecosystems. This has knock-on ecosystem impacts and if severe, it can lead to phase shifts, in which hugely biodiverse coral reef ecosystems shift into low diversity algae dominated ecosystems. MUI's involvement included hosting the team of researchers and doing two days of work together, taking samples of marine water, groundwater, algae and seagrass. This data will be added to a network of data that has been collected all over the Maldives to further the team's understanding of nitrogen uses and areas of particular pressure.



THE CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PROJECT (CCAP) SURVEY



The Climate Change Adaptation Project (CCAP) is a reef monitoring framework developed to aid the management of coral reef ecosystems using extensive datasets. This survey incorporates three components of reef monitoring, including target fish and invertebrate species, as well as substrate composition. The survey is carried out at five and 10 meters, to differentiate between reef states at different depth. These surveys are conducted along a 100 meter transect set at specific points that were allocated by small metal pins back in 2019. Since June 2019, the team has been conducting bi-annual surveys of the Olhuveli house reef here at Six Senses Laamu. This past month the survey was conducted by Jess, Coco and Kiah.

The surveyed fish and invertebrate species are selected based on ecological and economic (tourism, aquarium, commercial) value. They can be good indicators of reef health, water quality and diversity calculations, which, when put together, will give an overall representation of reef state and condition. The substrate survey includes identifying what kind of substrate occupies the area directly below the transect line. This can include hard corals, soft corals, micro and macro algae, and other life forms such as clams or sea slugs. Conversely, it can also be non-living substrate such as sand, rubble and boulders. This allows us to analyze the percentage of live cover on the reef and the diversity of life forms that can be found. Percentage of coral cover is particularly important to note given the changes in coral reef health in the Maldives over the past 20 years. This year's first survey showed a 40.32% coral cover compared to 29.05% in the beginning of 2021. In combination with the frequent observation of coral spawning events, these statistics are encouraging for the health of the resort's house reef moving forward. With all this information MUI aims to better understand the ongoing changes of the house reef as well as successfully conserve this area moving forward.



14 algae and seagrass samples taken



16 marine water samples taken



3 ground water samples taken

NAPOLEONS IN LAAMU



After collecting 2 years (27 consecutive months) of data, Philippa Roe, Aminath Shaha Hashim, Vivienne Evans, and Yvonne Sadovy de Mitcheson recently published their paper about "Status of Napoleon wrasse in Laamu Atoll, Maldives, after three decades of protection".

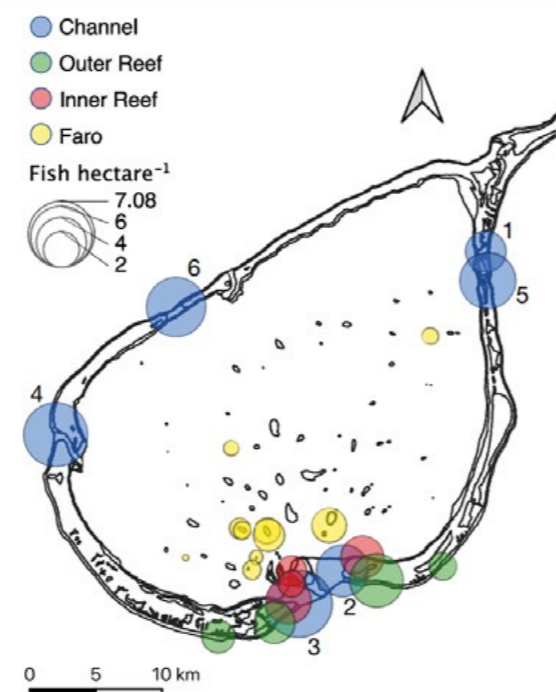
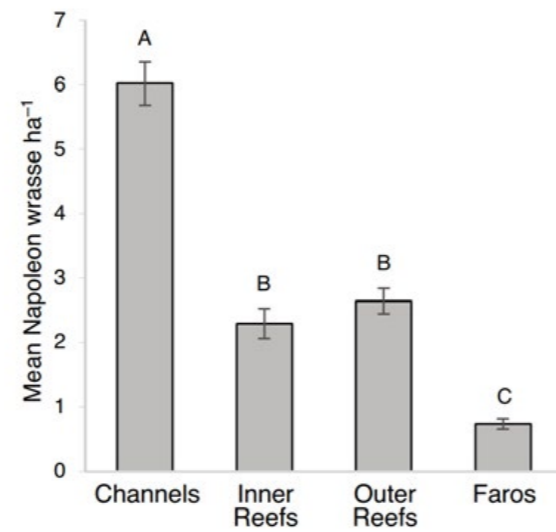
The Napoleon or humphead wrasse (*Cheilinus undulatus*) is a large, globally threatened coral reef fish. In recognition of suspected declines and their importance for ecotourism, the Maldives was one of the first countries to ban the capture, sale, and export of the globally threatened coral reef fish, Napoleon wrasse, in 1995. The only study to evaluate the abundance of Napoleon wrasse populations in the Maldives was conducted in Laamu Atoll in 1997, shortly after the ban.

After almost three decades of protection, new research undertaken by Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI), Blue Marine Foundation and Maldives resilient reefs (MRR) in collaboration with researchers from Hong Kong University found that Napoleon Wrasse population densities in the atoll are within the range of what can be considered an undisturbed population, and channel reef habitats are particularly important for this species.

Although the news is good from Laamu, unfortunately, Napoleon wrasse continue to face the threat of declining coral reef habitats around the world, impacting this species and other key megafaunas such as sharks, turtles, and manta rays. Because of this, it's important to also protect their habitats and the environments they live in.



1st peer reviewed published paper from the MUI Team



ATHIF IS BACK

Some of you may recognise Athif, as he previously joined MUI as an intern in July while conducting his research about the seagrass ecosystems around Olhuveli island (Six Senses Laamu) for his final year research module. Excitingly his findings will be published during this year for MUI.

After his time with the MUI team, he continued his studies at the Maldives National University. While studying, Athif also volunteered in a coral restoration project which was conducted by Sheba Hope Grows Collective, in partnership with the Maldives Coral Institute and Save The Beach Maldives at Baa Fulhadhoo. He also joined a National Coral Reef Monitoring Framework (NCRMF) workshop conducted by the Maldives Marine Research Institute. Moreover, he also took part in a "Marine and Land Survey" workshop which was carried out by the Marine Research and High Education Centre at Faafu Magoodhoo. He is also the project manager of ABLE Maldives and he is taking part with his colleagues on publishing a book about the ecosystems in the country. Furthermore, during his studies at university he and his colleagues travelled to many islands to conduct different types of surveys and research related to the studies. He wants to see more students that study the environment and marine fields because there are many opportunities and studies to be done here in the Maldives.



Now Athif has finished his bachelor's degree on marine science, he is back as an intern at Maldives Underwater Initiative to work in more research and education and is eager to learn more about all the exciting activities done here in Laamu!

Athif believes that it is crucial to learn more and understand the ecosystems in the Maldives such as seagrass, coral reefs and mangroves, because we highly depend on them. He wants everyone to love our environment and be more aware about our impact on them.

THE MANTA TRUST



PLANKTON FEEDING FRENZY

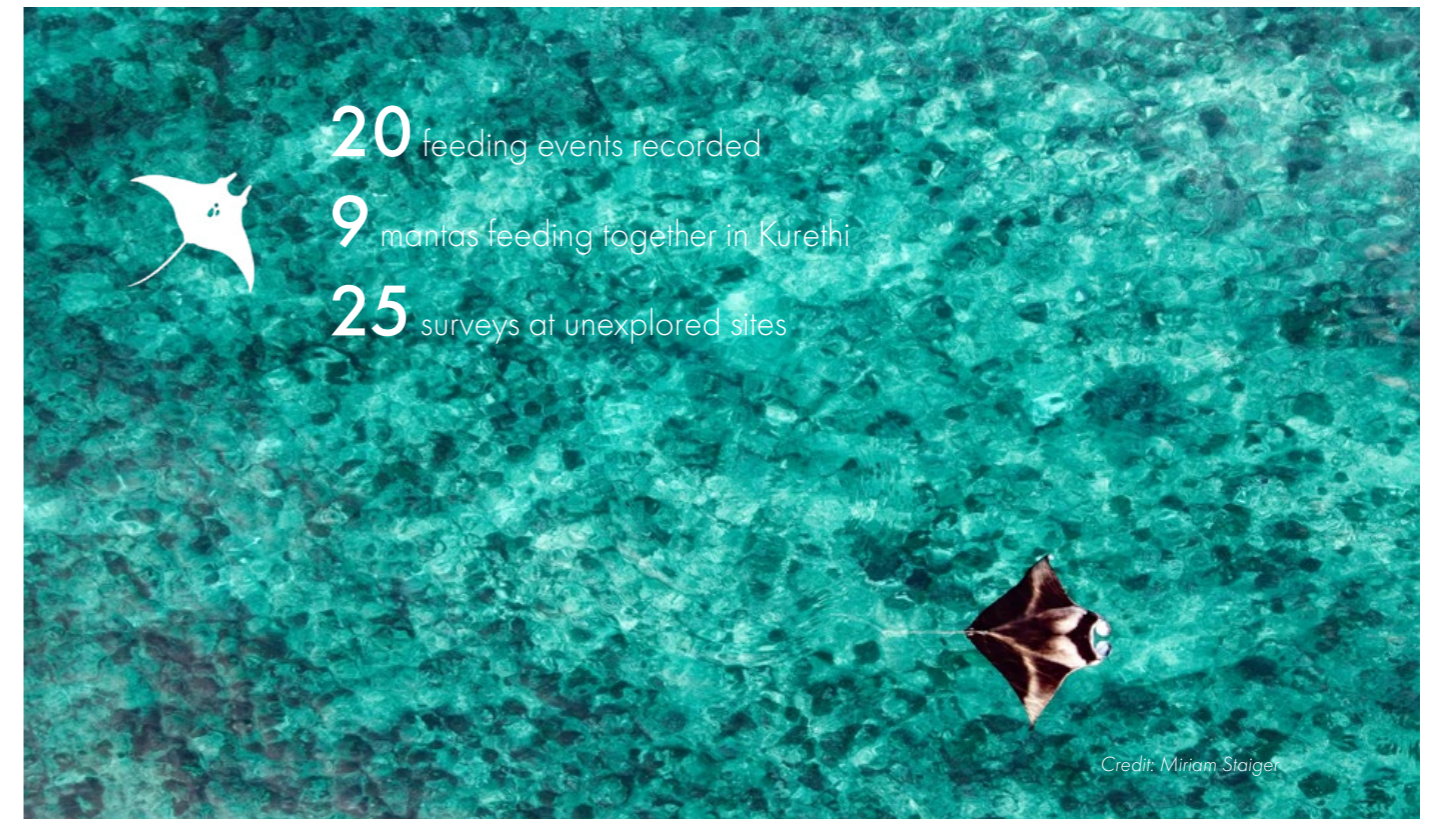


January has been an incredibly interesting month in terms of manta ray sightings in Laamu Atoll. On January 12, on a normal research boat day, the team spotted a manta ray near the surface close to Kurethi - also called Boduhuraa Beyru, a dive site on an outside reef in the southwest of Laamu Atoll, just a 30-minute boat ride away from the resort. When the first team member got ready to jump in the water to get the identification photograph, someone spotted another manta ray, and another one...and within five minutes the team had spotted at least five manta rays feeding together on the surface. On slowly entering the water to not scare the mantas away, it was no surprise to the team that the mantas had come here to feed! The water surface was full of zooplankton – copepods, small jellyfishes, fish larvae, ctenophores, and arrow worms – everything a manta ray could wish for! The team spent over an hour in the water getting photos of the manta ray's bellies – allowing the identification of individuals through recognition of the unique spot patterns on their bellies. Later, the team was able to identify nine different manta rays – reiterating the importance of continuously taking photos of the manta's bellies, as just from counting the manta rays in the water, it was assumed to be only five different mantas. The feeding frenzy didn't stop there. In January, the team had a total of 20 surveys on eight different days that recorded feeding mantas.

Throughout the north-east monsoon, in the Maldivian language called the Iruvai, the winds and also the currents move across Laamu in the direction after which they are named and therefore plankton often accumulates on the southwestern parts of the atoll. With feeding events, one has to be in the right place at the right time, which is why the team currently concentrates their survey effort around the southern survey sites of the atoll to maximize chances of recording these feeding events.

With already 20 feeding events in just one month, the team believes that this year could break the all-time record of witnessed feeding events ever recorded in Laamu Atoll. This is incredibly exciting, after the last two years have had low sightings of feeding events with only four events in 2022 and seven events in 2021. In terms of sighting events, 2023 has already caught up with the record year of 2020, where, across the whole year, a total of 20 manta feeding events were recorded. In terms of separate sighting days however, 2020 still holds the record by far with feeding having been observed on 19 days (with six events recorded in January 2020).

It is no surprise that the Manta Trust team is excited for what's to come this year and hopes the plankton stays healthy and abundant. It is important to track these events and keep an eye on the plankton abundance around the atoll, as climate models suggest that zooplankton abundance could decrease significantly in some areas of the world.



NEW YEAR - NEW STUDY SITES

This year, the team wants to focus on finding new manta study sites, i.e. areas where manta rays could be sighted either on cleaning stations or during feeding activities. In January, the team have explored sites that have previously been surveyed only very occasionally, if at all.

When the conditions were right, the team ventured out on their first all-day exploratory dive trip to search for newer, less studied areas. First, the team investigated a site called Maavah Beyru, an area that, on Google maps, has been marked as "manta point" apparently a couple of months ago and, according to the Manta Trust database, has only ever been visited once during a baseline survey in 2019. From word-of-mouth, the team understands that locals have even seen oceanic mantas there in the past. Although not having seen any mantas on this particular survey day, the team found a beautiful outer reef full of fish, which was like swimming through an aquarium. When travelling outside the atoll towards their next destination, the team kept their eyes peeled for any surface feeding mantas – and to much of their surprise, spotted a beautiful juvenile tiger shark from the surface, an incredibly rare find in Laamu Atoll.

A place called Fares Beyru was investigated next, which according to Manta Trust records, has only been visited four times since the start of data records in 2012. The last time it was visited was in 2021 with six mantas having been observed from the surface during a fishing trip, and the year before that, in 2020, with four mantas having been observed on the surface. Hence, this site has a lot of potential to be visited by mantas rays. When the team went diving there this time to explore the reef, they did not encounter any manta rays, but found two potential cleaning stations and were also able to get photo-IDs of 11 turtles that were completely new to the Olive Ridley Project database.

Another site investigated was Kunahandhoo Beyru, a site that is easily accessible from the resort but hasn't been surveyed much in history due to other nearby sites being more in favor for divers. In 11 years, only five surveys have ever been recorded there, with only one of them being an in-water survey in 2017, which had seven manta rays feeding on the surface. On the one exploratory dive the team conducted this month, they had a beautiful manta ray encounter with Debbie, a female manta ray already known to the Manta Trust's database and observed another manta, called Peter2, feeding on the surface. It wouldn't be surprising that manta rays visit or pass through this site regularly due to its close proximity to Hithadhoo Corner, a well known manta site.

In total, the team conducted 25 surveys to less explored sites in January, and they are incredibly excited to start exploring more areas to better understand manta ray abundance and distribution around the atoll.

BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION

FISH OF THE MONTH - BIGEYE TREVALLY



Last month many bigeye trevally were landed from our Laamaseelu Masveriyaa sustainable fisheries programme. Big eye trevally are schooling fish found inside the atoll and on channels all around Laamu Atoll. With a beautiful silvery olive color on their body, adult trevallies can grow up to 120 cm in length. The trevallies form big schools to better hunt for food, to reproduce and keep themselves safe from predators. However, due to their schooling nature they are susceptible to overfishing as many can be caught from a school at once. Nevertheless, big eye trevally are listed as Least Concerned on the IUCN red list, as they are very common. In the Laamaseelu Masveriyaa programme they are caught with a strict minimum size limit with sustainable fishing gear to ensure their population remains healthy. Big schools of big-eye trevally are fascinating to see underwater and they can be sighted on many of Laamu Atoll's channels.

 **23** Bigeye Trevallies landed

LAAMASEELU MASVERIYAA FIRST QUARTERLY MEETING 2023

The first quarterly meeting of the Laamaseelu Masveriyaa programme in 2023 was successfully carried out by the Blue Marine and MRR teams. These quarterly fisher meetings are a platform to discuss any changes to the programme and an avenue for fishers to share their perspectives and ideas about the programme. . Nine fishers attended the meeting from the nearby islands of Maamendhoo, Hithadhoo and Kunahandhoo.

An overview of 2022 was shared with the fishermen. And constructive discussions were held on ways to ensure a consistent supply of sustainably caught fish and seafood to meet the resort's needs. Highlights of the meeting include the re-introduction of Longnose Emperor and Rainbow Runner back on the accepted fish list but with strict minimum size requirements by taking a precautionary approach. The second major change was the introduction of Yellowfin tuna and Bigeye tuna into the purchasing list with the appropriate minimum size limits.

Three fishers who accrued the most amount of sustainability points over the past quarter were celebrated with a small gift. Fishers were delighted to receive the programme's A safety "at sea package" to ensure the fishers stay safe while carrying out their fishing operations. Comprising a buoy, life jacket, torch, docking line, dry bag, snorkel kit and a first aid box was also handed over to the most dedicated fishers of the programme.



 **1** fisher meeting convened

 **7** Safety at sea packages distributed

 **9** fishers attended

MUFLIHA AND NAUFAL JOIN THE MRR TEAM



Two new team members joined the Maldives Resilient Reefs team in January. They join a growing team of young Maldivian marine conservationists working for MRR and with MUI across Laamu Atoll.

Laamu Hithadhoo Environment Officer

Meet Naufal Shiyam – Laamu Hithadhoo’s Environment Officer. He will be based in Laamu Hithadhoo to support the establishment of a Community Conservation Area on the island, which would protect a critical grouper spawning site, a manta ray cleaning station and a green sea turtle aggregation site.

Naufal is a 19-year-old environmental enthusiast from Laamu Hithadhoo. He was born in Hithadhoo and spent his early years there before moving to Gaafu Dhaal Thinadhoo to complete his high school education. Naufal’s interest in the environment peaked during his experience in leading his school’s activities for Parley’s AIR challenge, which aims to tackle plastic pollution during his time as captain of Gaafu Dhaal Education Center. After completing his A’Levels last year, Naufal has now returned to his home island and wants to bring his community together to collectively protect the unique ecosystems around the island.

Project Assistant – South Asian Nitrogen Hub Project

Mufliya Ziyad (Muf) - a familiar face from her time working as an intern at Maldives Underwater Initiative last year - joins MRR as a Project Assistant for the South Asian Nitrogen Hub Project. She will be based in Laamu Gan island with the MRR team and will carry out research in Gan, Six Senses Laamu, Hithadhoo and other selected sites around Laamu Atoll.

Muf grew up in Male’ City but was drawn to the ocean from an early age. She started swimming for her school’s swim team when she was 12 years old and went on to take part in Inter-School and National Swim competitions. Muf graduated with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and communications in 2022, but her strong interest in conservation pulled her towards the field. During her internship with MUI, she learned more about marine research education and community.

“My curiosity was fueled by the plastic pollution I was witnessing while swimming, and from experiences I had during a nature trip conducted by EcoCare and Soneva Fushi in 2011.”

BACK TO SCHOOL – TRAINED UP ON NCRMF PROTOCOLS

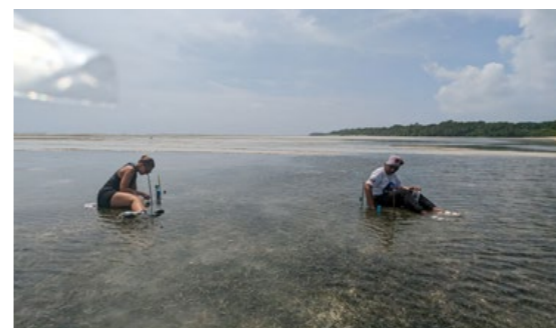
The Maldives Resilient Reefs team received a virtual training from Maldives Marine Research Institute (MMRI) on the National Coral Reef Monitoring Framework and the Coral Database used by MMRI this month. The team learned about the various national coral reef monitoring protocols and how to deliver training in these for the local community. Over the coming months, MRR will provide practical trainings to 11 young people across the atoll on how to monitor their backyard reefs.

NITROGEN RESEARCH RESUMES IN LAAMU

In January, MRR welcomed Jessica Arnall and her team back from the University of Edinburgh to kick off a second year of nitrogen pollution research in Laamu Atoll. This year, MRR and Jess will be carrying out a year-long project funded by the South Asian Nitrogen Hub (SANH) to measure the impact of nitrogen pollution on marine environments.

The team began by setting up nitrogen enrichment experiments on a seagrass meadow in Laamu Gan and a coral reef near the island. Common NPK fertilizer was deployed on the seagrass, and slow-release fertilizers on the coral reef to observe any changes in seagrass growth and coral bleaching. The team will also collect marine and groundwater samples from Laamu Gan, Hithadhoo, Gaadhoo and Six Senses Laamu to identify the sources of nitrogen.

After Jess leaves in February, MRR will continue monthly monitoring of the coral reef for bleaching as well as monthly collection of water samples from the survey sites throughout the year. Once the results are analyzed, it will be used to educate communities, and to produce efficient ways to tackle the issues of nitrogen pollution in our marine environments.

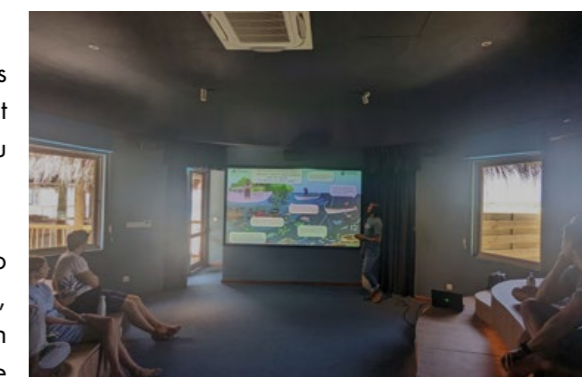


FIRST OF ITS KIND – HITHADHOO COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA

We are well on our way to protect one of the most biodiverse dive sites in Laamu Atoll – Hithadhoo Corner!

In January, Maldives Resilient Reefs signed an agreement with UNDP’s GEF Small Grants Programme to receive co-financing for the project to create a community conservation area in Hithadhoo Baaneykolhu Area.

MRR’s team also had meetings with the entire MUI team and Hithadhoo Council this month to present the plan for carrying out this project. Naufal, Hithadhoo’s Environment Officer, explained the planned activities which includes extensive consultations with Hithadhoo community before finalizing a management plan and creating by-laws which will legally create the CCA. Naufal, who is currently being trained in Gan, will go back to Hithadhoo to begin community consultations next month. We are all very excited to see this project get rolling straight from the start of the year.





OLIVE RIDLEY
PROJECT

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

THROWING QT A LINE

The team in Laamu encountered an entangled turtle during one of their house reef snorkels earlier this month. This juvenile hawksbill was resting under a boulder coral when the Sea Turtle biologist spotted a fishing line wrapped around its flippers, head and carapace. Fortunately, it was relaxed enough to allow the team to transport it safely back to the Chill Bar, where the fishing line was carefully removed with the help of the Six Senses bar hosts.

The turtle's injuries were assessed, and the line had left a shallow cut over turtle's right flipper, but thankfully it wasn't too severe, and it definitely didn't discourage this little fighter from getting back into the water! After ensuring there were no other injuries on the turtle's flippers or body, and checking that it was able to dive comfortably, it was returned to the ocean.

By taking photo ID shots and checking the database, the team found that this turtle was actually QT (HK3642) – a juvenile hawksbill that was first spotted in 2017, but hadn't been seen in the atoll for over five years! Despite the circumstances, everyone was over the moon to be reunited with QT, and hopes to see them on our house reef for many more years to come – free from any plastic or fishing gear!

Sadly, this is not an uncommon occurrence in the Maldives. Ghost nets and other discarded fishing gear are a major threat not only to sea turtles but other marine life such as sharks, rays and cetaceans. The team at ORP and MUI collect data on any ghost nets and other plastic debris found in Laamu to better understand the sources and types of plastics entering the oceans, and their impacts on the surrounding marine ecosystem.



147 turtle ID
submissions



142 hours of nest
watch



813 turtles in
Laamu

TURTLE IN THE SPOTLIGHT – MEET MARMALADE STINKY BISCUITS (HK3825)

Marmalade Stinky Biscuits is quite a mouthful to call a turtle - but it's what our big little VIPs at the Den at Six Senses Laamu decided was the most appropriate! This tiny hawksbill was first encountered in January 2018 and has since become a resident of the reef right in front of the Chill Bar. Over the last five years, we've encountered this turtle a whopping 84 times on the house reef, so you don't need to venture far to get your fix of turtles.

While most of the green turtle's in Laamu are adult males and females, the majority of the hawksbills are small juveniles usually no larger than serving plate. When new hawksbill recruits arrive to the coasts to forage, they will stay very loyal to their reef patch and can sometimes get very territorial! Marmalade is an especially feisty juvenile and has been seen several times chasing away larger hawksbills who get too close.

Marmalade can often be found in some of the most awkward positions foraging for coral, but don't hold your breath waiting for Marmalade to come up to breathe, they take their sweet time! Unfortunately this also makes it very difficult when the team needs to get a ID photo! When turtles does need to breathe, they don't care who's on top, they're going to come straight up - so keep your distance and make sure to never swim above a turtle or you might bump into one as silly as Marmalade!



58 live hatchlings
counted



35 guests at
hatching



3 nests laid



UNCOVERING A MYSTERY

One of the green turtle nests on the island recently hatched after 69 days of incubation, and while there was much anticipation from both guests and the MUI team, only 13 hatchlings were seen emerging from the nest. Green turtle nests in the Maldives typically incubate for 57-58 days before hatching, with each nest containing between 80 to 120 eggs, so the team was slightly puzzled at the late- than-average hatching date and the small group of hatchlings that came out! Although all hatchlings made it safely to sea, there were still questions of what happened to the rest of the hatchlings? Was the nest just unusually small? Or did the rest of the eggs just not hatch?

To better understand what happened, our team conducted an excavation where the contents of the nest were dug out and examined. This is typically done 48-72 hours after hatching, to give any strugglers a chance to leave the nest naturally, and provides invaluable data on the number of eggs laid, hatching success rate (percentage of eggs hatched), and potential disturbances to the nest.

Out of 112 eggs, 98 had remained completely unhatched, which is extremely high for a green turtle nest. After opening and inspecting the contents of the eggs, our team had discerned that these were all undeveloped eggs due to the absence of embryonic development. An egg's development can be disrupted by major disturbances, such as flooding, beach erosion, or excessive movement during relocation. However, in the case of this nest, no major disturbance events were observed during its incubation, so another explanation could be that these eggs were just unfertilized.

Although this is an uncommon occurrence, a higher rate of infertile eggs in nests is a growing concern for sea turtle populations around the world. With the rising temperatures from climate change, there is increasing worry about the feminization of turtle populations resulting from female-biased production of hatchlings. These



skewed sex-ratios reduce the likelihood of successful mating and subsequent fertilization of eggs before nesting, drastically reducing the reproductive output of females.

Data from excavations such as these provide a clearer picture of how climate change is affecting sea turtles, and can help inform better conservation methods to safeguard future populations.

*Excavations are carried out by trained biologists and under permits issued by the EPA.

OUR COMMUNITY



SIX SENSES LAAMU ATTENDS MPA MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

This month, Ali Shareef, Six Senses Laamu's Community Outreach Coordinator attended the joint workshop by the Maldives Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Technology, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the UK-government led Ocean Country Partnership Program (OCP), held in Male'. The workshop aimed to bring stakeholders related to the protected areas across the Maldives together, to discuss the Marine Protected Area (MPA) management framework and explore the potential for taking forward the IUCN green list in the Maldives.

During the workshop, the IUCN team presented the IUCN Green List Standards, the delivery of the IUCN Green List Feasibility study conducted in 2022, and key findings from the survey. The OCPP team shared the draft report of a Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) study and a draft of the national framework to assist the Maldives government and associate parties in effectively managing MPAs and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation (OECM) in the country for stakeholder input and feedback. The workshop closed with the PAME Assessment launch and comments from the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Aminath Shauna, and British High Commissioner for the Maldives, Caron Rohsler.

The workshop was an excellent opportunity for the team to align efforts with the Maldives government and other associates in recognizing the reef systems around Six Senses Laamu as an official OECM by the end of 2023. Currently, the reef ecosystem of Six Senses Laamu is recognized as a candidate OECM by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology of Maldives. Please read Blue and Green September 2022 edition for more information for OECM.



OUR HOME

CANDLE FROM SURF WAX

Are you a surfer and have you ever wondered what could you make out of surfboard wax? Certainly, our in-house surf partner, Tropicsurf, has thought a lot about it and have challenged the Earth Lab team to upcycle the waste surf wax. From there, a new type of candle was invented at our Earth Lab, surf wax candle! These candles naturally give a sweet smell from the surf wax, burn slowly and made the Tropicsurf team and the resort guests feel good about minimizing their impact on the environment.

“Since Tropicsurf are based on the island all year round, we would continuously receive the surf waxes in Earth Lab. And through the Earth Lab discovery experience, we get to inspire surfers who visit us from all around the world to upcycle their waste surf wax”, Laisha, Earth Lab intern, explains. “An average of 5 kg of surf wax are received in Earth Lab per month where we teach our guests about the best ways to melt the wax and types of mould that could be used to make the candles”. Currently, the Earth Lab team uses waste PVC pipes and coconut shells to make the mould.



EARTH LAB TRAINING

The month of January was dedicated for host education and trainings at the Earth Lab. From the departmental Plastic Free trainings, to launching the monthly Sustainability Committee meetings, our team is excited to strengthen the hosts education towards sustainable living and self-sufficiency of the operation.

A total of 44 hosts joined the plastic free sessions from four departments and spend four hours for training. At the Sustainability Meeting with all the Heads of Department, the Annual Sustainability Action Plan for 2023 was launched and the responsibilities were assigned among respective department heads. A total of 37 actions have been assigned among the 12 departments which have been targeted to be achieved in quarterly basis. Additionally, the Earth Lab team has also joined two hours of Pickle Training hosted by Nadiya's kitchen, a local chef. The aim of the training was to launch a Pickle Making experience as part of educating zero waste philosophy.



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