

News from the Charles Darwin Foundation – February 2012

Dear Julian

I would never have thought that my passion for scuba diving would lead me to join a shark tagging team in the Galapagos Marine Reserve. Some of the most astonishing ecosystems exist largely un-noticed under the ocean. From supporting local talent through scholarships to CDF oceanographers laboring side by side with world experts, the CDF is working with partners to gain the knowledge crucial to sustainable management of this precious World Heritage Site. The core of the CDF mission is to undertake scientific research and develop practical applications for long-term and effective management of the archipelago and surrounding seas. None of this is possible without your continuing involvement and generous support.

We hope you will continue to partner with the CDF as we work toward better understanding the complexities of this unique marine world

With best wishes,
Sven Lorenz
Executive Director

Conservation Highlights

Galapagos became UNESCO's first World Heritage Site in 1978 because of its outstanding universal value and the archipelago's integrity as an ecosystem.. World Heritage recognition was extended to the Galapagos Marine Reserve in 2001 because of the high number of endemic species, multifaceted oceanic currents, numerous marine communities, relationship with the landforms and the long history of scientific research in the archipelago. The diverse marine life of Galapagos developed because of a unique convergence of oceanic currents and a dramatic underwater landscape of coastal platforms and submarine mountains. CDF has been working on understanding how these complex marine ecosystems are influenced by natural factors such as climate variation, and human activities like fishing and tourism. You can find more information about our projects on our website.

www.darwinfoundation.org

Galapagos: A Sea Turtle Sanctuary

Sea turtles are emblematic species that have been part of the make up, maintenance, and evolution of marine ecosystems for millions of years. At their nesting sites, turtles generate tons of organic material, nitrogen, and phosphorus, crucial to environments whose terrestrial systems depend on ocean-land exchanges. Students and volunteers join our monitoring teams and the results of their work improve the understanding of green sea turtle demography in Galapagos, assess its current conservation status, and provide decision makers with information to guide planning of future green sea turtle conservation...<more> <http://www.cdfdevelopment.org/our-work/sea-turtles2012.html>

Anchors away

Anchors are an essential part of any watercraft and in Galapagos they are used by everything from the largest tourist vessels to the smallest skiffs for safe anchoring in ports and in sightseeing and fishing areas. Anchors and chains can have a devastating effect on a marine ecosystem. The Zero Anchors initiative aims to give the seabeds of the Galapagos Marine Reserve the chance to recover and have long term protection. ...<more> <http://www.cdfdevelopment.org/our-work/zero-anchors2012.html>

Making good choices- sustainable fisheries

Where the marine life found in the Galapagos Marine Reserve come from and where they go is a mystery, however many of them likely travel great distances to enjoy the rich food supplied by the nutrient rich Galapagos waters. Research on movement of fish and other marine animals is important for the design and evaluation of conservation zones. Whilst the ecological impact of the local artisanal fishing industry is comparatively small, decisions about sustainably managing the future of the Galapagos marine resources rely on the scientific information gathered by CDF. We also work closely with the local fishermen and the general community, so the consumers can make informed decisions about buying local and which seafood they choose to eat ... <more> <http://www.cdfdevelopment.org/our-work/sustainable-fisheries2012.html>

Collaborative solutions for sharks

CDF is a founding member of MIGRAMAR a network of marine research and conservation institutions working together to understand the dynamics of sharks and other pelagic species in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Region. We work closely with UC Davis and the Galapagos National Park Service to provide reliable scientific information which can be translated into conservation and management policies. As top predators, sharks are a key species in the marine world, driving natural selection processes and act as indicators of ecosystem health. Only by working together and breaking national barriers can these living dinosaurs truly be protected... ,<more> <http://migramar.org/hi/impact/migramar-presence-in-the-galapagos-science-symposium/>
Shark tagged at Galapagos Sets New Migration Record
<http://www.darwinfoundation.org/english/pages/noticias.php?txtCodiNoti=98&txtCodiCate=1>

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