



tropical marine ecology & conservation

Photo by Zsuzsanna Pusztai

*"The rose has thorns only for those who would gather it."
- Chinese Proverb -*

NEWSLETTER

Issue # 12 - Summer 2010

Summer Students



Summer students take courses for 2-5 weeks during June & July at CIEE Bonaire.

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CIEE Facilitates Learning Experiences

Whenever possible CIEE assists third parties in conducting learning experiences for the public.



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World Biodiversity Day on Bonaire



CIEE celebrates the international day of biodiversity in collaboration with the National Parks Foundation STINAPA.

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Leatherback Turtle Lays Nest on Klein Bonaire

Leatherback turtle nest is relocated to higher ground to protect the eggs from being destroyed by sea water.



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SUMMER STUDENTS

Issue # 12 - Summer 2010

SUMMER I



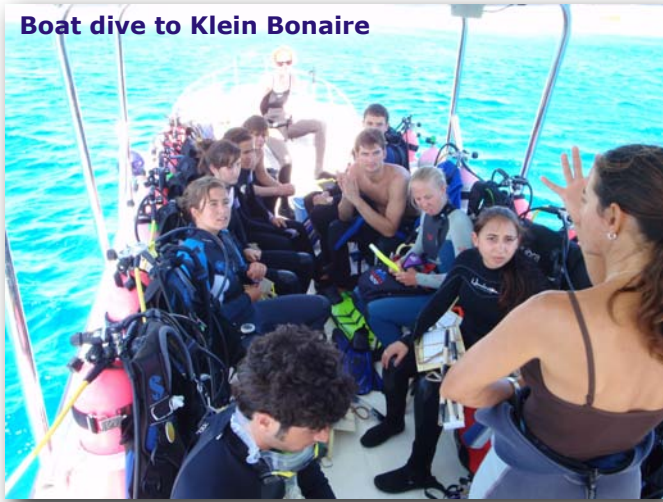
From left to right: Allyson Crowe (University of Colorado at Boulder), Miranda Filan (Washington State University), Travis Stoll (Middlebury College), Alex Medved (Auburn University), Matt Rhodes (University of Minnesota Twin Cities), Giby Winklaar (Food Guru Bonaire), Caryn McKinney (St. Olaf College), Brian Czornyj (Lehigh University), Jessica Lee (Auburn University), Kelli Foster (Spelman College)



Bridgette Black (Brown University) & Kelli Foster



Michael Kronfeld (University of Colorado at Boulder) ->



Boat dive to Klein Bonaire



Relaxing at the windsurf beach at Sorobon



Caving trip



Turtle trip to Klein Bonaire



SUMMER II

From left to right: Alex Medved (Auburn University), Ben Daugherty (Emory & Henry College), Allyson Crowe (University of Colorado at Boulder), William Winship (University of Colorado at Boulder), Miranda Filan (Washington State University), Travis Stoll (Middlebury College), Kathryn Brown (University of Tulsa), Brian Czornyj (Lehigh University) Front: Caryn McKinney (St. Olaf College)

CIEE hosts PADI Instructor Exam

In the beginning of June, Yellow Submarine dive shop hosted the grueling PADI IDC (Instructor Development Course). Eight candidates worked intensely for 2 weeks in order to become PADI Open Water Scuba Instructors. Among the candidates were 2 former CIEE interns. MaryLou Hildebrand first came to Bonaire as a student for the Tropical Marine Conservation study abroad program. After completing the course she was the CIEE volunteer summer intern and during that time also completed the PADI Divemaster internship. Lauren Saulino came to Bonaire as one of the two fall semester interns and she stayed on for spring semester. During this time she completed the PADI Divemaster course and went on to do the IDC together with MaryLou and several other divemasters working on Bonaire.

The Instructor Exams were hosted by CIEE over a period of 2 days. Both MaryLou and Lauren successfully completed the course and passed the exams.



PADI Course Director Thomas Kurtz hands out diploma's.

CIEE hosts Bonaire high school biology class



High school students at work at CIEE laboratory

Due to renovations the SGB (Scholen Gemeenschap Bonaire) high school found itself without their usual laboratory facilities. Their biology teacher MaryAnne Koops turned to CIEE and subsequently took over the research station for an afternoon. The high school class was split in two, one half of the students used the microscopes in the laboratory to learn about the cell structure of a potato, while the other half watched a movie on the oceans of the world in the CIEE lecture hall.



High school students in the CIEE lecture hall

hall. Their high school uniforms match the colour of the CIEE lab very well!

CIEE hosts REEF fish id classes

The Reef Environmental Education Foundation is a grass-roots organization that seeks to conserve marine ecosystems by educating, enlisting and enabling divers and other marine enthusiasts to become active ocean stewards and citizen scientists.

On Wednesday evenings throughout the months of July and August, Kim White will be conducting fish ID classes at CIEE. These classes are offered for free and participants may register with REEF to become a reef surveyor after taking the class.

Future REEF surveyors



The United Nations designated 2010 as the international year of biodiversity and May 22nd, 2010 was the Day of Biodiversity. Bonaire celebrated this international day of biodiversity with family activities and events at the island's Lac Cai location. CIEE contributed to this day by organizing the "Adopt a Rock" program.

Rock enthusiasts volunteering to paint rocks



Since Bonaire's mangroves do face several threats - coastal development, the input of pollutants, the impact of invasive species, damage from changes in environmental conditions, as well as increased vehicular and foot traffic - CIEE and STINAPA wish to diminish the threat of anthropogenic disturbance in the protected area of the mangrove forests of Lac Cai. This is achieved by coordinating volunteers to place yellow painted rocks,



Marine Park Manager Ramon de Leon adopting his rock

symbolic of the Bonaire National Marine Park, which will advise visitors to stay clear of the area. The public was invited to adopt a rock, paint "No Entry" on the rock in Papiamentu, Dutch, or English, and place the rock in the designated area, with the words NO ENTRY facing the road. Tables with the rocks and paint were set up and people on their way to the activities at Lac Cai were encouraged to take part in the protection of the mangrove area.

LEATHERBACK TURTLE LAYS NEST ON KLEIN BONAIRE - Mabel Nava

Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) relocates nest to protect eggs.

On Monday, June 7th, STCB staff found a leatherback nest on Klein Bonaire during routine nest monitoring. Leatherback turtles are seen infrequently around Bonaire, and nesting attempts are a rare occurrence.

A leatherback which may have been this nesting female, was sighted on June 5th by August Montburn, dive operations manager at Buddy Dive Resort. The turtle was spotted swimming near Klein Bonaire. It was also spotted in front of Habitat and Buddy Dive the following day.

Klein Bonaire is not an optimal beach for leatherback nesting. Upon investigation, STCB staff found that the nest was flooded with seawater. Using best practices to enhance success, the staff relocated the nest of over 100 eggs to a higher and drier site of the beach. Adult female leatherbacks require sandy nesting beaches backed by vegetation and sloped sufficiently so the crawl to dry sand is not too far. The preferred beaches have proximity to deep water and generally rough seas.

The leatherback is the largest, deepest diving, and most migratory and wide ranging of all sea turtles. The adult leatherback can reach 4 to 8 feet in length and 500 to 2000 pounds in weight. Its shell plates are covered by firm, rubbery skin with seven longitudinal ridges. Jellyfish are the main staple of its diet, but it is also known to feed on sea urchins, squid, crustaceans, tunicates, fish, blue-green algae, and floating seaweed.



Leatherback sea turtle - Daniel Evans

The last time leatherback activity was recorded on Bonaire was on 2008. A female leatherback intended to lay her nest at Cai. The crawl was checked but eggs were not found by STCB staff. This kind of opportunistic nesting can happen at the end of the leatherback nesting season. This may occur when these animals are returning from their nesting homes to their feeding homes and suddenly they feel the urge to lay one last nest. They look for the nearest beach and try their best to make a nest.