



Conservation Education Society

NEWSLETTER

The Conservation Education Society's monthly newsletter.



Photo of our mask distribution at a nearby school

Responsible Interactions with Marine Megafauna

This month we wanted to share one of our blogs, this one was written by Jenni Choma from the Marine Education Centre.

Marine megafauna are essentially the larger animals in our oceans, and in many places, they are a key attraction for tourists. They include everything from whales and dolphins to seals and dugongs, to sharks and rays, and of course sea turtles too! These ocean giants are generally considered to have greater cognitive abilities and they often display curiosity towards humans, as well as show their unique characters during our interactions with them. However, the majority of our lucky encounters allow us to see them simply going about their lives, moving from one place to another, searching for food or a place to rest, or even feeding or resting! During these moments, we can become a stressor to the animal if we try to affect the interaction for our benefit – and this is what we actively work to avoid!

In Diani, we are lucky to see sea turtles, dolphins, stingrays and guitarfish all year round, with the occasional mobula or eagle ray! From June to November we have Humpback whales migrating along our coastline, then December to April the ocean's biggest fish, the whale shark!

We have developed a number of interaction guidelines with our friends and sponsors at the Diving the Crab. But ultimately, the same applies for all marine life – so we can list the top 5 points here:

1. Let the animal control the interaction
2. Keep calm
3. Keep a distance (2 to 3 metres is always best)
4. Don't swim directly in front, behind, or above the animal (they can't see you!)
5. And, we have to say it: Do Not Attempt To Touch!!

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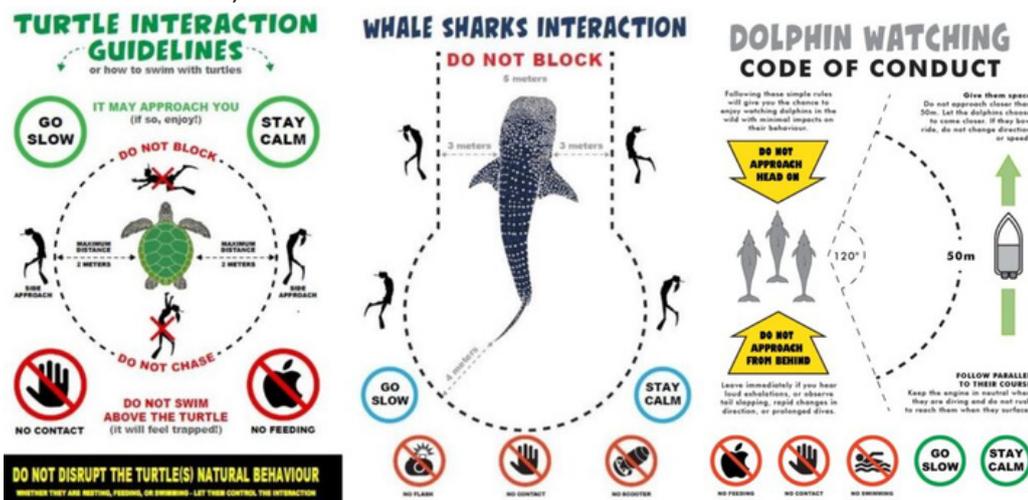
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Of course, there is much more we can do, both for the benefit of the animal, but also the environment in which they live and depend upon. It is easy to forget where your fins or hands end up in the excitement of seeing marine life! Yet, grabbing hold of, or kicking something which may seem inconsequential at the time, will definitely have a detrimental impact on the animal or plant, which will also affect the health of other species which rely on it – and it may be something that stings you!

For those of us with underwater cameras, we must always be considerate of the animal and the environment in how we place ourselves and the camera, but also remember to be mindful of the flash! You can even aid our monitoring and conservation efforts by photographing the species you encounter, especially sea turtles and whale sharks, as their unique patterning allows us to identify them as individuals! We are also creating a biodiversity database of species present in the Diani-Chale Marine National Reserve, so ultimately, any photograph in which an animal is clear enough to identify can contribute to this! So, overall, the main message is this: be respectful of marine life! Let them feed, let them rest, and let them swim where they wish – if you change this, you will increase stress and decrease health. How we interact with an animal today, will affect how it interacts with us or other humans tomorrow – so don't ruin it for everyone else!

And lastly, this is not specific to Diani, or even Kenya; these principles should be followed anywhere in the world, and you can help spread the word whenever you visit somewhere new, as well as making positive impacts within the marine tourism industry by choosing operators who adhere to guidelines which benefit marine life.

To read more blogs from our partners and team members please go to <https://ceskenya.org/category/blog/>



Photos/Infograph accredited to the Marine Education Centre and Diving the Crab

What We Have Been Up To This Month!

The first month of 2021 has been a great start to what we hope will be a great year. Here is what we have been up to in January;



Photo: Fatma using our new sanitizer stand from Pipemans!

- We can now share the final amount raised from the Sands at Nomad Christmas Fair. All proceeds raised, including an online silent auction, were donated to the Marine Education Centre and its educational activities. In total KSH 325,820 was donated, including a donation of KSH 15,090 from Pipe Manufacturers stall. Thank you Sands at Nomad and Pipe Manufacturers!
- We received an incredibly kind donation from Bhardwaj Welfare Trust of 300 reusable masks in December. January we were able to distribute them to some of our beneficiaries, these being our network of teachers and students. Teacher Mr. Hassan collected 120 for his students and the CES team visited Muamalaat primary school to distribute masks to the students.

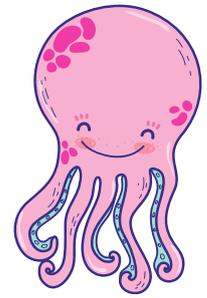


Photo on top: Some students posing with their reusable masks. Photo at the bottom: Posing after a meeting with KPPC on new outreach project

- We partnered with the Marine Education Centre and had a stall at this year's Kenya Kite Cup at the Sands at Nomad Hotel. All proceeds from this event was donated to our partner Diani Turtle Watch. Pipe Manufactures also had a stall at the event and were incredibly kind to donate a sanitizer stand and some products to the Marine Education Centre. We now have some great Pipeman products in our gift shop, come and check them out!
- January was the first month of our Marine Club, we currently have 8 members. This month's theme was the Sustainable Development Goals.
- We are working with our partners, the Kwale Plastic Plus Collectors, to develop and implement an educational outreach programme, we are currently in the development and recruitment stage of this project and are excited to see it rolled out over the next couple of months.
- Finally, we would like to welcome back some of the Marine Team, who due to COVID-19 had temporarily returned home. Leah from the Olive Ridley Project and Jenni from the Marine Education Centre welcome back!



NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS



DIANI TURTLE WATCH & LOCAL OCEAN CONSERVATION

Diani Turtle Watch reported 7 new nests in January, bringing their total number of nests currently being monitored to 11. Unfortunately, 3 turtles were found dead in January. Diani Turtle Watch reported that this was due to net entanglement, fishing line hook and one was unknown.

KWALE PLASTIC PLUS COLLECTORS

We have teamed up with Kwale Plastic Plus Collectors and will be working on an exciting education outreach pilot project. We are currently recruiting a small team and will be piloting our first module, which will be on waste management.

MARINE EDUCATION CENTRE

The centre was excited to launch the new marine club, add a new sea turtle design to the online Teemill store (<https://marine-education-centre.teemill.com>), and print the new activity sheets available at the centre to test your marine knowledge! They were also busy with plans for the new year, re-starting scuba diving surveys, and attending the Kenya Kite Cup in support of Diani Turtle Watch.

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

In January, the Olive Ridley Project sighted 87 turtles in Kenya, 79 of which were green turtles and 8 being Hawksbill turtles. Twenty-three of these sightings were new additions to the turtle ID database. They also welcomed back Leah, who will be the Olive Ridley Projects local coordinator for Kenya.

REEFOLUTION FOUNDATION

The REEFolution Foundation, based in Shimonu have created an amazing VR experience of the world underwater. This is a great opportunity for Kenyan students to experience what it's like in the ocean. Check out their blogs by going to www.reefolution.org/blog.

MARINE CLUB CORNER

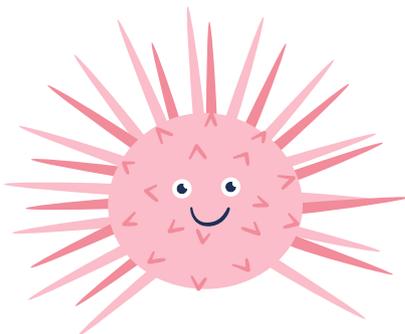
Welcome to the newest section of our monthly newsletter, the Marine Club Corner!

This is a special section dedicated to the members of the Marine Club where they have the opportunity to share their

experiences, ideas and basically anything to do with marine conservation! Last month, our topic was the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations. Our Marine Clubbers had the chance to set their own sustainability goals for 2021! We would like to give a shout out to Reya Radia aged 5, who completed this month's activities. Reya wants to 'keep the environment safe, so all living beings can have a good life' and will be telling her friends not to use single-use plastics, not to eat meat and not to waste food. Thank you Reya!

Feel like you're missing out? Join the Marine Club today!

Simply click on [this link](#) and follow the prompts or alternatively contact us on campaigns@ces-kenya.org and we'll sort you out!



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



A special thank you to the following businesses, without them, our work would not be possible.



The Marine Education Centre Opening Times

Monday	2pm - 5pm
Tuesday	2pm - 5pm
Wednesday	2pm - 5pm
Thursday	2pm - 5pm
Friday	2pm - 5pm
Saturday	2pm - 5pm
Sunday	2pm - 5pm



Our Conservation Partners



Remember

If you see a turtle nesting or an injured turtle, please contact Diani Turtle Watch on +254 758 961 322



Conservation Education Society

**The Sands at Nomad Hotel
Conservation Education Society/
Marine Education Centre
P.O Box 5066-80401
T: +254 757 130 827
W: www.ceskenya.org
E: info@ces-kenya.org**



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www.youtube.com/channel/UCGCujsWA630vLbz7ycsBaeA