

Sharks project

Shark, that very unique fish

The Green Island Foundation's sharks project aims at educating the local community and raise awareness on the importance of sharks in the marine ecosystem.

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Group photo with the GIF project manager and WiseOceans Team.

The Green Islands Foundation (GIF) continues with its national shark education campaign, spreading the message about the importance of sharks to another group of school children. The GIF's message is basically that Sharks play a very important role in the oceans in a way that an average fish does not. The GIF says sharks are at the top of the food chain in virtually every part of every ocean. "Our oceans play a central role in many of today's societal issues and students are inherently interested

to learn more. Marine education is essential to give students the right message and initiatives undertaken by various environmental organisations are gaining momentum in Seychelles".

In April 2015, GIF teamed up with WiseOceans and the Fishermen and Boat Owner's Association (FBOA) to educate a group of scouts about the wonders of our oceans and the sharks that roam our seas. 13 students from the fourth and 18th Seychelles Scouts Troop from Belonie and Plaisance

Secondary school respectively, took part in the activity held at the Four Seasons Resort and the Victoria Fishing Port.

Students spent the first half of the day at Petite Anse bay where the Four Seasons Resort is located and where the WiseOceans team is based. WiseOceans are specialists in marine education and conservation and strive to spread awareness about our wonderful yet fragile oceans and the creatures that live within them.

Jo Eames, a marine educator at

WiseOceans gave the students a presentation on the various species of fish, coral, invertebrates and reptiles that can be found on the reef. The scouts also enjoyed a reef guided snorkel with the senior marine educator at WiseOceans Charlotte Orba, assisted by GIF staff Arjan De Groene. This was a great opportunity for them to observe and identify the diversity of marine life found on coral reefs. Jennifer Appoo from GIF gave a presentation about sharks, explaining what makes them unique fish and which

different shark species can be found in Seychelles waters. Explaining to children the role of sharks in the ocean as well as the threats sharks face by shark finning, overfishing, habitat destruction are included in GIF's campaign.

In the afternoon, the group moved to the Fishing Port in Victoria where FBOA is based. FBOA is a NGO set to defend and promote the traditional fishing sector in Seychelles and sustainable fishing practices. Assisted by Bertille Bonne from FBOA and local artist Peter Lalande, the children enjoyed a drawing and colouring activity to show what they saw under the sea. They were also encouraged to draw their favourite shark before going home.

These activities are part of Shark Projects being implemented by GIF aiming to educate the local community and raise awareness on the importance of sharks in the marine ecosystem. The project is funded by the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme and the Environment Trust Fund. Several other activities have taken place in the past to promote and raise awareness on sharks. For example on Sunday 19 April, GIF participated in the Earth Day Festival at Port Glaud to spread the message. The children present on that day got the chance to make their own shark



Enjoying the reef guided snorkel hats and shark decorations for cucakes.

According to Charlotte Orba "WiseOceans was thrilled to have welcomed the boys and girls from the fourth and 18th Seychelles Scout Troup for this event with Green Islands Foundation. Everyone was very enthusiastic and passionate about the marine life that they learned about and saw on their snorkel. It is exciting to see that this event and others like it will help to ensure that Seychelles has some great future ambassadors for its incredible marine life!"

