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MBR TURTLE HATCHERY BLOG

www.melinabeachturtles.wordpress.com

CONSERVATION NEWS

thefigtreeforum.blogspot.com

NEW HORIZONS IN RAJAH AMPAT



EFT Conservation in this tropical paradise

The **Raja Ampat Islands** in Indonesia are at the very heart of the coral triangle, where the most biodiverse marine habitats in the world are found. Spectacular above water and below, the area is a focus for marine conservation and ecotourism development. Ecofieldtrips is preparing to enter a new phase with the introduction of working holidays to the area. Guests will be able to make a serious contribution to conservation with a mix of training programs for baseline marine surveys and monitoring as well as land-based rehabilitation of old mined areas. This invaluable experience will be open to the alumni of schools we have taken on trips - no matter the age!

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS AT MBR!

At Ecofieldtrips, we believe that every student should have the chance to explore the outdoors and learn about the environment, no matter their age, background or ability. As Melina Beach Resort is having a fantastic makeover, plans are in place to build ramps and pathways for school groups that require wheelchair access. We hope to be able to complete this in the early part of the year. Now students who require wheelchairs can experience the wonder of nature like never before - on an Ecofieldtrip!

CORAL REEF CONSERVATION

LETS GO BUOYS!

Get out your tools and work hat, conservation at Ecofieldtrips has hit an all new level. Our latest trip takes students into the real world of coral reef protection and will quench even the most enthusiastic of their thirst for eco-action.



Installing permanent mooring buoys is great news for the reef - no more anchors!

Constructing permanent Mooring Buoys on reefs are a fantastic way to avoid the destruction caused by boats dropping anchor. This proactive Coral Reef Conservation trip gives students the chance to help coral reefs on Tioman Island by actively building and planting mooring buoys - ideal for those taking part in the **Global Action Programme**.

They will also spend time exploring the reefs and mangroves with EFT biologists so that they fully understand the importance of the project.



The weights poised on the edge of the boat ready to go!

Students will work together before the trip to raise funds for the materials and schools will have their name permanently branded on their mooring buoys. All involved can come away from the trip with heads held high, knowing they have helped to conserve Tioman's beautiful Marine Park.

COLOUR FOR A CAUSE!



The latest, marine friend of EFT is now going to help us teach children all over Asia about turtle conservation. Penyu, a Green turtle hatched from the sandy beaches of Tioman now has her own Colouring-in Book.

Two of our biologists helped Penyu turn her story (as she doesn't have fingers) into an exciting book. Author Xu Qiaoling helped translate her words while artistic Jamie FitzGerald illustrated the book, giving it lots of pictures just waiting for colour.

But none of this could have come together without the sponsorship of the **Singapore American School**, who raised money for the Melina Beach Turtle Hatchery Fund with tie-dye t-shirts. Congratulations for helping us release the first "batch"! These will be donated to primary schools on Tioman Island to help educate local children on the plight of turtles on their shores.

If you would like to get involved on your next trip, let us know!

ASIAN GEOGRAPHIC JUNIOR

Continuing on the theme of environmental education, EFT staff Tara Beardmore and Samantha Craven have been busy scribbling away for Singapore's own *ASIAN Geographic JUNIOR* magazine. Check out their articles in the latest issue (2/2011 - Colours of Asia Edition). We are happy to be involved with a magazine that has a strong environmental awareness and conservation message. Especially when they are bringing out a special-edition book on sea turtles in conjunction with the turtle-themed Asia Dive Expo! We hope that we can work more with AGJ in the future!



www.asiangeo junior.com

SOP: SAFETY FIRST

This year, EFT is implementing even more stringent safety standards. Our new Standard Operating Procedures are tailored for each trip, and we will be reviewing our procedures on an even more regular basis. The SOPs are supplemented by Risk Assessments of Adventurous or Non-Adventurous activities, Staff Qualifications and Training History, Transport policies and PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) Log and Inspection. EFT is currently in the process of being accredited under the P3PP scheme (Preferred 3rd Party Providers) - a list of preferred 3rd party activity, travel and adventure providers for international schools based in South East Asia.

MEET OUR NEW STAFF!

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, EFT productions is proud to present... the new staff for 2011!



From L to R: Kristin, Joe, Carolien, Sabah, Kajsa, James, Pete and Mena

All the way from India, **Meena** has a post grad in Zoology. **Pete** is from England and is our new resident geographer with a BSc in physical geography. Also from England we have **Joe**, a Marine Biology graduate and Divemaster. An ex-dissertation student, **James** has a degree in biology. **Kristin** is our new Marine Biology graduate from the United States. **Carolien** is half Dutch and has a zoology degree. From England, **Sabah** is a Biology graduate. And finally, **Kajsa**, another ex-dissertation student, joins us from Sweden and has a bachelor degree in Zoology. As you can see, we have a fantastic bunch joining us this year. You can find out more about them on our website!

FROM THE REEF TO THE ROOTS: SUCCESSIVE YEAR GROUPS

For the biologists at EFT, saying goodbye at the end of each trip is tough after making so many new friends. That's why we are very pleased when we see the return of school groups! Last year's grade 6 class at the **Australian International School** are back for more in 2011 with their Year 7 field trip to The Roots Resort in Ipoh. This means that the entire second half of March will see both our resorts, Melina Beach on Tioman and The Roots in Ipoh, booked out by AIS!



Last year's class will return as Year 7's for some culture and conservation in Ipoh.

EFT also take successive year groups from **Tanglin Trust School**. Not only do we explore Tioman's Rainforest to Reef with the Year 7s, we see them again (but much more grown up) on their Sixth Form Biology Trip. We see **International School Kuala Lumpur** biannually as well. This year they're going to be visiting Tioman for a Malaysia Week program and Ipoh with their Year 6's for an eye-opening cultural experience. Last year **Nexus International School** had their first trip with us in Ipoh. This year they have upped the ante with a Year 10 geography survey trip on Tioman! The **International School Dhaka** has been running trips with us since 2006 and they are always a blast to have! We could be seeing double this year with a possible trip to Ipoh on top of their Tioman trip! Successive trips, especially between Ipoh and Tioman are a great way to build on knowledge in exciting new locations while taking a deeper look into Malaysian culture and conservation.

Karen Chen

Karen Chen has been mentor for many a generation of EFT Biologists. A Singapore Tour Guide, she has an unrivalled passion for the Rainforest and nature photography. She is also a veteran diver and fantastic underwater photographer. A natural leader, Karen commands respect from both staff and her students. She might be small in size, but not in personality! She is strict, fair and funny, and you would be hard pressed to find a student that hadn't fallen for her charm. To top it off, we are proud to announce that she recently won the Singapore Tourism Board Award for 'Best Tour Guide' in Singapore! After so many years with EFT, Karen has now settled at the helm, as Operations Manager, and we expect smooth sailing all the way!



99 BOOKINGS OF

SCHOOLS ON THE BOARD...

2011 is set to be our busiest year yet! With a record number of bookings, we are very pleased to welcome several new schools over the next couple of months.

A big Ahlan wa-Sahlan, or welcome, to the **Saudi Aramco School** and **Qatar Leadership Academy**. Both will be flying across deserts and oceans to explore the tropical ecosystems of Tioman Island with us. We look forward to getting out into the field with SAS in March and QLA in May!

We also have a new school travelling all the way from China. Nihao, or hello, to **Dulwich College Shanghai**. They will be joining us in April to crack down on IB Biology... and where else better to do so than the pristine rainforests and colourful reefs of Tioman.

We can't wait to meet you all and introduce you to our island paradise!



EFT RADAR: MONKEYS ALLERGIC TO RAIN?

In late 2010, a species of snub-nosed monkey was discovered in Myanmar. They have upturned nostrils that fill with water in the rain - so during downpours they sneeze!