

Editorial Team

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Sedili Field Trips



Sedili Lodge is located near the fishing village of Sedili Besar on the East Coast of Malaysia. It overlooks the South China Sea with breathtaking sea views of the islands of Tioman, Tinggi and Aur. In this tranquil resort 80km from Johor Bahru (1.5 hrs by coach), there's everything from fun outdoor education and in-depth biology/geography coursework. Young people can have fun exploring the outdoors with experienced Ecofieldtrips biologists or do comprehensive biology and geography fieldwork. Sedili Lodge is located on the most accessible and diverse rocky seashore and coastal mangroves in the area, making it particularly suitable for GCSE, MYP, IB and A-Level projects and course work.

Melina Beach & Ecofieldtrips' New Education/Research Centre!



Melina Beach

Melina Beach Resort is located on a scenic stretch of beach between Kampong Paya and Genting. The resort is private and isolated without any neighbouring resorts. There is a pristine coral reef directly in front of the resort and the un-spoilt primary rainforest directly behind with mangrove forests within walking distance.

Peter Witzigmann, Managing Director of Melina Beach Resort and Bridget Hedderman, Director of Ecofieldtrips are expanding Melina Beach and the concept of environmental education and conservation. This is aimed particularly to school groups and also the general public interested in nature conservation.

Komodo Mooring Buoy Project 2007



The Komodo National Park Conservation Fund managed by PT Putra Naga Komodo and marine biologist Helen Newman have teamed up to undertake an ambitious mooring buoy project to install permanent moorings around this world-renowned National Park.

Aimed at protecting coral reefs from anchor damage by big live aboard dive boats and visiting yachts, environmentally friendly Manta Ray moorings will be installed.

There is ample space on the existing Melina Beach site for further development without interfering with the beautiful sea views or in any way changing the natural beauty of Melina Beach.



Turtle Hatchling from Melina Beach Turtle Sanctuary

Plans to build additional cottages that can accommodate up to 4 persons are already underway. All the buildings will be placed harmoniously between the existing rocks and trees, which will be incorporated into the development. There are plans to further develop the turtle hatchery and other conservation programmes as well as an onsite dive centre in the future.

The new Melina Beach, will cater exclusively to school groups of up to 55 and used for small family groups and other tourists only when available.

We look forward to launching the newly revamped Melina Beach in February 2007!

We are seeking qualified divers that are experienced and capable of working at 30m and have a nitrox qualification. We will have time for the occasional leisure dive and experienced divers will be on board to assist.

10th-18th Feb 07 9-days / 8 nights

18th-26th Feb 07 9-days / 8 nights

Cost: US\$800.00 pp per trip

Places are limited! For booking forms or more information, please contact Helen Newman at newman@pacific.net.sg or call +62 081338753770 (Bali)

+65 97312677 (International)
Fund raising to complete the project continues with a further US\$30,000 required to complete the project. Your contribution will help!
Check out the official Komodo website www.komodonationalpark.org

**Seychelles Whale Shark Monitoring Trip - Singapore American School
October 19 – 25, 2006**



Tagging a Whale Shark in Seychelles

The Seychelles archipelago is a group of 115 Equatorial Islands, many uninhabited, where unique flora and fauna are found alongside beautiful beaches beneath majestic mountains.

The surrounding Indian Ocean boasts some of the greatest marine environments in the World and it is here between the months of August to October that Whale Sharks make their annual migration. The Whale Shark *Rhincodon typus* -the largest fish in the ocean- is now seriously under threat from over fishing. Although described some 170 years ago, very little is known about the life of the whale shark. In recent years a number of programmes have been set up to study the whale shark and following increasing interest from the diving industry.

David Rowat, biologist and President of Marine Conservation Society Seychelles (MCSS) and owner of "Underwater Seychelles Dive Centre" started the Whale Shark Tagging Project in 1996.

MCSS is a locally registered non-profit and Non-Governmental Organisation dedicated to the advancement of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in Seychelles.

Students' feedback

"During the field trip to Tioman Island, we experienced some things that would have been impossible to learn in a classroom. The snorkeling was awesome – everything was so bright and colorful. All of the creatures that we saw while hiking through the tropical rainforest were so interesting. It was incredible!"
- Sonia Liang, Canadian International School (Singapore)

One of the main areas of research MCSS has been involved with is the Whale Shark Monitoring and Tagging project.

Due to the efforts of MCSS over the years, in January 2003, the whale shark was declared a protected species in Seychelles, under the Wild Animals Protection Act.

EFT Director Bridget Hedderman has visited Seychelles many times and has worked with David over the years. Bridget and Helen Newman researched, edited and published a series of textbooks for Seychelles High Schools on the marine biology of Seychelles in 1998. Since then Bridget has returned three times with divers to partake in the Whale Shark Tagging Programme. This October, 22 Singapore American students, teachers and parents along with 2 EFT biologists - Chua Sek Chuan and Bridget Hedderman - will take part in this exciting research project. The majority of the group are qualified divers and with EFT biologists, they will be doing marine biology dives in the mornings and whale shark monitoring in the afternoons. This promises to be a trip to remember!!!

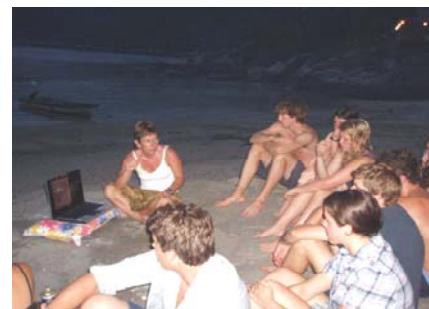
Proposed airport and marina project... Tioman Island's demise?

It is a huge concern to everyone who is familiar with Tioman Island that development plans are affecting the world-renowned marine dive site. As the RM 40 million marina project nears completion, the extent of destruction to the natural ecosystems is all too obvious in Kampong Tekek. As plans for the proposed airstrip continue, concerns for the future of "One of the World's 10 most beautiful Island's" mount. According to WWF-Malaysia, it is said that the airport plans include reclaiming almost 50-ha of land just south of Paya Beach. This would lead to the complete destruction of huge areas of coastal ecosystems, including coastal forests as well as destroying some and damaging all the coral reefs in the area due to sediment run-off.

On a smaller scale of environmental impact, it has been observed that tourists visiting Tioman lack the knowledge of conservation and have been unknowingly involved in activities that destroy nature.

Teacher's Feedback

"The trip was brilliant. I knew it would be good but it exceeded our expectations in so many ways... The turtle-hatching and rubber-tapping on top of everything else were superb. Raj and Karen were both brilliant. The diving was fantastic - fifteen dives - phew! Jason and his team with you and Jen were brilliant. And the last day in Singapore could not have been better ... It all worked out perfectly"
- Andrew Powell, Canford School, UK



Canford students on Pulau Aur-evening presentation with Bridget

*"Hope is a waking dream."
- Aristotle*



Proposed site for airport development



Tekek Marina in construction

Actions like littering, leisure fishing and inappropriate feeding of wildlife are harmful and will negatively impact the environment. For more information on Tioman development plans, visit <http://www.wwfmalaysia.org/newsroom/pressrel/2004/pr041011.htm>