

Cambodia Reef Conservation Project (CRCP)

Monthly Project Update

April 2013

Location:

Prek Svey Village, Koh Rong, Sihanoukville, Cambodia

Project Manager - Sophie Clay



Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries
Fisheries Administration

CRCP Project Aim

The Cambodia Reef Conservation Project (CRCP) is a collaborative project surveying the coral reefs of Koh Rong and Koh Rong Samloem Islands in the Municipality of Sihanoukville. The programme provides training and conservation education opportunities for local Cambodians as part of an integrated programme to develop local capacity, and to ensure the long-term protection and sustainable use of marine resources throughout the region. Coral Cay Conservation (CCC) is working at the invitation of and in partnership with the Fisheries Administration of the Royal Government of Cambodia.

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Latest News

This month has seen the arrival and departure of a number of people on site. We have said farewell to Logan Sullivan, our Field Base Manager, and welcomed Ben Thorne as his replacement. Ben is an experienced field operative, having worked in many remote locations around the world including Honduras, Indonesia and the Great Barrier Reef.



Children from Prek Svey village play CCC's educational games

He has a background in biology, with a Masters in Applied Environmental Science from the University of Sydney and is looking forward to being part of CCC's work in Cambodia. We have also been sad to see volunteers Ida, Kenny and Emma leave us but were happy to welcome new volunteers Vicky and Ben to the CCC team!

CCC's Project Coordinator, Sok Sopheary, and Project Manager, Sophie Clay, have been busy developing an education program for the school

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children in Prek Svay village. A component of this has been putting together games to illustrate the marine environment and challenges facing this. This month CCC volunteers and staff trialled these games with some of the local children prior to implementing them in the school. The games aim to educate the children on the types of marine life found around Koh Rong, the relationships between these, food chains, and the impacts our actions can have on marine life. These trials were hugely successful, with a lot of laughter for all involved! Volunteers Emma Camm and Ida Hendricks, along with staff members Jonny Beck and Sophie Clay, led by Sok Sopheary, spent a couple of hours with the children playing these games. A number of adults came to watch and there was a lot of discussion around the pictures of all the marine life. It was great to see the community engage in these environmental games and we got some useful tips on how best to refine the games in time for the academic program due to start in the coming weeks.

Story of the month

This month, CCC's Project Coordinator, Sok Sopheary, and Project Manager, Sophie Clay, were in Phnom Penh for meetings with our project partners, the Fisheries Administration of the Government of Cambodia and Fauna and Flora International. The aim of these meetings was to complete an internal management effectiveness scorecard known as the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT). METT has been adapted for use by the World Bank WWF alliance for Protected Areas and other management effectiveness models. The METT scorecard aims to enable managers and stakeholders of protected areas to better assess their progress towards meeting objectives and can serve as a baseline from which to measure progress. Completion of the scorecard requires discussion and collaboration between multiple stakeholders therefore provides a useful team building exercise. This tool allows managers of protected areas to assess their progress towards meeting objectives and outcomes to enable a more proactive and adaptive approach to management. The meetings were very successful, with a scorecard completed to reflect the current stage of implementation of the Marine Fisheries Management Area (MFMA) around Koh Rong and Koh Rong Samloem Island, which CCC is working with our partners to help to establish. An aspirational scorecard was also created to reflect where we like to be in 2015. With such a proactive approach to ensuring sound management of the MFMA it is likely to be a great success once implemented later this year!



CCC, FiA and FFI staff meet to discuss the MPA Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool scorecard for Koh Rong (L-R) Berry Mulligan, Tuy Sereivathana, Sophie Clay, Ing Try

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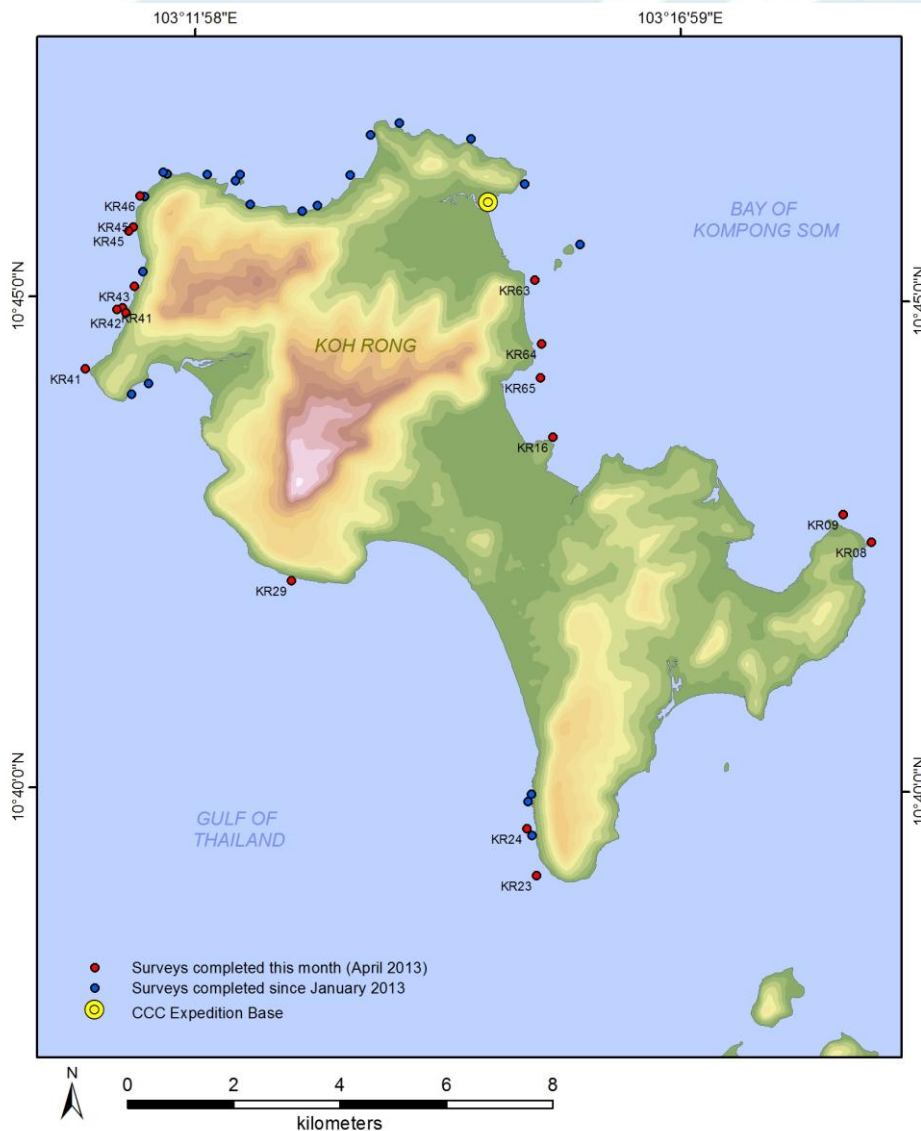
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Survey Update

Survey background: Our baseline-surveying programme is designed to gather data about the biological and morphological standing of Koh Rong and Koh Rong Samloem Islands. This data is combined with information on human and natural impacts on the reefs, along with oceanographic data, to ultimately produce a Geographical Information System 'map' of the various habitats of the islands. It is like a 'stock-take' of the current marine resources. This will provide policymakers and concerned institutions with information necessary to effectively manage those resources. We are also monitoring the reefs for signs of bleaching, following the mass bleaching event in 2010.

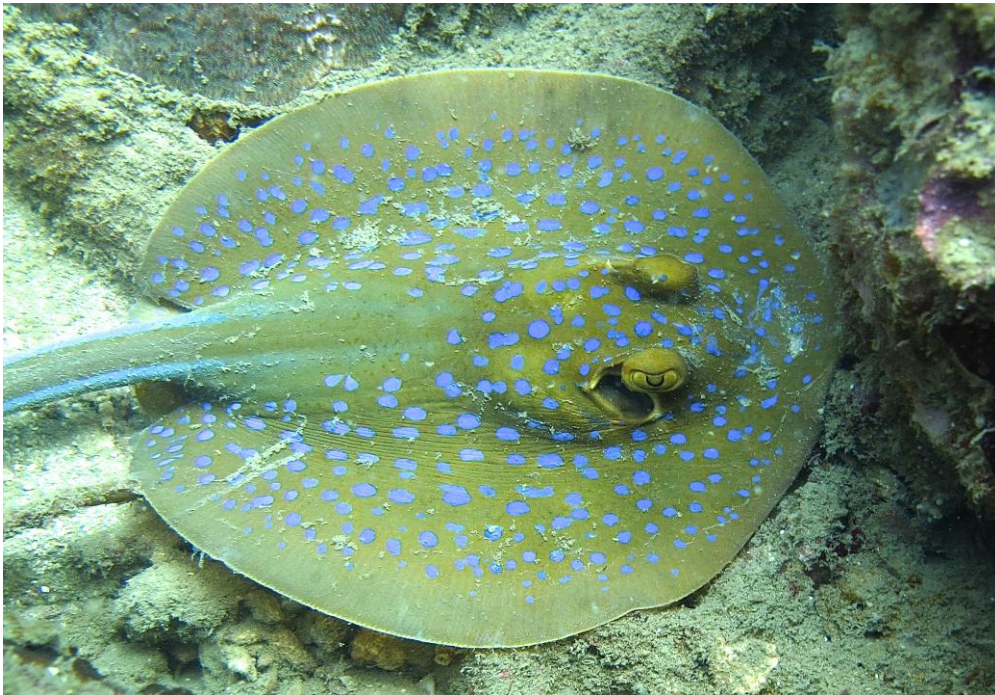
Once again we have made great progress with surveys this month, with two more camping trips to sites further away and many of the survey sites close to home being completed, and had our first rare animal siting on a survey, an 80cm long brown-banded bamboo shark. Vicky, our latest new volunteer, is currently working away to complete the Skills Development Program; Ret, our scholar, has made great progress in passing all her tests and beginning the Open Water diver course; and Ben is now an active part of our survey team!



Marine Creature of the Month

Taeniura lymma
Blue Spotted Ribbon Tail Ray
Family Dasyatidae

One of our target species, the blue spotted ribbon tail ray is frequently seen hiding under rocks or ledges. With vibrant electric blue colouration, the ribbon tail ray is a stunning marine creature of the month and we are always excited when we are lucky enough to spot one on surveys or recreational dives! Categorised as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List, we are pleased to find a number of these beautiful rays around Koh Rong.



Learn More!

To learn more about CCC's Cambodia project, to join the expedition, or to find out about local Marine Scholarship opportunities, visit www.coralcay.org or email cambodia@coralcay.org.