



**OCEAN MATTERS**

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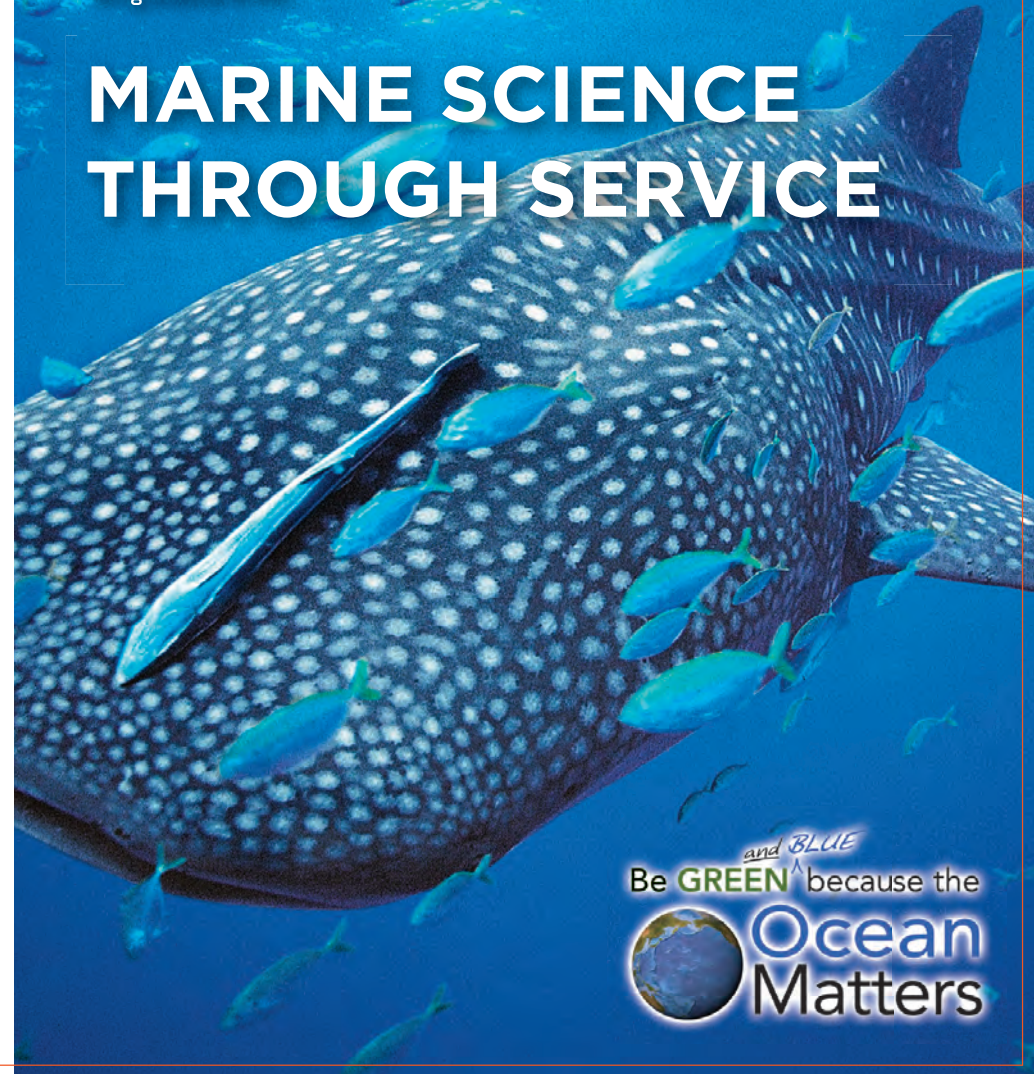
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 **Ocean Matters**

Join our team of marine biologists, naturalists, and scuba instructors to address a problem facing the sea. Find out what it feels like to inhabit the watery realm. Learn first hand how to protect the ocean — and the world you will inherit. Bring science to life!

# MARINE SCIENCE THROUGH SERVICE



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# UTILA HONDURAS

## About Ocean Matters

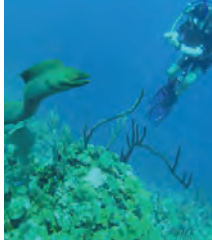
We bring high-school aged students to endangered marine ecosystems for service learning projects performed on scuba. Our projects are designed in conjunction with local conservation organizations, universities, or NGOs and are designed to meaningfully address a pressing problem facing the sea.

Young people who have come on an Ocean Matters adventure have collected data on coral vs. algal diversity on two coral reefs facing differing dive pressure in Grand Cayman for the Department of the Environment.

We've GPS positioned and size classed understudied seahorse populations in Oahu, Hawai'i for the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology of the University of Hawai'i.

We've eradicated invasive lionfish and monitored fish populations and whale sharks for the Whale Shark and Oceanic Research Center, as well as done trash cleanups in Utila, Honduras.

Students receive leadership skills training and support in bringing the learning home to address pressing issues facing the seas no matter where they live, in projects along rivers, lakes, and even in land-locked ecosystems.



Ocean Matters is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit led by a world-class group of marine conservationists and advocates including Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul & Mary and National Geographic underwater photographer Brian Skerry.

Come along and find out why the ocean matters... and why you do, too!

## Our Caribbean Program Utila, Honduras: Lionfish, Whale Sharks, and Trash... Oh, My!

High school students (age 15+) are invited to join us for 1-3 weeks in the summer in the Caribbean to help address challenges facing the health of the coral reef, including:

- the lionfish invasion
- effects of marine debris and trash,
- assisting with the annual whale shark census.

Lionfish are an Indo-Pacific fish species that researchers speculate were introduced to the Atlantic through private aquaria and storm inundations. Unfortunately, as an invasive species to the Caribbean with no known predator, voracious appetites, and high rates of reproduction, lionfish have the advantage. The lionfish are

helping themselves to an all-you-can-eat-buffet in the Caribbean.

Ocean Matters young people are paired with trained and certified adult divers to spot and remove invasive lionfish found on the reef and then participate in dissecting the lionfish for data collection and participation in an Oxford University lionfish diet and depth study. We'll also have a cook-off prepared by trained chefs, serving the invasive fish caught by the young people for dinner.

Since lionfish can drastically change the assemblage of fish populations on the reef, the Ocean Matters students are also trained as Level II fish ID surveyors in order to participate in a Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) fish survey.

The island of Utila is famous for its high population of whale sharks. Our partners, the Whale Shark and Oceanic Research Center (WSORC), has been monitoring the distribution, abundance, and population dynamics of whale sharks since the late 1990s. However, little is known about whale shark life history traits and even what draws large numbers of the animals to Utila in the first place.

By helping track whale sharks, Ocean Matters students gather important data that can assist in helping to inform important marine conservation policy. Join us and learn first-hand how drones and the latest technologies are making a difference to the WSORC's research efforts. Dive daily on the coral reef in both research and recreational dives supervised by professional dive staff.

Scuba diving instruction, certification for PADI Open Water Diver, and daily diving is included.

For details on our Caribbean Program in Utila, Honduras see [www.oceanmatters.org](http://www.oceanmatters.org)

*"The program gave me a lot of confidence. I was about to go to college and meet 3,000 new people. I had no idea what to expect. I still think to this day that the extra confidence may have given me a bit of an edge when I arrived at college."*

— Josh, an Ocean Matters student

A special thank you to Ocean Matters Director Brian Skerry for the use of his underwater photography. © Brian Skerry. All rights reserved.



# OAHU HAWAI'I

## Our Pacific Program Coconut Island, Oahu, Hawai'i: Seahorses, Bioacoustics, Turtles, and Hawai'i Culture!

High school students (ages 15+) are invited to join us for 1-3 weeks in the summer in the Pacific to help address challenges facing the health of the coral reef, including:

- trash and marine debris
- effects of noise pollution on marine animals
- assisting with seahorse conservation.

Ocean Matters is partnering with the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology of the University of Hawai'i, located on the private island of Coconut Island off of Oahu. Ocean Matters students from the mainland will be joining Hawai'i students for this cross-cultural marine science through service adventure.

Classes and labs are all held at the world class Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, the largest marine research facility in the United States, where students will get a front-row seat to University of Hawai'i's faculty, labs, and research. Learn about the important role of bioacoustics in marine life and what can be done about the noise pollution that is impacting marine animals and mammals in particular.

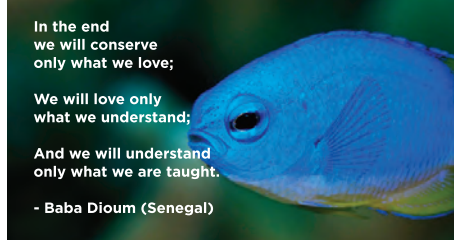
Participate in a seahorse survey where you will GPS locate and size class seahorses towards helping to understand more about the life history traits of underfunded and understudied seahorse populations in the Pacific. As primarily coastal animals, seahorses are under threat by mounting pollution and aquaria trade. We'll also address this by involvement in Dive Against Debris underwater and beach cleanups.

The cultural heritage of Hawai'i, which offers rich clues to sustainable practices, is a featured centerpiece of this program. We'll learn about and visit Hawai'i native fish ponds, learn about celestial navigation from a member of the Hōkūle'a boat; and spend evenings with a native Hawai'i story teller.

Coconut Island is the island made famous by the 1960s television series Gilligan's Island. Dive daily on the coral reef in both research and recreational dives supervised by professional dive staff.

Scuba diving instruction, certification for PADI Open Water Diver, and daily diving is included.

For details on our Pacific Program in Coconut Island, Oahu, Hawaii see [www.oceanmatters.org](http://www.oceanmatters.org)



In the end we will conserve only what we love;

We will love only what we understand;

And we will understand only what we are taught.

- Baba Dioum (Senegal)

