



Key Largo, Florida Field Trip

Fish Counts in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach to Coral Reef Management

Sponsored by: REEF
(Reef Environmental Education Foundation)

Date: 12 – 15 July 2008

Trip Leaders: Dr. Jim Bohnsack, Paul Humann, Leda A. Cunningham and a visiting scientist



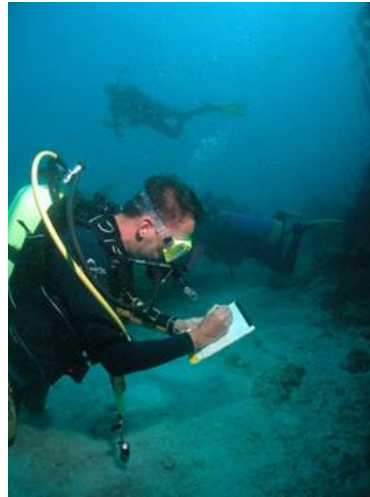
Field Trip Theme:

Training volunteers in marine life data collection to monitor near shore ecosystem health, assess long-term ecological change and engage local stakeholders in coral reef research and conservation.

Field Trip Overview:

The REEF trip will train participants to use the REEF Volunteer Fish Survey Project to monitor and assess marine resources and engage local stakeholders. Participants will learn how to identify coral reef fishes of the tropical western Atlantic, conduct fish surveys using the Roving Diver Technique (RDT), use the data to complement existing management and research efforts and build a community of volunteers to collect long-term data on near shore marine habitats. Other topics covered may include current research in fish biology, Florida fisheries conservation initiatives, the utility of citizen science data as collected by REEF and discussion of various survey methods as they relate to management issues. All fieldwork will take place in Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) waters. The trip will be most useful to participants who work within a REEF survey region (coastal Americas, Caribbean and Hawaiian Islands, American Samoa-visit <http://www.reef.org/data/database.htm> to see a map of survey regions), however all are welcome to sign up. A limited number of scholarships are available for qualified applicants.

The reefs are located a short 20 minute boat ride from Horizon. Morning dives will be 2-tank; 1-tank optional night dives will be available. Reef depths are less than 33 feet and easily accessible to snorkelers. Water temperature will be approximately 82 – 84°F (28 – 29°C). Diving participants must bring a scuba certification card.



Date: 12 – 15 July 2008

Diving Cost: \$435 per scuba diving participant; \$315 per snorkeling participant. Cost includes lodging, but does not include food, dive equipment, or transportation to/from Key Largo.

A limited number of scholarships are available to cover diving and accommodations.

Trip Leaders: Dr. Jim Bohnsack, NOAA research fisheries biologist; Paul Humann, underwater photographer and author of *Reef ID* field guide series; Leda A. Cunningham, Executive Director, REEF; and a visiting scientist.

Itinerary:

July 12 (Day 1): Arrive/meet at Horizon Divers. Afternoon orientation and fish ID class with Paul Humann and Dr. Jim Bohnsack.

July 13 (Day 2): Morning survey dives on Key Largo reefs. Afternoon class with Dr. Bohnsack on Roving Diver Technique (RDT) as a survey methodology and the utility of REEF data.

July 14 (Day 3): Morning dives on Key Largo reefs/wrecks with Paul, Jim and the visiting scientist. Afternoon class with the visiting scientist on designing a volunteer monitoring program to help answer management questions.

July 15 (Day 4): Morning dives on Key Largo reefs/wrecks with Paul, Jim and Leda Cunningham. Afternoon class with Leda on incorporating the REEF Volunteer Fish Survey Project into existing management strategies to monitor ecosystem health, assess ecological change and engage local stakeholders. Evening social with local resource managers, including representatives of the National Marine Sanctuaries Program, the National Park Service, NOAA Fisheries, the National Undersea Research Program and other partners.

Number of Participants: 18 people (maximum)

Other Important Information:

Meeting Point:

Horizon Divers Dive Shop, 100 Ocean Drive, Key Largo, FL 33037
(305) 453-3535

Transportation:

Participants will be responsible for their transportation from Fort Lauderdale to Key Largo. Carpooling or taking the Keys Shuttle (<http://keysshuttle.50megs.com/>) is recommended.

Lodging:

Lodging will be at the Key Largo Ramada Inn (<http://www.ramadakeylargo.com/>). Cost to participants will be approximately \$120 per room per night based on double occupancy (\$60 per person per night). Total = approximately \$180 for 3 nights per person.

Meals:

Participants are responsible for meals; there are ample restaurant choices within walking distance or a short drive from both the hotel and dive shop.

**Diving/Snorkeling:**

Cost per two-tank dive = \$85; 3 days of two-tank dives = \$255

Snorkeling cost = \$45; 3 days of snorkeling = \$135

Equipment:

Tanks and weights will be provided by Horizon Divers. Participants are responsible for providing their own dive/snorkel gear or renting it from the dive shop.

Field work:

The reefs are located a short 20 minute boat ride from Horizon. Morning dives will be 2-tank; 1-tank optional night dives will be available. Reef depths are less than 33 feet and easily accessible to snorkelers. Water temperature will be approximately 82 – 84°F (28 – 29°C). Diving participants must bring a scuba certification card.

Contact:

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