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International Course On Sea Turtles Underway

August 14, 2013 | [2 Comments](#)

The Bermuda Turtle Project is hosting a group of seven students and professionals from around the world as they undertake an in-water course studying the biology and conservation of sea turtles.

"It is a two weeks intense, in-water course with field work and classroom work on board, along with daily readings and lectures, and most importantly, group discussions," explained Jennifer Gray, who serves as the course leader.

This year, there are seven enrolled in the programme, representing Mexico, Grenada, El Salvador, United Kingdom, USA and Colombia, as well as one Bermudian, under the leadership of visiting scientists and experts Drs. Annie and Peter Meylan, leading scientists for the Bermuda Turtle Project.

Students from around the world participate in collecting, tagging and releasing juvenile sea turtles:



They are ably assisted by Robert Hardy, a satellite telemetry expert, Dr. Emma Harrison, the Sea Turtle Conservancy's Scientific Director, and Dr. Jim Fourqurean, of the Seagrass Ecosystems Research Lab in Florida, as well as a team of local experts.

The course is now in its 18th year, and, to date, more than 155 individuals from 36 jurisdictions have taken part. During the two-week programme, students participate in collecting, tagging and genetic profiling of turtles from locations around the island, before they are released back into their environment.

They also participate in a necropsy session on stranded sea turtle specimens, and debate issues and methods of conservation and protection of turtles in their home countries.

Weighing larger turtles often requires many hands for the task:



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"We're excited to have representatives from around the world, each of whom represents important areas in the life cycle of the sea turtles which come to Bermuda," said BAMZ Principal Curator Dr. Ian Walker.

"The course is extremely valuable from the stand point that it allows us to teach representatives from other jurisdictions how we deal with our sea turtles, and to learn from them. It also allows us to create a network of people, which can only improve sea turtle conservation in the region."

The course began in earnest on Monday August 5, and will continue until August 16.

Photos by Lynda Johnson

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J Starling says:

August 14, 2013 at 8:11 am

This is a fantastic program, and has provided important data over the years.

Any Bermudians interested in marine biology should try to get involved in future years – it really is a great course!

reply



Jazzy says:

August 14, 2013 at 8:48 am

Shout out to Emily who is representing Bermuda well and all the other participants and instructors.

