



BLUE MARLIN
CONSERVATION



**Marine Conservation
Program**



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Who we are

We are a marine conservation organization based on the beautiful Gili Air island, training the new generation of citizen scientists through our programs.

Blue Marline Conservation is a proud member of the Conservation Diver Foundation, an international non-profit organization which through training courses is giving people, from many different backgrounds, the knowledge to initiate action and through their networks helping those who want to make a difference join up and realize their goals.

Leon Haines

Blue Marlin Conservation Founder



George Bevan

Conservation Diver Director



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Blue Marlin Conservation Director



Rowan Coombe

Blue Marlin Dive Manager

Mission & Vision

Mission

To conserve and restore the coral reef ecosystem through the provision of marine conservation education to the local community and tourists visiting Gili Air; that builds awareness of the issues threatening our marine environments. Our program will be research led, producing data that actively contributes to the development of successful conservation strategies and scientific methodologies that will further our understanding of the marine environment.

Vision

At Blue Marlin Conservation, we foster a proactive culture in which every member engages and contributes to marine conservation initiatives; we envisage a community that is highly conscious of the threats facing our reefs, is capable of developing solutions to mitigate these threats and ease environmental stress and human impact. As an official training center of Conservation Diver, we have a tailored curriculum of courses aimed to educate people from all walks of life to make to become valuable contributors in the fight to save our seas. Our work will produce research outputs through collaboration with local and international initiatives.

Our Partners



GILI ECO TRUST



Our Programs

No matter your professional background, everybody who is interested in marine conservation is welcome! All the courses include a classroom session (theory), followed by a practical application of skills. Our conservation program is divided in 3 main modalities:

1.-Specialty Courses

Our individual specialty certifications can be accomplished within 1 day and represents a good option for people travelling/visiting our island during a short period of time. Each specialty course includes one lecture (theory) and a practical dive. Please note that all candidates must have the AOW certification. The current offered specialty courses are:

- Coral Reef Ecology & Monitoring
- Shark Ecology and Population Studies
- Sea Turtle Ecology and Monitoring
- Seahorse: Population and Monitoring
- Sea slugs Ecology and Identification (nudibranchs)

2.- Weekly Programs

Our second modality is based on weekly programs. These are a good opportunity for people that will stay on Gili Air for at least 6 full days. All candidates must have the AOW certification. We offer one-week, or a two-week program:



Week one During the first week, we focus on the Ecological Monitoring Program (EMP). Every day starts with a lecture on the day's topic, followed by a dive to put the theory into practice. You will learn the ins and outs of the tropical coral reef ecosystems, how to monitor invertebrate and fish species and how-to assess the health of corals. Additionally, you will have your first approach to one specialty course.

Week two During the second week, we focus on Coral Restoration and Artificial Reefs. During this week, you take your new understanding of the reef and put it into action. After reviewing the theory and techniques involved in reef restoration, you will help in the design, built, and maintenance of coral nurseries and artificial reef structures. Working underwater to restore coral reefs is one of the most fun, challenging and rewarding things you will ever do! Additionally, you will start your learning process on identifying corals with our Coral Taxonomy I course, and you will have your second specialty course.

3.- Internship Program

The program offers a third modality in the form of an internship program that lasts from four to twelve weeks, providing a unique opportunity to participants from all walks of life to develop skills in scientific diving, which is essential for pursuing a career in marine conservation. With hands-on training, you will learn how to survey the reef, collect data, participate in coral restoration projects, research projects, and engage with the local community. It is important to note that all candidates must have the Divemaster certification.

The first month of the internship program will focus on training, covering the week 1 and 2 courses and as well the next two weeks:

Week three During the third week of our program, we continue with a mix of hands-on work, dives, and lectures. The first two days focus on completing the construction of artificial reef structures, followed by their deployment, allowing you to put your skills from the previous week into practice.

For the remaining days of the week, we delve into new topics, which include Coral Predators, Coral Taxonomy II, and your third specialty course.

Week four During the final week of our program, we delve even deeper into the fascinating world of marine ecology. During this time, you will be able to continue to practice and improve all the surveying techniques learned during the previous weeks. Moreover, you will have the opportunity to take three specialty courses, covering topics such as Marine Plastic Pollution, Coral Diseases, and our signature course, Sea Turtle Ecology and Population Studies.

During this week, we offer an opportunity for our students to experience the exciting world of freediving*. As part of our Sea Turtle course, we conduct a freediving survey that requires a full day of training. Our freediving course is conducted by experienced instructors, who will guide you through each step of the training process, ensuring your safety and comfort throughout. This practical training will not only allow you to explore the underwater world in a more intimate way (without the constraints of scuba diving equipment), but it will also provide you with valuable new skills that you can use in your future marine conservation endeavors. Hence, during the first four weeks, you will learn the basics of reef monitoring, data collection, coral taxonomy, and coral disease identification.

In the second and third month of the program, you will have the opportunity to achieve the advanced Ecological Monitoring Program certification, acquiring broad experience in coral taxonomy and disease identification. You will receive increased responsibilities and opportunities to contribute to the program success; this includes sharing your ideas and suggestions for creating new approaches to existing courses, such as innovative learning methods and diving sessions. Your input will be highly valued and appreciated, as we strive to provide the best possible learning experience for all participants.

*Kindly inquire about the availability of freediving as a modality for the course. If it is unavailable, the course will proceed utilizing the SCUBA method.

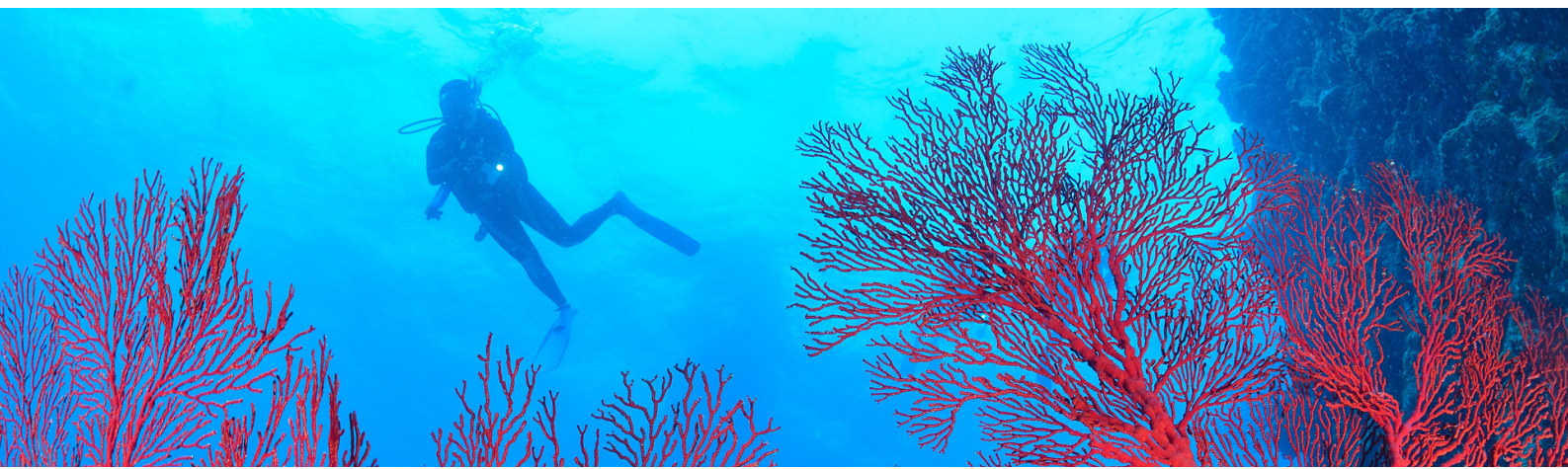


Moreover, you will have the option to participate in ongoing research projects, which will further enhance your experience in marine conservation and even provide an opportunity to develop your scientific writing skills. As a team, we aim to publish our findings in scientific journals, providing you with the chance to gain valuable experience in this area as well. Finally, in the last month of the internship program, you will work towards achieving the Research Assistant certification, which includes leadership, communication skills, and extensive experience in reef monitoring and data collection.

This internship program is also ideal for undergraduate and postgraduate students who are interested in gaining practical experience in a real-world setting, building a professional network, and developing the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the field of marine conservation.

Additionally, students currently working on research projects, such as a thesis, and interested in collecting data for their own projects are welcome. In such cases, the second and third months will primarily focus on their own data collection and observations while working towards achieving the Advanced EMP certification.

To enhance the overall experience and increase the quality of our program, students are required to fill out a questionnaire prior to their arrival. The questionnaire will help the instructors to better understand the student's expectations and needs, allowing us to tailor the program accordingly and cover as many aspects as possible.



Our Courses

Coral Reef Ecology & Monitoring

Marine Ecology is the science that studies all marine life-forms and their interactions with their surrounding environment. With this introductory course, students will gain insight on conservation of tropical marine populations, habitats and ecosystems; will analyze the importance of the Ecological Monitoring program, which was designed following international protocols to specifically survey our reefs.



The student will understand basic coral anatomy and life cycle concepts and will gain insight on coral reef ecological and economical importance, adequate environmental conditions for coral growth, and on ecological interactions within reefs. It is a prerequisite course for all students undergoing our weekly programs, as it contains key terms and relevant theory that will be used afterward in subsequent courses.

If you select the Coral Reef Ecology course as a Specialty Course, the certification will include the Coral Reef Ecology Lecture, and one of our EMP courses of your choice (theory and dive session): EMP fish or EMP invertebrates.

Ecological Monitoring Program

In order to establish successful conservation and management plans that help us to preserve and protect our coastal environments, practitioners, scientist and stakeholders must make decisions based on reliable and punctual data. However, due to the current information gaps in marine sciences, the decision making complicates, jeopardizing the successful rate of the conservation project. Due to the current information gaps in marine sciences, it is of critical importance for students to acquire the right skills in data collection, observation and species identification, and surveying techniques.



Our Ecological Monitoring Program (EMP) comprises of a series of three integral courses that represent the first approach to scientific diving: EMP Invertebrates Course, EMP Chordates Course, and EMP Substrate Course.

The EMP Invertebrate Course reviews the principal indicator invertebrate species of the reef and analyzes their functional roles. The EMP Chordates Course highlights the importance of surveying reef fishes indicators and other organisms such as sea turtles and moray eels. Lastly, the EMP Substrate analyzes the benthic composition of the reef. Collectively, the three courses provide key pieces of information about the health status of the reef, abundance and biodiversity. By the end of EMP, the student will be capable of collecting data by surveying the reef using indicator species and by determining the substrate composition. The collected data will be annexed to our local database and will contribute to local conservation projects

Coral Restoration and Artificial Reef courses



Coral reefs are amongst the most biodiverse ecosystems of the planet; although they cover less than 1% of the Earth's surface, they sustain life for thousands of species. They provide nurseries and habitat, sequester millions of tons of CO₂ and offer protection against storms and coastal erosion. Furthermore, reefs provide an important source of food and resources, supporting the livelihood of 500 million people over the world. Drastically, over the past 60 years, the world has lost over 50% of corals due to several causes including ocean warming, pollution, and habitat destruction. Therefore, we urgently require establishing the right environmental management and conservation strategies in order to protect and conserve our reefs for present and future generations.

The Coral Restoration Course is a great opportunity for students to understand the basics of this conservation approach; it analyzes the fundamentals of reef restoration and highlights the steps that follow a restoration process, including nursery design and construction, fragment collection, and coral handling and transplanting. Complementary, our Artificial Reef course offers an integral overview of the different structure design, materials and techniques used in artificial reef building. Each student will have the opportunity to design, build and deploy an artificial reef and will aid in the maintenance chores of our current coral nurseries and artificial reef sites.

Coral Taxonomy I & II

Scientists have estimated that there might be up to 6000 coral species in the world, however, there might be thousands of species yet to be described. Therefore, it is indispensable to name, describe and classify reef diversity through Taxonomy. The Coral Taxonomy courses then become essential elements of our program, as it is imperative to identify the benthic organisms during our surveys. To facilitate the student's learning process, we have divided our course into 2 courses; Coral Taxonomy I and Coral Taxonomy II (sometimes referred as the Advanced Taxonomy Course).



The Coral Taxonomy courses introduce the student to the most common hard coral genera located around the Gili Islands; coral anatomy, coral growth form and coral colony form are also discussed. Through underwater exercises like our Coral Safari and Coral Taxonomy Dive, we ensure students develop the skills needed in coral identification. By the end of the Advanced Taxonomy Course, the student will be capable of identifying the most common genera of 11 hard coral families.

Coral Diseases & Compromised Health

In several regions of the world, environmental stressors such as coastal development, poor water quality and thermal anomalies are a mounting issue. In the last two decades, cumulative impacts of coral diseases outbreaks, in synergy with the aforementioned environmental stressors, have drastically reduced the biodiversity and abundance of major reef-building corals, inducing regime shifts towards ecosystems dominated mainly by macroalgae. It is due to the ability of coral diseases to reshape coral assemblages that we need to broaden our understanding of processes and environmental conditions that promote coral disease outbreaks. By doing so, we will increase our abilities to address current outbreaks and to prevent future cases through the correct management strategies.



During the course, students will review the main triggering conditions for diseases, survey and identification techniques and will analyze the main diseases present in the Coral Triangle region. During our practical dive, students will assess the overall health of the reef based on the presence or absence of coral diseases.



Coral Predators

Corals of the world are facing severe stress caused from several threatening processes including temperature anomalies, ocean acidification, overfishing, coastal development and habitat destruction. Coral predators in healthy reefs will have an important functional role; far from producing any harm, these organisms will help to maintain the system in equilibrium. Nonetheless, during the past decades we have seen the increase of predator outbreak frequency and level of destruction; the Crown of Thorns outbreak remains amongst the most severe examples. In some places, predator outbreaks represent the second-biggest threat, right after coral bleaching. In order to understand, predict and manage coral predator outbreaks, we must first expand our knowledge of the life history of coral predators and of how natural processes might influence.

By the end of the Coral Predator Course, the student will have a broader understanding of prey-predator interactions, trophic cascades, and predator outbreaks by analyzing the most important coral predators of the reef, including *Drupella* snails and Crown of Thorns.



Seahorse Population & Monitoring

Seahorse ecology presents several information gaps; most of what is known has been obtained from ex-situ observations and research has focused mainly on mating and reproduction systems, while subjects such as conservation status and classification (just to mention a few) remain poorly understudied. The lack of information is probably one of the main limiting factors towards applying an effective conservation plan. To successfully provide seahorses with adequate conservation plans, we need to understand their life history traits and ecology.

After completing the Seahorse Population & monitoring course, the student will be able to identify seahorse species found on the Coral Triangle by considering main anatomical features and behavioral ecology traits. In addition, the student will recognize the threatening processes seahorses face and possible solutions.

At Blue Marlin Conservation, we are proud to be partnered with the iSeahorse project. Our students will have the opportunity to document and contribute to the world iSeahorse initiative by registering data while SCUBA in a world-class muck dive site.

Shark Ecology & Population Studies

Sharks have been swimming in our oceans for millions of years and their anatomy has barely changed, demonstrating their evolutionary success. However, in the last decades, shark populations have drastically decreased worldwide. Overfishing and habitat loss, including coral reefs and mangroves, are among the main causes of population declines. Sharks have an extremely important role in the marine ecosystem, as they are apex predators that constantly control the food chain all the way down to the bottom level of the trophic pyramid. Hence, it is imperative to start taking actions to minimize the causes causing the decline of global shark populations.



The Shark Ecology & Population Studies overviews the basic ecology of sharks, including behavior, anatomy and distribution. Furthermore, human activities that endanger shark populations are also discussed. At the end of the course, the student will successfully survey and identify common shark species present around the Gili Islands and determine and employ the adequate conservation approach.

At Blue Marlin Conservation we are proud to be partnered with The Shark Trust organization. Our partnership enables our students to have the opportunity to contribute to their database by registering key data points obtained during shark encounters. For more information about The Shark Trust Organization, please visit: <https://www.sharktrust.org/>

Sea Turtle Ecology & Monitoring

Turtles are among the most charismatic marine species in the world; for different cultures, turtles represent omens and symbols of good luck, longevity and mother nature. Within the coastal and marine ecosystem, sea turtles have important functional role including maintaining sea grass beds, controlling populations of organisms through predation (e.g., sponges and jellyfishes); they represent food for higher trophic levels and free up space on the reef substrate so corals can establish. Moreover, turtle tourism represents a multi-million dollar income, supporting the livelihood of entire coastal communities all over the globe.



The Sea turtle Ecology & Monitoring course reviews the evolutionary history, anatomy, behaviour, and current threats of marine turtles. To complement, study cases of monitoring and conservation efforts will be analyzed and discussed. Our center is privileged to be located in an area where it is extremely common to see them swimming around during our dives; in fact The Gili Islands have been lately called the “Turtle Capital of The World”. During the practical dive session*, the student will be able to observe their behavior and to register data and photographic material that will be used later to identify each individual. Registering photographs and key information of sea turtle encounters will influence the effectiveness of conservation programs, aiding the local and global marine turtle population.

At Blue Marlin Conservation we are proud to be partnered with Gili Shark Conservation. During the practical dive session, the student will obtain photographs and essential data that will be later exported into the Gili Shark Conservation turtle identification database. If the turtle has not been identified previously, the student will get to name the turtle!

*Two modalities available: free diving and SCUBA. Please contact us to inquire current modality.

Sea Slug Ecology and Identification



For many divers, sea slugs, in particular nudibranchs, are often on the top list of their favorite sea animals. They get to be cryptic but conspicuous at the same time, and overall, they are very charismatic little creatures that everybody is trying to find. Despite their small size, sea slugs are species that can provide information about the general state of the environment where they dwell. The toxins secreted by a few species of sea slugs are currently used in cancer and neurological diseases.

The Sea slug Ecology and Identification course overviews the ecology and anatomy of sea slugs and their classification; it analyzes their ecological importance, and discusses the latest biotechnology applications. The student will acquire and apply identification and surveying skills while SCUBA in a world-class muck dive site.

At Blue Marlin Conservation, we are proud to collaborate with the Nudibase Initiative. Similar to other course collaborations, the students will contribute to an existent open source database by uploading their sightings.

Accommodation

We recognize that finding suitable accommodation can be an overwhelming task, especially when you're travelling to a new location. To help alleviate this challenge, we offer our students a range of housing recommendations included in a small directory. We have negotiated special rates with these providers to make your stay more affordable and comfortable.

Please note that while we are happy to provide you with information about our partner accommodations, it is ultimately each student's responsibility to book directly with them.

How to apply

For those interested in our specialty courses, please note that these are offered continuously, allowing you to join us almost at any time throughout the year. However, please keep in mind that availability may vary depending on the course and the season. To avoid any disappointment, we recommend that you contact us in advance to ensure that the course you're interested in is available during your preferred time frame.

For those interested in our weekly programs (1 week or 2 week) or internship, please, contact us for starting dates and further information.

We look forward to hearing from you and helping you to take the first step towards a meaningful and rewarding experience in marine conservation.

Other Courses

- Plastic Pollution: Monitoring & Assessment
- EMP Marine Plants: Seagrass
- Giant Clams Nurseries and Monitoring
- Sea Turtle Hatchery & Head Start Management
- Mangrove Restoration

Please, contact us to inquire current course availability

Pricing List

1-day Specialty Course certification	1,800,000 IDR
Week 1 program certification	13,000,000 IDR
Week 1 & 2 program certification	19,000,000 IDR
4-week internship certification	28,000,000 IDR
Second extra internship month	14,000,000 IDR
Third extra internship month	12,000,000 IDR
Fourth extra internship month	9,000,000 IDR



EDUCATE TO PRESERVE



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Email us at marco@conservationdiver.com

For further information, please visit our website:
<https://conservationdiver.com/certification-centers/marine-conservation-gili-air/>

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