



NEGRIL MARINE PARK NEWS

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International Coastal Cleanup 2006

On Saturday, September 16, 2006, Negril celebrated International Coastal Cleanup Day 2006. This year marked the 21st annual Coastal Cleanup, the effort having originally started in 1986 at one beach in Texas. Today over 90 countries participate, hundreds of thousands of people coming out to help in the effort to alleviate the trash problem in our waterways and oceans. This was the 11th year that the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society's (NCRPS) has coordinated cleanup efforts. Over 100 persons were present for the event. Around 60 students from four area schools cleaned beaches and competed for the Green Team Trophy, given to the school that had the best showing. Negril All Age, Sheffield All Age, Mt. Airy All Age, and Whitehall Basic and Prep. schools cleaned Mary's Bay, 2 sites at Bloody Bay, and Little Bloody Bay, respectively. In the end Whitehall came away with the trophy, having collected over 50 bags of garbage at their site.

The day's activities commenced at 9:30 am with Ms. Jean Brown, NCRPS President, welcoming all participants and giving a brief orientation to the day's events. Besides the students from the area schools, volunteers included local fishermen, Peace Corps volunteers, and NCRPS staff. The sites cleaned were Orange Bay fishing beach, Green Island fishing beach, 2 rivers in Orange Bay, 2 sites at Bloody Bay, Little Bloody Bay, the Negril fishing beach, and Mary's Bay. After the orientation as to how to record data collected, etc. people went to their sites. Around 12:30 to 1pm most of the cleanup efforts were finished. People then had lunch, lunches being cooked on site at the fishing beaches and lunches being provided to the students back at the Marine Park Headquarters. The day's activities ended at approximately 3pm.

Did you Know...

- The porous make-up of coral makes coral a good substitute for bone in bone transplants, just one of the ways corals are helping modern medicine!
- Jamaica has the greatest number of hard coral species of anywhere in the Caribbean! But they're disappearing fast.

There was also an underwater cleanup effort at Dream Scape. Altogether, underwater and land sites, there were over 150 garbage bags worth of garbage collected. Sadly, most sites remained still quite dirty. When the problem gets to be so big even one full day of cleanup is not sufficient because there is simply too much. This is why there has to be a continual cleanup effort, everyday by people individually. Leaving your trash behind is not only bad for the aesthetics of the beach you are leaving, but also it is so very detrimental to the environment.

The Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society would like to give thanks to our sponsor the National Environmental Societies Trust, and to the numerous in-kind contributions from the community. Generous contributions that are greatly appreciated came from the following: Couples Swept Away, Hedonism II, Beaches Sandy Bay, Beaches Negril, Sandals Negril, Couples Negril, Rockhouse, Alfred's Ocean Palace, Pirate's Cave, P& S Wholesale, Xtabi, C& E Hotel and Restaurant Company, Sunset at the Palms, Valuemaster, SuperPlus, Kuyaba, Moon Dance, Club RIU, Rayon Hotel, JUTA Negril, The Jungle, Suave Fashions, Burger King, D& Y Supermarket, P&S Supermarket, Shopper's Choice, HiLo Basix, CB Chickens.



Miss Jean Brown addressing the participants, and volunteers picking up trash at Little Bloody Bay and Orange Bay fishing beach.

Sustainable Tourism Expose

On Monday, September 25 there was a tourism expose held at Sandals. Many people were asked to attend the event to present on their respective organizations. NCRPS was one of the organizations participating, delivering information to anyone who was interested. The event was attended by people from a wide array of Jamaican schools. There was entertainment such as singing, dancing, a DJ, and a marching band. Other booths there included Negril Area Environment Protection Trust, the Negril Chamber of Commerce, Beaches, Sandals, and a lively display from the Inter School Wildlife Lecture with a Jamaican boa, American crocodile (both of which are critically endangered), hermit crabs, and a turtle.



The NCRPS display table

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The American crocodile



The Jamaican or Yellow Boa

Reef Check, September 2006

This past weekend Reef Check was once again completed here in Negril. This is the 6th year that NCRPS has been conducting these surveys. Reef Check is an international effort to monitor the health of coral reefs worldwide. The data here has been collected by a combination of scientists, Marine Park staff and recreational divers. The data collected will be analyzed by the Caribbean Coastal Data Center and UCLA. 19 people came out for Reef Check this year. Reef check focuses on three things: fish, invertebrates, and substrate. These have proven to be good indicators of overall reef health. Specific fish and invertebrates have been selected as those to be monitored based upon their relative importance and that they are easily identifiable. There are ten different substrate categories such as hard coral, nutrient indicator algae, or recently killed coral.

Sadly one of the things being consistently seen is the decline of the reefs worldwide, and especially relevant to here, the decline of the Negril reefs. The sites where the surveying was conducted were Bloody Bay, Sandy Cay, Grand Lido, Ireland Pen, El Punto de Negrilo, and Little Bay. Sites still outstanding include Middle Shoal and Rockhouse. Some of the sites this year were specifically set out to target coral bleaching, a phenomenon being seen as a result of warmer sea temperatures being caused by global warming. For bleached coral, the rise in sea temperatures has caused the symbiotic algae living in the coral tissue (called zooxanthellae) to leave, thus the coral no longer has its primary means of nutrition and dies.

Reef Check was begun in 1997, the International Year of the Reef. Since then it has become an annual event in many of the 101 countries around the world that have coral reefs. In it's 9 years, over 1,500 reefs have been monitored, by a combination of scientists, recreational divers, and locals such as fishermen who have a vested interest in the health of the reef. Reef Check can be an important educational tool, increasing awareness of the declining state of the reefs and fostering a better connection of people to the reefs on which they subside.



The Reef Check team outside NCRPS headquarters



In action underwater



Two invertebrates surveyed

New Staff at NCRPS

Mr. Malden Miller joins the NCRPS staff in September 2006 and takes on the responsibilities of Project Manager. He replaces Mr. Carl Hanson who recently migrated to greener pastures. Mr. Miller is a graduate University of the West Indies (UWI) and comes to NCRPS with a wide array of experience, some of which has in the past included working with the UWI Fisheries Improvement Project, the Montego Bay Marine Park, and the United Nations Environment Programme Caribbean Environment Programme. He is no stranger to Negril having worked



here before as the Science Officer for NEPT and NCRPS and has coordinated Reef Check coral reef monitoring activities for the NCRPS as a volunteer. Most recently, Mr. Miller worked for the Caribbean Regional Environment Programme (CREP) as the Negril Project Manager prior to taking on this new assignment.

Brooke Anderson has also just joined NCRPS, she is a volunteer with the US Peace Corps and will be with NCRPS for the next two years. She recently graduated from the College of William and Mary in May with degrees in Biology and Environmental Science. Her chief responsibilities will be as the Environment Education Coordinator, as well as other duties.



Algae

Encroaching algae is having one of the most devastating impacts on coral reefs in the Negril area. Algae in this area is a result of nutrient overloading. Excess nutrients are bad for the environment, especially for coral reefs. Interestingly, one of the most biologically prosperous communities in the ocean is the most nutritionally void. Inside the coral tissue are symbiotic algae, called zooxanthellae. These algae are able to photosynthesize, creating carbohydrates from sunlight and the carbon dioxide in the water. These carbohydrates feed the coral, while the algae get a place to live. Thus the corals create the base of the food chain in coral reefs. Without the corals, much less life is able to exist.

The problem comes when there is too much algae living freely, outside of the corals. The algae can essentially suffocate the coral. If algae begins to grow on a coral head, it absorbs all the sunlight and that means none of the sunlight is hitting the symbiotic algae in the corals, and therefore the coral's main food source is gone. Thus the coral begins to die and the algae takes over. This can be seen all over the Negril Marine Park. Main nutrient sources are sewage treatment effluent, excess fertilizers, and improper solid waste management.

Farewell Mr. Hanson and Ms. Grant

Mr. Carl Hanson, former Project Manager who had joined the NCRPS in 1999 had resigned from the organization in June. Mr. Hanson had left his mark on the organization and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Deanne Grant, former Peace Corps Volunteer, also left NCRPS in May. She was a volunteer for nearly two years focusing primarily on environmental education through the Junior Environmental Ranger Programme. She left to continue her education, part of which involved moving to Africa.

The NCRPS family wish to thank Mr. Hanson and Miss Grant for the great work that they had done for the organization and wish them all the best in the future. Walk Good...

Marine Park Regulations

Under the NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ACT, the Marine Park Regulation 4.1.b., specifically states, a person shall not cut, carve, injure, mutilate, move, displace or break off any bottom formation or growth. If found liable, a person may be convicted before a Resident Magistrate and made to pay a fine up to \$20,000 or serve as many as two years imprisonment, with or without hard labor.

All users of the Negril Marine Park should endeavor to become more aware of the Park, so as to become conscious of the potential threats to the reef and other natural marine resources in general. If you have any questions regarding the NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AUTHORITY ACT, please call the National Environment & Planning Agency (754-7543), stop by the Negril Marine Park Headquarters or call NCRPS at 957-3735.



For our children's children.....

The Mission of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society is to protect and preserve coral reef ecosystems, locally, regionally, and globally, through education, research, training, monitoring, lobbying, and the creation of marine protected areas.

Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society

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Join NCRPS and Support the Negril Marine Park!

You can support the Negril Marine Park and help protect the fragile coral reef ecosystem by becoming a member of the Negril Coral Reef Preservation Society.

Members receive newsletters.

I wish to become a member of NCRPS (Membership fees are for a one year period)

- Business Membership, \$1000 JA (Jamaican residents)/\$50 US (Overseas residents)
- Family Membership, \$700 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$35 US (Overseas residents)
- Full Individual Membership \$500 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$15 US (Overseas residents)
- Student Membership, \$50 JA (Jamaican residents) /\$5 US (Overseas residents)



I wish to make a tax deductible donation to NCRPS to benefit the Negril Marine Park

(NCRPS is registered as a non-profit, charitable organization in Jamaica, West Indies)

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of \$ _____

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ E MAIL _____

Please make cheques payable to: NCRPS, Negril P.O. Box #2563, Westmoreland, Jamaica, West Indies

US TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS THROUGH FRIENDS OF JAMAICA USA

NCRPS works in partnership with Friends of Jamaica (FOJ) USA, a US based organization dedicated to providing economic assistance to organizations in Jamaica. FOJ is recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit charitable organization, 501 (c) (3). All contributions made to NCRPS through FOJ are US tax deductible. FOJ will retain 5% of all contributions for administrative purposes. Those wishing to make donations to NCRPS through FOJ will become members of FOJ and receive membership benefits. www.friendsofjamaicausa.org

Please make cheques payable to Friends of Jamaica USA, 1312 W. Empire Street, Freeport, Ill. 61032