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Front Page

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Island News

Volunteers check coral reef health

Eve's droppings

Next month a local dive company, Ocean Dive, will be helping volunteers to check the health of the Island's reefs, as part of the global initiative 'Reef Check'. Volunteers will work with marine biologists from James Cook University to seek out signs of human impacts on corals and other reef animals.



Columns

Volunteers will learn to identify recently killed corals, healthy corals, and signs of threats to coral health, such as nutrient indicating algae.

Letters

They will also be looking out for invertebrates that can indicate a healthy reef, like coral banded shrimp, sea cucumbers and spiny lobsters.

Editorial

Reef Check co-ordinator for Queensland, Jos Hill, says "Its great to see dive compan responsibility for the Great Barrier Reef by giving our team a ride out to the reef to sites. The data gathered by volunteers will be used by reef managers, and will help picture of coral reef health around the world."

Community close-up

Round the rock

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About Reef Check

The Reef Check program was founded in 1997 to try and answer the question "What health of the world's reefs?"

To do this on a global scale, a simple, rapid monitoring program was designed that r volunteers, trained and led by marine scientists.

Today, Reef Check surveys have been carried out at over 1000 reefs in 50 countries territories. Reef Check have been able to track global trends such as the global exte

overfishing on reefs and the 1998 bleaching and mortality event that devastated reefs throughout the tropical oceans including the corals off Magnetic Island.

Reef Check objectives are to:

1. Educate the public about the coral reef crisis;
2. Create a global network of volunteer teams trained in Reef Check's scientific methods to regularly monitor and report on reef health;
3. Facilitate collaboration that produces ecologically sound and economically sustainable solutions;
4. Stimulate local community action to protect remaining pristine reefs and rehabilitate damaged reefs worldwide

Interested people can form their own Reef Check group however there is one basic requirement. Each team must have a designated, qualified marine scientist on board to train the team in the survey methods, to help with identifications, and to help with the data analysis.

Teams without a qualified marine scientist are welcome to carry out surveys, however Reef Check will not accept data from unregistered teams. Reef Check can also help teams find a scientist to come on board.

The above information was taken from Reef Check's official site - for more information visit <http://www.reefcheck.org>

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