

Shark Conservation Society

Mid Year Newsletter 2009

Welcome to the first SCS newsletter. It is intended that the newsletter will now be sent electronically bi-annually, once during the middle of the year and again at the end of the year.

Should anyone have any comments or material that they feel should be included in the newsletter then please feel free to contact Mark Boothman at markpboothman@gmail.com.



SOCIETY NEWS

(For all society news please check the news section of the website regularly at www.sharkconsoc.com/shark.news)

INAUGURAL BOARD MEETING

The society held its first board meeting in July 2008 in Cornwall and has since held two further meetings at both the Birmingham and London Dive Shows.

CURRENT NUMBERS OF SUPPORTERS

We are delighted to report that although only in our first year we currently have nearly 100 Registered Supporters (RS's) and Friends. The board would like to sincerely thank all those who have joined and hope that as the 1st year renewal dates come around we can rely on you for your continued support.

CAMPAIGNS

Aside from mounting research expeditions SCS is also involved in campaigns which have a direct and positive impact on furthering shark conservation and sustainable fisheries.

The society has been working hard during the last 12 months to modify the current regulations on the satellite tagging of sharks to ensure that all those attempting to fix satellite tags to sharks can prove experience and show they are qualified and capable of doing so in order to minimise both the risk of injury and incorrect placement of the tag. SCS believes that animal welfare should be the main consideration and that demonstrable animal handling skills are of paramount importance.

We are happy to report that the Home Office has been extremely receptive to the suggestions made by SCS and discussions are ongoing. We expect the Home Office to put into place new tagging guidelines in the future. Please visit the News section of the website for updates on developments.



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SHARK ALLIANCE

In February 2009 SCS joined the Shark Alliance. The society joins a number of highly reputable organisations all working in conjunction with one another to further shark conservation and sustainable fisheries.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS (HLMs)

Our list of HLMs continues to grow and among those who have recently accepted honorary life membership are Ron and Valerie Taylor (Australia), Mike Rutzen (South Africa) and leading figures from the government of Qatar who supported our Qatar expedition.

We would like to sincerely thank all those who have joined us in their support of the society's work.

All new HLMs are announced via the News section of the website at www.sharkconsoc.com/shark.news

WEBSITE

As many of our supporters will be aware the website has been recently updated. We have been very pleased with the extremely positive feedback that we have received from our supporters who appreciate the uncomplicated design and businesslike approach.

ONLINE SHOP

The online shop is now up and running. Please visit www.sharkconsoc.com/shark.shop to purchase from our range of products with all the proceeds from sales used to further the Society's expanding work around the world.

Please remember that if any supporter has anything that they would like to be included in the news section of the website or in the next newsletter e-mail Mark Boothman at markboothman@gmail.com We will endeavour to include all items that are relevant to the society but please remember space is limited.

CHAT FORUMS

At its first meeting the Board decided that SCS must remain credible on all shark discussion topics and because of this voted against an SCS online chat forum. Subsequently several supporters have contacted the office asking whether they could declare SCS links when commenting on chat forums. The society can neither control nor direct the opinions of its supporters, and would not seek to do so, and for this reason requests that all supporters and directors refrain from associating their personal views with the society in any way. Therefore can supporters, directors, advisors and HLMs please avoid identifying themselves with SCS or adding links to the website when posting on internet forums.



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FUTURE DATES

23rd – 28th September – Qatar

Following the success of the 2009 Qatar Expedition (see below) Richard will be returning to Qatar with Bob Pennington and Mark Boothman in an attempt to gain further footage and stills of Sandbar sharks to be included in the film of the Kuwait and Qatar expeditions, 'The World's Richest Sharks'. Keep an eye on the website for all the developments.



SCS volunteers netting a channel in the mangroves - Qatar 2009

6th – 16th October – Adriatic Expedition

The dates for this expedition are as above and we are in the final stages of preparation. As well as conducting a general shark survey the expedition has two further aims: our first will be to attempt to investigate a possible Blue shark pupping area, and our second to try to film and photograph a Great White shark in the Adriatic.

At the time of going to press there is one place remaining on this expedition. Anyone who is interested in participating should contact the office immediately on +44 (0) 1288 352608.

24th – 25th October – Birmingham Dive Show

- The Board will have its 2nd meeting of 2009
- SCS will again have a stand at the Dive Show where it will be recruiting RS's and Friends, as well as selling merchandise. Please feel free to come and visit us at the stand over the weekend and its location will be published in the News section of the website when further details are known.
- Richard will again be presenting at this year's show. His talk entitled 'The World's Richest Sharks' will take place on both days of the show and will document the 2008 Kuwait and 2009 Qatar Expeditions, as well as looking ahead to the 2010 UAE Expedition. Again more details to follow.
- All our supporters, families and friends are invited to join us for an informal gathering on the evening of Saturday 24th. We hope that as many of you as possible will be able to come and once again please keep an eye on the News section of the website closer to the time for exact details of timings and location.



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Christmas 2009

Although it may still seem a long way off please don't forget the SCS shop for your Christmas presents. The society is also pleased to announce that this year we will have our own Christmas cards and 2010 calendars. Further details will be published on the website but don't forget to order early to avoid disappointment. Both the cards and calendars are unique and are based on cartoons done by Chris Wylie Thanks Chris.

April 2010

The final Arabian Gulf Expedition will take place in the United Arab Emirates. As in Kuwait and Qatar this will consist of general 'at sea' research, as well market research in the fish markets. Although planning is still in its early stages all RS's who would like to participate in this expedition can now register their interest with the office.

EXPEDITION NEWS

2009 Qatar Expedition

The Qatar Expedition was successful on many levels. Over 2000 sharks and rays were processed in the markets, 21 locations surveyed and 17 shark and ray species confirmed.

Further to this a probable Milk shark pupping ground was identified and the society would like to thank Mohammed Jaidah for kindly giving us permission to use his rare footage of the Green Sawfish. This footage is believed to be the only footage in the world and will be shown for the first time in public at the Birmingham Dive Show during Richard's presentation of 'The World's Richest Sharks'.

SCS has recommended to the Qatari Authorities three specific fisheries management/conservation measures – year round mandatory release/protection for the Green Sawfish, a three month closed season for the Milk shark pupping ground and a three month closed season for all elasmobranchs. Discussions are ongoing however thus far the Qataris have been extremely receptive to our ideas and we look forward to working closely with them in pursuit of these goals. Updates will be published in the News section.



Arabian nights - the Qatar 2009 expedition team relax in the Environment Centre's majlis at the Khor al Udaid channel. The beautiful legs seen bottom right belong to volunteer Bennett and extra copies of legs only *might* be available from the webshop if the board go insane!



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2009 Porbeagle Expedition

The 2009 Porbeagle Expedition was plagued by bad weather which meant that only 2 out of 7 days were achieved. Unfortunately no Porbeagles were seen during these two days however three Nursehounds were caught and released.

Now that the scientific aims of the expedition have been achieved the society is currently reviewing whether to move the 2010 expedition earlier into June as changing weather patterns over the last few years seem to suggest that this is the best time for settled periods of high pressure. Keep an eye on the News section for updates.



2009 Porbeagle expedition participants

2008 Kuwait Expedition

The society is happy to report that since the SCS expedition in April 2008 the Kuwaiti government has introduced new legislation designed to restrict commercial fisheries for sharks in Kuwaiti waters. Although the new legislation does not amount to a blanket ban on shark fisheries the Society applauds the steps take by the Kuwaiti authorities. SCS does not claim any credit for the new legislation but hopes that the 2008 expedition did help to influence the decision-makers in their taking of this important step.

ONLINE SHOP

As previously noted the online shop is now up and running. Currently in stock are the following items (Please note all prices include P&P):

SCS Keyring	£3.00
SCS Coffee Mug	£6.99
SCS T-Shirt	£11.99
Shark Cornwall T-Shirt	£11.99
Signed copies of Sharks in British Seas (Book) by Richard Peirce	£9.99
Signed copies of Sharks in British Seas (DVD) written and presented by Richard Peirce	£19.99

NEW

Signed copies of Sharks in Cornwall and Devon by Richard Peirce	£5.99
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COMING SOON

SCS 100% Recycled SCS Biro	£1.00
SCS Parker Jotter	£5.99
The World's Richest Sharks (DVD) – The film of the Kuwait and Qatar Expeditions	£9.99
Pirates of Devon and Cornwall (Book) by Richard Peirce	£TBA



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SCS 2010 Calendar
SCS Christmas Cards

£TBA
£TBA

Please don't forget that all proceeds from the shop go directly into furthering SCS work. Your help is greatly appreciated.

RENEWAL DATES

As renewal dates approach for the first time we really hope that you all decide to continue supporting us for the next 12 months. Supporter rates will remain at £20/year whilst rates for Friends of the Society will remain at £10/year. The office will contact you electronically when renewal is due.

We have been amazed at the growth of the society during the first 12 months and we hope that we can count on you for your continued support for the next 12 months, without which our work, achievements and successes can not carry on.

We look forward to seeing many of you in the coming months and don't forget to check the website regularly for all our news and updates.

As I said at the beginning of this newsletter I would welcome any ideas/contributions for future newsletters. Please DO get in touch.

Mark Boothman
markpboothman@gmail.com

P.S. We are close to 100 Registered Supporters. RS no. 100 will receive a free copy of "Sharks in British Seas" (DVD) signed and personalised by Richard and Simon. Please put the word out!

The society is extremely grateful to Russell Atkinson for donating his time and expertise in designing not only this newsletter but also our posters and pamphlets. We are delighted to announce that Russell has accepted our offer of becoming the 'Design and Print Consultant' for SCS. Please help us to repay the favours he does for us by visiting his website at www.russatkinson.com should you require any design work.



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