



GRAND PARK
— KODHIPPARU —
MALDIVES



CONNECT WITH *Nature*

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A NOTE FROM GRACE



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August reminded me how quickly a reef can change. Early in the month, warmer surface water formed visible layers above the coral. Then a warm-water cloud settled over parts of the house reef, suspended particles filled the water column, and visibility dropped. Familiar sections suddenly looked completely different.

But the reef did not become quieter. Green and hawksbill turtles appeared more often, blacktip reef shark sightings increased, and schools of reef fish became denser and more active. Some of August's best encounters happened in less-clear water — a reminder that visibility is not the same thing as life.

Beyond the reef, the month brought the 6th Marine Research Symposium, Whale Shark Day, and the first dive-training sessions for three members of our Blue Team. Each moment pointed back to the same idea: conservation grows through observation, learning and participation.

FIND ME AT THE REEF



Guided Reef Snorkel -

a morning introduction to the house reef with species identification and ecological context. Suitable for all levels, including non-swimmers with a float board.



Marine Biology Dive -

for certified divers, an immersive exploration of the reef drop-off with live commentary, species surveys, and biodiversity documentation.



Reef Talk -

an afternoon session at the Beach Club, where Grace shares the month's most significant sightings, reef health updates, and what to look for next.

AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS

The shift began with temperature. On some days, different layers of water were visible above the reef, with a warmer surface layer sitting over cooler water below. In the weeks that followed, a warm-water cloud settled over parts of the house reef, suspended particles filled the water column, and visibility dropped considerably. Familiar sections suddenly looked very different.



It would be easy to read that change as a sign of poorer conditions. But tropical reefs are dynamic. Temperature, currents, plankton and suspended organic matter are always moving. A reef can look different from one week to the next and still be highly active beneath the surface.

And August was active. Green and hawksbill turtles were encountered more often, blacktip reef shark sightings increased, and larger concentrations of reef fish moved across the house reef. Schools appeared denser and more active, while animals that are not always easy to encounter became more visible during snorkelling experiences.

For guests, that meant turtles swimming calmly alongside snorkellers, sharks cruising through the lagoon, and clouds of reef fish moving together over the coral. Sometimes a changing environment does not mean less life. It simply means the reef is rearranging itself.



A MONTH OF LEARNING AND NETWORKING



On 4 and 5 August, we joined the 6th Marine Research Symposium, where researchers, conservationists and marine professionals shared more than 32 presentations. Topics ranged from turtle health and shark and ray conservation to mangroves, fisheries, coastal protection and ecosystem monitoring.

Across two days, the strongest message was connection. Species, habitats, monitoring and human activity rarely sit apart; understanding one often means looking at the wider system around it.

The conversations between sessions were just as valuable. New connections opened ideas for reef surveys, monitoring, conservation awareness and possible future research at Kodhipparu. Marine conservation is stronger when knowledge is shared.



NOTABLE SIGHTINGS



CROWNED JELLYFISH

Cephea cephea

One of August's most striking visitors was a crowned jellyfish, approximately 50 centimetres across and drifting at around six metres depth. Its broad bell and delicate structures moved slowly with the current, creating an almost weightless silhouette in the blue.

Jellyfish are closely linked to the conditions around them. Currents, temperature and plankton availability influence when they appear, so this encounter echoed the changes already visible in the water column.

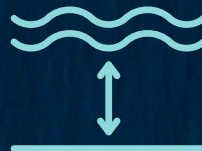
For a few minutes, it became a memorable reminder that Kodhipparu's reef is part of a much larger, constantly moving ocean.

DID YOU KNOW



ABOUT 50 CM

The individual observed in August measured approximately half a metre across.



AROUND 6 M

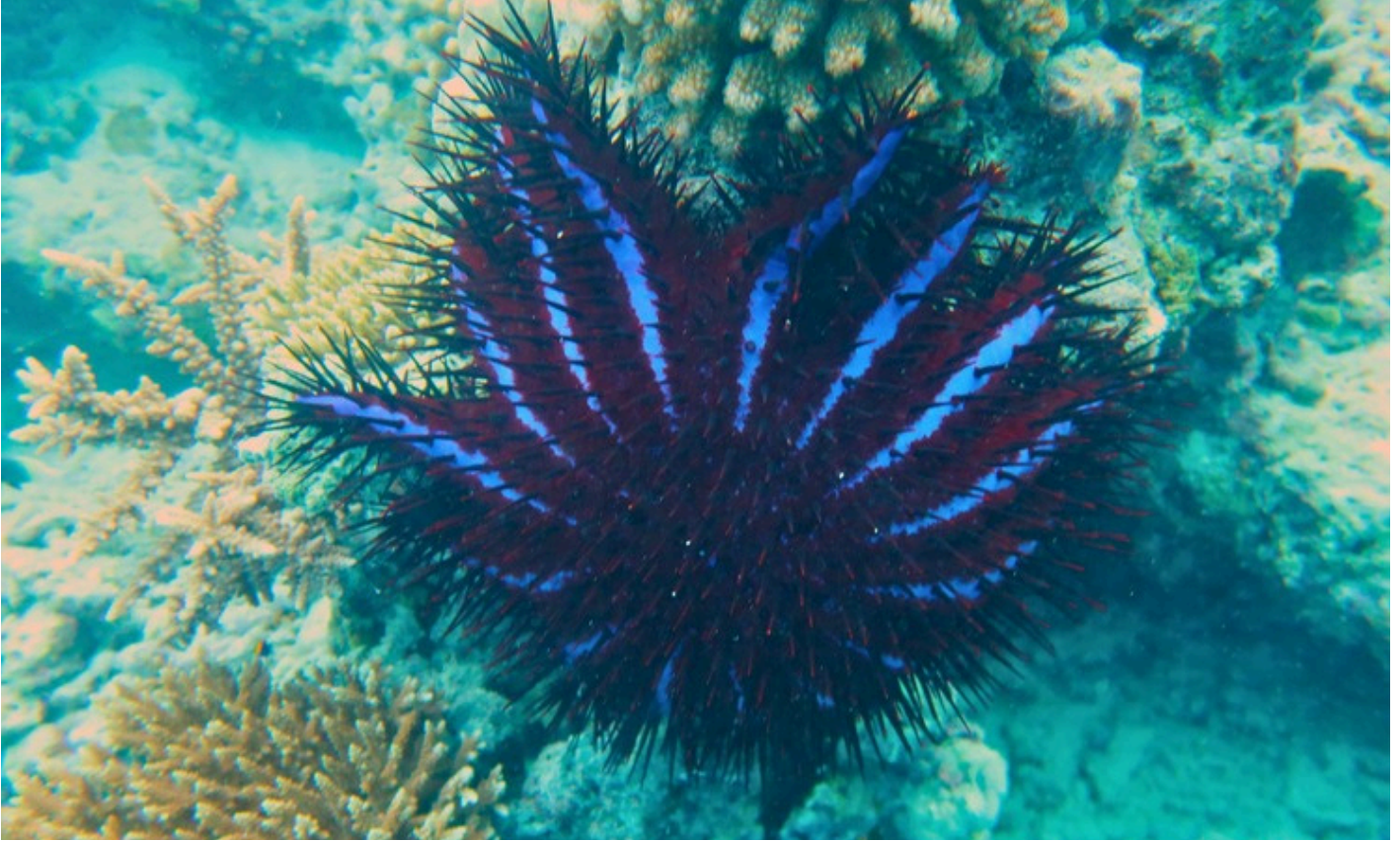
It was seen drifting at roughly six metres depth.



A MOVING OCEAN

Its appearance is influenced by currents, temperature and plankton availability.

MY FAVOURITE ENCOUNTER



THE BLUE CROWN-OF-THORNS

(Euphorbia milii)

Where: On the house reef

This month's favourite was hard to miss: a crown-of-thorns starfish, seen twice in the same area of the house reef. At approximately 40 centimetres across, its unusually vivid blue colour stood out immediately against the coral.

Crown-of-thorns starfish feed mainly on living coral tissue. They are a natural part of reef ecosystems, although unusually high numbers can place pressure on coral communities. A single individual, however, is not itself a cause for concern.

What stayed with me was the animal itself — its size, colour and repeat appearance. Not every memorable sighting has to be rare; sometimes the reef simply gives you a reason to stop and look twice.

*“Sometimes the most fascinating marine life is simply the animal that makes you stop
and look twice”*

RAISING AWARENESS

WHALE SHARK DAY

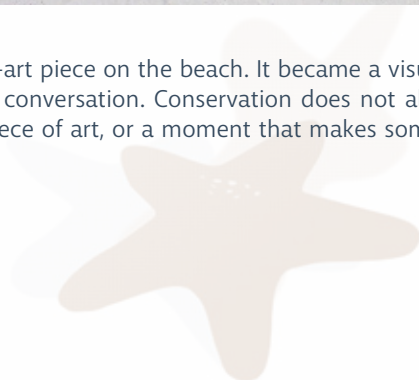


The end of August gave us another chance to bring marine conservation closer to our guests through Whale Shark Day. A dedicated presentation explored the biology and behaviour of whale sharks, their importance within marine ecosystems, and some of the challenges they face across their range.

The aim was not simply to share facts. It was to encourage a different way of looking at encounters with marine wildlife — with curiosity, respect and a better understanding of the animals we are fortunate enough to share the ocean with.



That idea continued outside the presentation through a whale shark sand-art piece on the beach. It became a visual reminder of the species, but also an invitation: to stop, look, ask a question and begin a conversation. Conservation does not always begin with a large project. Sometimes it begins with a photograph, a presentation, a piece of art, or a moment that makes someone care enough to keep thinking about the ocean after the holiday is over.



MOMENT OF THE MONTH



The Blue Team Takes the Plunge

August also marked the start of dive training for the Blue Team. Three team members began their course, taking their first steps towards becoming active collaborators in the marine conservation work around the resort.

Learning to dive opens a new way to observe and monitor the marine environment. With more team members confident underwater, more people can take part directly in conservation and share responsibility for the reef.

WHAT THIS MONTH REMINDED US

OBSERVATION

The reef can look very different as temperature, currents and suspended matter shift.

CONNECTION

Guest experiences, presentations and shared learning all help turn marine life into something people care about.

COLLABORATION

Conservation becomes stronger when more people gain the skills and confidence to take part.



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Until next month...
the reef keeps its own rhythm —
happening whether we're watching or not.

[Discover our house reef >](#)