



Reef Watchers Programme

What is it?

The Reef Watchers programme is designed to promote “citizen scientists” who will observe and monitor the status of coral reefs within Barbados’ first marine protected area, Folkestone Marine Reserve. The results of the reef surveys will be used for the Folkestone Marine Reserve’s coral reef monitoring database.



What is the goal of programme?

- to educate the local public about local coral reef status;
- to create a local network of volunteers which regularly monitor and report on reef health within and around the Folkestone Marine Reserve;
- to stimulate local community action to protect the remaining reefs and rehabilitate damaged ones

Why is the programme important?

By participating in Reef Watchers’ training and reef surveys, the diving community will develop stewardship responsibilities towards the reefs that they are monitoring. The programme allows divers the opportunity to move beyond awareness and play an active role in reef conservation. This allows them to contribute to on-going efforts to safeguard our reefs our national treasures.



What will we be monitoring?

Seven reefs within the Folkestone Marine Reserve will be monitored: North Bellairs Fringing Reef, South Bellairs Fringing Reef, Fisherman's Bank Reef, Dottins Bank Reef, Sandy Lane Bank Reef, Sandy Lane Patch Reef and Sandy Lane Fringing Reef. Four types of data will be collected from each reef:

- (1) environmental conditions and human impacts,
- (2) substrate types,
- (3) invertebrate counts and
- (4) fish counts.



When will we be monitoring the reefs?

In the dry season (January to May), dives will be held in January and April. During the wet season (June to December) dives will be held in August and October. The dives will be scheduled on the Saturdays during the dive months. Please note that the dive dates are subject to change particularly during the hurricane season.

How can I join?

Once you are a certified scuba diver, you can join the Reef Watchers programme. You are also required to participate in the Reef Watchers' training workshop. Once you join the programme, you will be provided with the Reef Watchers' training manual, the Reef Watchers' under water guides and the Reef Watchers' instructional video. Please contact CERMES or HighTide Watersports for more details.

Contact information

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