

HKDCS PAST ACTIVITIES – HONG KONG REEF CHECK

Reef Check 2006

10 September, HKDCS again took part in Reef Check – an annual marine conservation event jointly organized by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Reef Check Foundation.

This year we were allocated Tai She Wan in Sai Kung, the same as last two years' and hence we had the advantage of being already familiar with the site. This year our survey is so popular among our members that our survey team had almost 30 members! The weather before the survey had been unstable with the red rainstorm warning signal hoisted. But the weather the next day turned out to be wonderful with north monsoon.



Under supervision of Choyce - HKDCS vice chairlady, diving members had their duties prepared and allocated before entering the water while those who did not scuba dive helped out with other preparation work on board. After Choyce had laid down the 100-m transect line, diving members responsible for surveying fish, invertebrate and coral respectively started their work.

With our previous experiences in underwater survey, the activity was carried out smoothly. After the survey, we went to Sharp Island and spent a great afternoon there having water sports and enjoying the marvelous underwater scenery.

Reef Check 2005



In 2005, HKDCS again took part in Reef Check – an annual marine conservation event jointly organised by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Reef Check Foundation. A news conference was held on 3 December 2005 to announce the findings.

A total of 33 teams took part in Reef Check 2005 which is more than the previous year. Our 18-membered team was made up of HKDCS members, dolphin ambassadors, committee members and other volunteers. We were allocated Tai She Wan in Sai Kung, the same as last year's and hence we had the advantage of being already familiar with the site.

One Sunday in September 2005, we set out to survey the corals in Tai She Wan. Those with Scuba licenses were responsible for underwater surveys whilst others helped out with preparation on board.

Upon arrival, the two members familiar with the site entered the water first to find a suitable place for the 100-meter transect line. Then the other divers entered the water to carry out surveys on fish, invertebrates as well as coral species. Once we had finished the survey, we went to Ung Kong Wan and



had a great afternoon of water sports.

The Reef Check results show that Tai She Wan is one of Hong Kong's coral hotspots with coral coverage as high as 55%. There was no significant coral bleaching and human damage, indicating that the coral colonies in Tai She Wan are in generally healthy condition. Besides corals, some coral fish species – including wrasse and butterfly fish – were also recorded.

Reef Check 2004

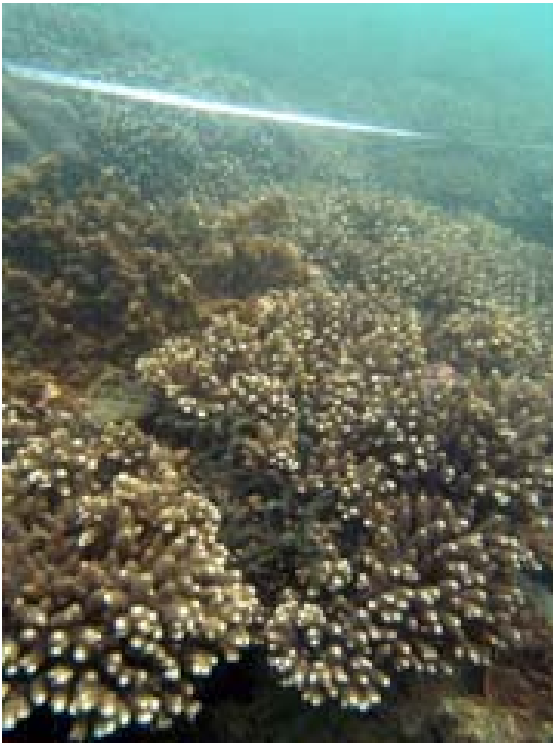
This year is the first time that HKDCS participated in the Reef Check, which was carried out on 12 Sept (Sunday). Other than cetaceans, HKDCS is also concerned about HK's marine environment. That's why we took part in this annual event to conserve our marine ecosystem.

In collaboration with the Reef Check Foundation, AFCD coordinates the Reef Check activity. This event can help raise public awareness on the value of coral reefs, as well as the threats facing them and the related conservation issues. Data collected by the research teams will be used by AFCD and other green groups for implementing effective measure in corals conservation.



This year the survey site assigned to the HKDCS is Tai She Wan of Sai Kung. Scuba divers first laid a 100-m transect line on coral reef in a designated region. They then followed the transect line to record fishes, invertebrates and corals on their way. Substratum of the sea floor along the way and any abnormal condition (e.g. coral bleaching and reef destruction by anchor) were documented too.

As a number of our committee members are not qualified Scuba divers, HKDCS started to



recruit eligible open-water divers for help two months ago. We were so pleased that quite a lot of our members, dolphin ambassadors and other friends were enthusiastic to give a helping hand. And some non-divers came as to give us support and enjoy a leisurely trip! Finally there were around 30 participants joining and our trip was filled with happiness.

Besides Tai She Wan, we have also conducted Reef Check survey at another site in the afternoon: Bluff Island. As we observed, coral cover in Bluff Island seems higher than that of Tai She Wan; and the coral communities at Bluff Island are more diverse apparently. And, as Bluff Island is more celebrated tourist spot, it may risk

damage from more human activities.

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