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Kia Ora ReSharkers,

Nat is busy finishing up the next issue of The ReSharker, so I thought I'd squeak in another ReShark Ramblings before that bigger production. Plenty of news to update on:

First Shedd eggs arrive!

Though Chicago's Shedd Aquarium is a founding member of StAR and ReShark and has played a very important role in the development of our programs, until recently there has been one contribution we haven't seen from them - eggs! I'm delighted to announce that the first four eggs from Shedd, along with two eggs from Aquarium of the Pacific, [arrived in mid-July to the Kri nursery](#), and are currently incubating nicely.



We're hopeful to announce their first pups hatching in the nursery by early September, where they'll join a diverse group of pups we now have from Singapore Oceanarium, Irukandji Shark and Ray Encounters, SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium, Georgia Aquarium, Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium, and Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay.

Congratulations to Lise Watson and the team at Shedd for this important milestone, which was also very nicely written up in the following article:

Science

Sharks on a Plane

To overcome functional extinction in Indonesian waters, global aquariums are airlifting zebra sharks back to the Pacific.



By Johnny Sturgeon
August 12, 2026



Marguerite the zebra shark is released into Indonesian waters. Credit: Mark Erdmann/ReShark

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StAR Thailand team repairs Maiton sea pen

Likely enhanced by El Niño conditions, the current SE Monsoon season hitting both Thailand and Indonesia has proven to be both very dry and windy, with rough seas and large waves frequently hitting our sea pens in both countries. The StAR Thailand team had to act quickly last month when the sea pen at Maiton was damaged by large waves. Fortunately they were able to get the pen repaired in a temporary fashion that should hopefully suffice to keep their current cohort of leopard shark pups safe and sound until their likely release at the end of this year/beginning of next.

May and her team are currently exploring options for a more permanent structure that includes both sea pen and nursery where eggs can be incubated - hopefully we'll have more to report on this soon. Once a nursery is in place, then May can spend more focus on the government discussions needed to be able to secure a permit to import additional eggs from international breeders, which should ramp up the release schedule considerably in Thailand!

Misool Nursery construction completed!

I'm delighted to announce that after a lot of hard work and several changes of construction plans, the new solar-powered Misool nursery on Kalig Island, Raja Ampat, is now completed! Congratulations to Virly, Annisa, Ayub and the Misool Foundation team for seeing this through, and a huge thanks to the Rumah Foundation for funding this construction, and also to the Djinda Foundation for their recent commitment that will allow us to get this new nursery running at full speed in the near future!

As you can see from the photos below, the new nursery is set on stilts over the water, similar to the Kri nursery, and is adjacent to the protected lagoon on the NW tip of Kalig where the sea pen has been located for the past 2 years. The new nursery is a very significant expansion in floor space over the previous hatchery room at Misool Resort, and will allow Annisa's nursery team to host nursery tours similar to what is now done at the Kri nursery. Nesha and I will be visiting the nursery next week along with a team from International Concept Management to install the Life Support System and get the nursery ready to receive its first scheduled shipment of eggs from Singapore Oceanarium in late August!



The brand new Misool nursery over the NW lagoon of Kalig Island.

US National Public Radio covers the StAR Project!

The US National Public Radio (NPR) program "Short Wave" recently featured a nice 13-minute piece on the StAR Project by journalist Katerina Barton, who visited the RARCC nursery last year. The piece features our senior aquarist Mardia Sultan at the RARCC nursery, with cameo appearances in the background by Max Ammer of Papua Diving/RARCC, and also relies upon a number of

scientific inputs from Georgia Aquarium's Dr. Chelsea Black. Have a listen - great to see StAR getting this extra exposure!

 SHORT WAVE

LISTEN & FOLLOW

A cooler of eggs and a bold plan to save leopard sharks

JULY 28, 2026 · 3:00 AM ET

By Katerina Barton, Nathan Rott, Rachel Carlson, Rebecca Ramirez, Hannah Chinn

 13-Minute Listen + PLAYLIST 



Two leopard shark pups snack on snails at the nursery in Raja Ampat, Indonesia in December 2025.
Claire Harbage/NPR

Re:wild and Bezos Earth Fund announce the Phoenix Species Project to recover threatened species - including the bowmouth guitarfish!

After months of having to remain silent whilst awaiting the launch, I'm delighted that Re:wild and the Bezos Earth Fund have finally announced the [Phoenix Species Project](#), which is the largest single philanthropic initiative dedicated exclusively to recovering critically endangered plants and animals across all continents. The project already has US\$200 million committed at the time of launching (half from Bezos Earth Fund, half from Re:wild) and has already announced the first 100 species (all either critically endangered or extinct in the wild) that will receive funding for focused efforts to show measurable recovery in the wild.

Two of the species recovery projects will be run through ReShark - including one focused on recovering the [bowmouth guitarfish](#) (*Rhina ancylostomus*) in Indonesia, and a second one focused on recovering the short-tail nurse shark

(*Pseudoginglymostoma brevicaudatum*) in the western Indian Ocean. The bowmouth guitarfish project was chosen as one of the first focal projects, and we are currently discussing plans for this with [Shark Ray 360](#) (who became an affiliate project of ReShark last month!) and the Indonesian government. Expect more information soon! In the meantime, here are a few articles announcing the fund:



The New York Times

NEWS & INSIGHTS

Phoenix Species Project launches global effort to pull 100 of the world's most threatened species back from the brink

Led by Leonardo DiCaprio's Re:wild and the Bezos Earth Fund, the largest single philanthropic initiative dedicated exclusively to critically endangered species across continents

PRESS RELEASE

AUGUST 4, 2026



Nutmeg Gorge green salamander [Photo credit: ARC / José Garrido]

100 Animals and Plants Just Got Some Needed Help

A new fund called the Phoenix Species Project will provide help pull imperiled wildlife back from the brink of extinction



Listen · 6:45 min



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Some of the imperiled animals included in the Phoenix Species Project. Joel Sartor

Introducing Kinanti Niloperbowo as Thrive's Conservation Genomics Officer

We're delighted to announce Kinanti Niloperbowo ("Kinan") as Thrive Conservation's Conservation Genomics Officer. Kinan was formerly an intern at the RARCC nursery at Kri, and now she's returning as a full-time staff. She's now based in Bali with ReShark's partner Yayasan Biodiversitas Indonesia ("Bionesia", a local Indonesian NGO focused on using genetic techniques to explore Indonesia's tremendous biodiversity), and she will be largely in charge of

processing the increasingly large load of genetic samples from the two nurseries in Raja Ampat.

Every pup that hatches in our nurseries has a genetic sample taken (for confirming parentage, checking for potential parthenotes, etc), as do any eggs that do not hatch (to help determine genetic correlates to mortality). As we expand our number of breeding institutions, and also continue to delve into artificial insemination techniques, prompt analysis of these genetic samples is increasingly a priority. As we look to add eDNA sampling as a potential means of post-release monitoring, this will become even more important - and we're delighted to have Kinan on the job to focus on these samples!



Kinan first came to us as an intern at the RARCC nursery in Kri, and now will be working to analyze our genetic samples at the Bionesia facility.

Big thanks to Leah Neal for tidying up the StAR Project admin!

A quick shout-out to Leah Neal from the StAR Project Steering Committee and AZA Species Survival Plan *Stegostoma* Program for her efforts over the past 5 months to tidy up the StAR Project's administration, ranging from streamlining

the breeder onboarding process to maintaining robust records, tidying up the StAR Charter and generally getting all of our paperwork in order. A thankless job, but a very important one nonetheless - thanks Leah!!

ED visit to Barefoot Manta Island Resort in Yasawa Islands, Fiji

In mid-July I had the pleasure of visiting the Barefoot Manta Island Resort in the Yasawa Islands in western Fiji. Hosted by the indomitable Peter Farrell, founder of Barefoot Manta, I was there to evaluate the potential for making this area the next expansion site for the StAR Project. I was introduced to Peter about a year ago by colleagues John and Antoinette Vermilye of the Gallifrey Foundation, who had recently visited Peter on Drawaqa island and were convinced that Peter and his resort would be an excellent expansion partner for StAR, with their expansive environmental programs and extremely deep relationships with local communities. After some initial fruitful discussions, Peter and his wife Julia visited the RARCC nursery at Kri in March to gain a full understanding of the field requirements for a StAR Project, and shortly thereafter Peter invited me to visit their facility in Fiji.

I'm happy to say that Peter's entire team at Barefoot were super excited about the potential of hosting a StAR Project in Fiji, and I was very pleased with what I saw - ranging from strong local community support for conservation, plenty of room to develop nursery and sea pen facilities, a very robust conservation program already in place, and a plethora of local Fijian marine conservation talent - as Barefoot brings on lots of young Fijian marine scientists from the University of the South Pacific.

Moreover, the island's shoreline is COVERED in snails! Perfect food for baby leopard sharks...Next steps include a discussion with the StAR Steering Committee and of course meetings with the Fijian government to suss out the potential for an import permit for leopard shark eggs - but its all looking promising! An expansion to Fiji would be a natural progression for StAR, as Fiji marks the easternmost extent of the leopard shark's natural range and, while they are still occasionally seen in Fiji (even on the house reef of Barefoot Manta), local elders suggest that their numbers are dramatically depleted compared to 30 years ago. Stay tuned for more developments!



Barefoot Manta Island Resort on Drawaqa Island in the Yasawa Archipelago of western Fiji.

Chris Dudgeon presents to local schoolchildren on leopard shark satellite tagging in Australia

Many of you are aware that ReShark supports a robust research program in Australia, where populations of leopard sharks and bowmouth guitarfish and other potential ReShark species are still in relatively good shape.

Dr. Christine Dudgeon from Biopixel Oceans Foundation leads the ReShark research program in Australia, and last month Chris had the honor of speaking to a very enthusiastic school group at Manly West State School in Brisbane that included sisters Olivia and Isla, who recovered one of our leopard shark satellite tags that had washed up on the beach of nearby Moreton Island.

Satellite tagging of leopard sharks proved a great entry point to introducing the schoolchildren to the ReShark initiative, and Chris seems to have now inspired a new crop of young shark conservationists! Thanks for all you do Chris! As an aside, one of our leopard shark satellite tags from Australia that just popped off last week recorded a 214.5m dive - the new world record for deep diving by a leopard!



Chris Dudgeon demonstrates satellite tag placement on a stuffed Stegostoma to Olivia, who along with her sister Isla recovered this tag from Moreton Island.

Alright - I'm nearly done rambling! One final shout-out to our recurrent gift supporters (Torben Rühl, Sandra Emich, Kaspar Kaegi, Aimee Zullo, Kristyn Annis, Roman Frischknecht, and Ciel Park), whose monthly gifts via the ReShark online giving platform are hugely appreciated!

In my next Ramblings I'll report on our next round of releases planned from Kri in early September, including Jelly, Bestie, Alistair, Elisa, Francesco and possibly Connor. Til then, be well!

Warm regards,

Mark Erdmann
Executive Director, ReShark



ReShark

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