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Greetings ReSharkers!

My sincere apologies for the longer-than-expected delay since my last Ramblings. It's been a very busy last month with an extended Raja Ampat excursion followed by a trip with Nesha Ichida to Fiji to further investigate the possibility of launching StAR Fiji in the near future! As always, lots to report, starting this time with some happy news from Thailand!

StAR Thailand - new nannies, new nursery planned!

The past month has been full of exciting developments for May and the StAR Thailand team. Firstly, long-time Thai shark nanny Yam is now joined by two new aquarists, Pleng and Bua! Welcome to these enthusiastic young women, who bring our overall StAR shark nanny count back up to 6 (Yam, Pleng and Bua in Thailand, and Annisa, Mardia and Aenun in Raja Ampat!).

Equally important, after two long years of patient enquiries and searching for various alternatives, May and team have received the fantastic news from Maiton Island that they can proceed with building a proper leopard shark nursery on the

island! May has already been working on the design with our partners from Integrated Concept Management, and is hoping to get started on the new nursery soon.

In other news, StAR Thailand has been progressing their MOU renewal with [Aquaria Phuket](#) (who will be providing additional pups), and planning is underway for their next major release of pups in January 2027. Ocean Blue Tree has generously agreed to provide satellite tags for these pups, which will be the first leopard shark pups to be satellite tagged in Thailand. Finally, happy to note that shark nanny Yam was recently featured in an interview on ABC NewsRadio!



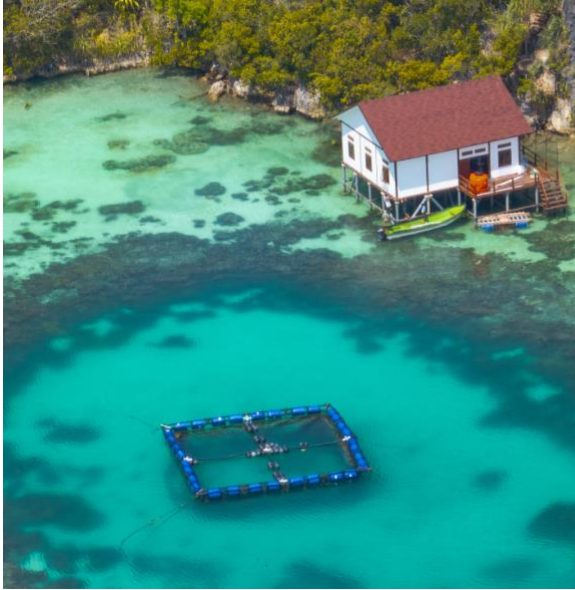
*(L) Yam with Pleng and Bua, StAR Thailand's new shark nannies!
(R) StAR Thailand partners updating the DMCR about recent progress.*

Misool Nursery Life Support System installed; first egg shipment received!

A huge thanks to the Integrated Concept Management team that accompanied Nesha and I to the newly completed Misool nursery on Kalig Island in late August to install a fantastic new life support system for the nursery. It was amazing to watch this team at work - in three days the entire system was up and running, with all the new egg and pup tanks filled with freshly filtered water.

The timing was impeccable, as the following week our new Kalig nursery received its first egg shipment - 5 eggs from Singapore Oceanarium! I'm even more please to say that Annisa announced her first pup hatching in the nursery last week - Hasan, named after the head of the Raja Ampat MPA Management Authority, Mr. Hasan Makassar Lilinta.

We're delighted to have the Kalig nursery up and running after such a long time in the planning and construction phase. Big thanks again to the Rumah Foundation and Djinda Foundation for their support of the nursery, Integrated Concept Management for building the life support system, PT Papua Katamaran for building the pup tanks, and the Thrive Conservation and Misool Foundation teams that persevered to have the nursery delivered in time for this first egg shipment!



*(L) The brand new Misool nursery over the NW lagoon of Kalig Island.
(R) The ICM wonder team after building the life support system.*



Credits: Annisa Fathya / Misool Founda

Hasan, the first pup to hatch in the new Kalig nursery.

StAR Indonesia releases its 80th pup!

StAR Indonesia is moving closer to the 100 pup mark, having released its 80th pup into the waters of Raja Ampat in early September! A total of five pups were released over a week long period - Jelly, Bestie, Alistair, Elisa, and Francesco. We had a variety of formats for the releases, ranging from the [Governor of SW Papua](#) and his wife climbing down into the water to release Elisa (named after the Governor), to the schoolchildren of Sawinggrai village releasing “their” shark [Bestie](#) (with the support of local NGO Raja Ampat Sea Centre), and finally, a new approach: taking a pup to the people!



Mardia and the schoolchildren from Sawinggrai village release their shark, Bestie.

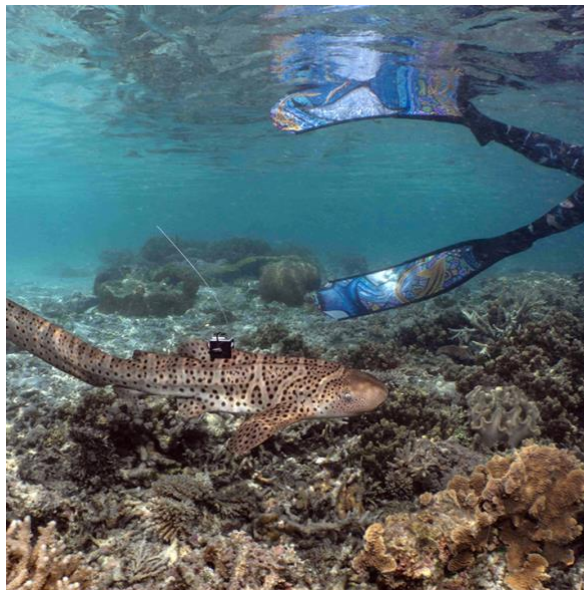
For this one, we transported [Alistair](#) (named for StAR founding member Dr. Al Dove) to Yarweser village on Batanta Island, where the RARCC team manages the Batanta Hope School. The Governor and his wife had such a good time with their own pup release that they joined to the village as well, where he gave a wonderful speech on the value of StAR and of sharks in general, after which we were treated to an hour of cultural performance before we got down to the business of releasing Alistair!

We all agreed it was an awesome way to do a release and we plan to do many more of these village releases in the future. As an aside, the Governor's wife Susan was so enthusiastic about the releases that we unanimously agreed to name a pup for her as well. Fortunately, just days before she visited the nursery, one of the Aquarium of the Pacific eggs hatched into a beautiful baby girl - now named Susan and actively munching snails and growing well.

Below are some images that capture the excitement of the releases! And a big thanks to Terra Abadi Papua and Diantara for arranging the Governor's visit for the release of Elisa and Alistair.



The Governor of West Papua Elisa Kambu and his wife Susan release Alistair at Yarweser village.



Mardia and Yolanda track Elisa, while Dr. Chris Dudgeon films Jelly as she swims to freedom.

Busy weeks at the Kri Nursery

The five releases mentioned above were only part of the action at the Kri Nursery in late August and early September. We were also delighted to host Dr. Shannon Corrigan from the Minderoo Foundation and Dr. Christine Dudgeon and Dr. Hugo Lassauce from Biopixel Oceans Foundation for a wide range of activities - including training Kinan and the Kri nannies Mardia and Aenun to launch a cutting edge eDNA monitoring program and helping the team to compile and begin analyzing data on egg shape and size and growth rates, etc. All in all a very busy 10 days!

During this time, we were also delighted to see all four of the [Shedd Aquarium eggs](#) that I mentioned in my last Ramblings hatch successfully - even more special because we had two guests from the Shedd Aquarium visiting Papua Diving at the time, who were able to witness the first days of the Shedd pups in the Kri nursery. I'm also pleased to note that two of those pups, Lise and Heather, are named for two very special team members from the Shedd Aquarium - Lise Watson (one of the world's leading experts on leopard shark husbandry and the head of the AZA Species Survival Program for leopard sharks!) and Heather Urbaniak (a long-time aquarist at Shedd who has worked on their leopard sharks for several decades). It was great to hear Heather's excitement on learning of her shark:

"It truly has been a full circle experience. When I found our first batch of eggs from our female Cleo in the aquarium over 23 years ago, I could never imagine we would be releasing her offspring back into the ocean. ReShark/StAR is astounding. That's what it's all about and why I come to work every day. I love it!"



*(L) The good Drs. Shannon, Chris and Hugo with Aenun at the Governor's release.
(R) Lise, Heather and Florence (3 of the Shedd pups) resting together in their pup tank.*

Big Thanks to Andy Sim and team at Seattle Aquarium

I'm going to try every Ramblings to call out some of the folks working hard behind the scenes to make ReShark projects work smoothy and efficiently. This time I'd like to specifically thank the team at [Seattle Aquarium](#) (including Dr. Caitlin Hadfield, Andrew Sim, Amie Bialo, Lucia Davids and a range of other SEAQ staff) who play the very important role of collating eggs from all of our US-based breeding institutions, providing them a temporary home while they incubate and await their shipment date to Indonesia, and arranging their international export permits! Once shipment day arrives, the SEAQ team put a tremendous amount of effort and care into individually packing each egg, hyperoxygenating them, and shipping them for their long journey to Jakarta. Thanks ya'll - we hugely appreciate it!!

Shark Ray 360 receives grant to study feasibility of artificial insemination in bowmouth guitarfish

Members of [Shark Ray 360](#) were awarded \$18,320 from the 2026 AZA Conservation Grants Fund (CGF) to help support the project "Feasibility of artificial insemination in bowmouth guitarfish: a pilot study investigating semen collection and cryopreservation, ultrasound and hormone analysis". This important collaborative work engages aquariums throughout the US.

Additionally, the awardees are sharing information gathered in real time with other scientists at aquariums in South Africa, Hong Kong and Singapore in efforts to remove barriers and advance conservation initiatives. This one year grant will collect samples from bowmouth guitarfish quarterly to investigate their basic reproductive biology and develop tools for artificial insemination using endocrinology, ultrasonography and sperm cryopreservation. This project also aligns with and supports the goals and objectives of the SAFE Shark and Ray Direct Species Conservation Action pillar of work. Good luck to the SR360 team with their important efforts with the "other" AI!!

In closing - an article from CNN...

And finally, a nice little article (not fake news, I assure you!) titled "The 'world's first rewilded sharks' are being raised by shark nannies" from [CNN](#) on the StAR Project:

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The 'world's first rewilded sharks' are being raised by shark nannies

AUG 19, 2025

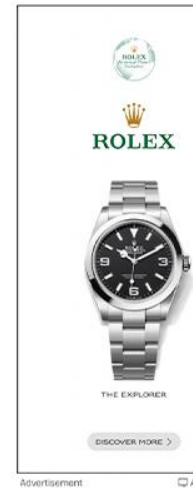
By Maheshpreet Kaur Narula



10 photos: Rewilding Indo-Pacific leopard sharks

10 photos

This Indo-Pacific leopard shark was released in the Dampier Strait in Indonesia, as part of an



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That's a wrap for this ReShark Ramblings! Next month expect to hear exciting news on our brand new shark conservation education catamaran in Raja Ampat, amongst other developments....

Warm regards,

Mark Erdmann
Executive Director, ReShark





ReShark

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