

From: Mark Erdmann | Executive Director – ReShark merdmann@rewild.org
Subject: 🐟 Tagging Australia's first bowmouth, conservation education in Raja Ampat & 2 BILLION views for steg threesome?!
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To: merdmann@rewild.org



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Greetings ReSharkers!

And Happy Thanksgiving to those who are celebrating it! As I'm still in the midst of intensive travel (between bowmouth guitarfish expedition and the "GASSE 2.c leopard shark expedition to North Stradbroke Island off Brisbane), I'll keep this Ramblings short:

First bowmouth guitarfish (*Rhina ancylostoma*) satellite and acousti tagged in Australia

Over the past week, a team of conservation scientists from ReShark, Biopixel Oceans Foundation, Georgia Aquarium, SEA LIFE Sydney Aquarium and Cairns Marine conducted an expedition to the far north of Australia's Great Barrier Reef hoping to find and tag a number of individuals of the critically endangered bowmouth guitarfish, *Rhina ancylostoma*. Working long hours setting drum line in reef areas where commercial crayfish fishermen have previously reported encounters with *Rhina*, the team managed to catch a single 2.2m mature female, which was quickly "processed" and released - with the processing including

which was quickly processed and released - with the processing including genetic and cloacal swab samples, internal acoustic tag surgery and external miniPAT satellite tagging.

To our knowledge, this is the first *Rhina* to be satellite and acoustic tagged in Australia, and we are greatly looking forward to the movement ecology data that will eventually flow from these tags - data that will be shared to the Shark Ray 360 Project to inform their developing plan for *Rhina* rewilding. The team also made important observations on the bottlenose wedgefish *Rhynchobatus australiae* and the Giant Guitarfish *Glaucostegus typus*, two other potential future ReShark focal species. Thanks very much to the Fat Tire Foundation, Djinda Foundation and Rolex Perpetual Planet Initiative for sponsoring the expedition.



First two Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium pups hatch in RARCC Nursery

In the past week, the RARCC nursery “shark nannies” have welcomed two very special new pups into the world - “Jelly” (a 25cm, 70 gram female) and “PowerTee” (a 26.5cm, 66 gram male), the first two pups to hatch from Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium eggs sent to Raja Ampat! Both pups are doing very well and immediately foraged on live jetty snails in the first 24 hours after hatching. Congratulations to the PDZA team - an exciting moment in their journey as an approved breeder for StAR Indonesia!

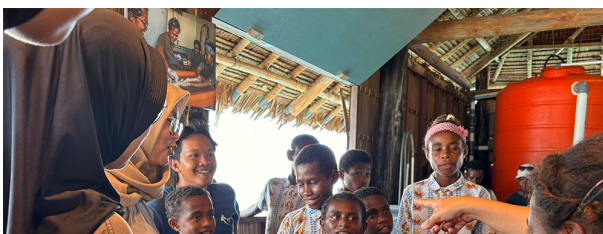




ReShark-focused marine conservation education program ramping up in Raja Ampat

Also in the last week, Thrive Conservation completed its onboarding of conservation education specialist Yolanda Wamaer from Manokwari, West Papua. Yolanda previously completed two months as an intern at the RARCC nursery, during which time she worked hard and developed important skills in leopard shark husbandry (see her diving in the sea pen below). Yolanda has been hired to lead Thrive's ReShark-focused marine conservation education program in Raja Ampat, which will formally launch in the new year.

In the meantime, both nurseries in Raja Ampat have been increasingly frequently hosting local school groups from Raja Ampat visiting the nurseries, with a large group of 5th and 6th graders visiting the RARCC nursery yesterday, sponsored and chaperoned by Raja Ampat SEA Centre. As you can see from the photo below the students absolutely LOVE visiting the nursery. In early 2026 Thrive will begin operating a solar-powered marine conservation education catamaran to take education to the villages and bring the students back to the nurseries - a program that Yolanda will be leading!





Dr. Chris Dudgeon presents on StAR Project at West Pacific Marine Biology Network Symposium in Brisbane

On 26 November, Dr. Christine Dudgeon, head of the StAR Research Working Group, gave her presentation “The StAR Project - Foundational Research for Rewilding Leopard Sharks” at the UQ-CNRS 3rd West Pacific Marine Biology Network Symposium in Brisbane. Attendees at the symposium, many of whom were more cell biology-focused, were eager to learn more about the StAR project thanks to Chris for representing the project so professionally!



2 billion views (!?) for Dr. Hugo Lassauce

The University of the Sunshine Coast’s media team analyzed the reach of Dr. Hugo Lassauce’s [Leonard Shark Sex story with accompaning video](#) (ie. the one

[Hugo's appearance on the popular Australian news program, 60 Minutes](#) (the one that was picked up by late night TV hosts back in late September) and the results are rather extraordinary - up to 2.16 BILLION people may have seen the story, based upon the reach of the media outlets that picked up and publicized the story. Congratulations to Hugo - elevating *Stegostoma* to a level of public awareness never before envisioned!

That's it for this version of ReShark Ramblings. In the next edition we'll feature the initial results of the GASSE (Great Australian *Stegostoma* Semen Expedition) 2.0 - stay tuned for more details! Thanks also to all those partners who have submitted abstracts for presentation in the ReShark/Elasmobranch Rewilding session of [Sharks International](#) next 4-8 May 2026 in Sri Lanka - its shaping up to be an exciting session jam-packed with a wide array of elasmobranch rewilding presentations.

Be well!

Mark Erdmann
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