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Newsletter

## In this issue

- 1 Help clean up our beaches!
- 2 Annual Meeting American Elasmobranch Society
- 3 EEA 2017: Call for papers
- 4 Benefit shows Jörgen Raymann

## Help clean up our beaches

A recent study estimated that, based on weight, by 2050 there is more plastic in the oceans than fish. Right now, over 5 trillion plastic pieces are estimated to be floating around in the oceans. As large plastic pieces are broken down into smaller plastic particles, they are taken up into the marine food web together with other toxic chemicals. These chemicals concentrate in the top predators, often being sharks and commercial species like tuna and swordfish.

For this reason, Save Our Sharks is teaming up with the North Sea Foundation to contribute to their annual Boskalis Beach Cleanup Tour of the entire coastline of The Netherlands. And you can join us! Together with the North Sea Foundation we will clean up the beach from Castricum to Wijk aan Zee on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August. On that same day, there will be a beach cleanup on the Dutch Caribbean islands. To join us in The Netherlands, visit [www.beachcleanupntour.nl](http://www.beachcleanupntour.nl). To join the clean up in the Dutch Caribbean, please inquire with your local nature conservation organization.



Are you not able to join us on August 13<sup>th</sup>? Here are three things you can do to minimize your 'plastic footprint':

- ◆ **Say no to disposables.** Disposables are single-use products like plastic bags, plastic plates, cups and bottles. Replacing them with reusable products not only saves you money in the long run, but also limits your plastic consumption.
- ◆ **Ban micro-plastics (or microbeads) from your life.** They can be found in a lot of cosmetics like scrubs and toothpaste. Check the ingredients and make sure to buy ecofriendly alternatives like the ones with beads made out of coconut.
- ◆ **Recycle.** Sounds pretty obvious, but by making sure your used products are recycled you prevent these plastics to end up somewhere in nature!

## Annual meeting American Elasmobranch Society

This July, the American Elasmobranch Society (AES) came together for their annual meeting to talk about the latest advances in shark research. This year's conference took place in Austin, Texas. As per usual, the AES meeting was part of the bigger Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists. The conference consisted of four days filled with oral presentation sessions, workshops, poster sessions, and a symposium about the applications of physical ecology. Some remarkable presentation topics included the first video of a sawfish birth, ideas about the formation of manta rays' cephalic lobes (the paddle-like fins in front of their mouth), and the finding that a lemon shark expelled an ingested foreign object through its stomach.

A recurring topic of discussion was the new taxonomic classification of manta rays. There is strong genetic evidence that manta rays and mobula rays (also known as devil rays) are more related than previously thought, and therefore, they are now all called different species of mobula. In addition, manta ray researchers are finding increasingly more evidence for the existence of a new species of manta ray (or now mobula ray).



And this new species may be residing in the Caribbean Sea as well.

On the final day, the official AES conference banquet was held at the Renaissance Hotel with a formal program, auction, and the student awards. The prestigious Eugenie Clark award, which recognizes female early-career scientists who demonstrate uncommon perseverance, dedication and innovation in biological research and public outreach on elasmobranch fishes, was awarded to Christine Bedore from Georgia Southern University.

Photo: Natasha Hinojosa



## EEA 2017: Call for papers

For the second time, the Dutch Elasmobranch Society will be hosting the annual scientific conference of the European Elasmobranch Association in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The meeting will take place from 12 – 14 October in at the KIT Royal Tropical Institute. Keynote speakers for the conference include Dr. Neil Hammerschlag (University of Miami), Dr. Robert Hueter (Mote Marine Laboratory), and Dr. Kim Friedman (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation; FAO).

The Dutch Elasmobranch Society invites authors to submit abstracts for oral and poster presentations **before August 16.**

For more information about the submission procedure of abstracts and student bursaries, visit [www.elasmobranch.nl/eea2017](http://www.elasmobranch.nl/eea2017)

## Jörgen Raymann performs benefit shows

After three years of focusing on other occupations, comedian and Save Our Sharks ambassador Jörgen Raymann has returned to the stage with a new solo show. During the show named “Zo kan het ook!” (“That also works!”) Jörgen goes into detail about growing older and how life actually gets more fun, as long as you keep smiling back at life. During the Dutch Caribbean Shark Week, the shark ambassador visited the Dutch Caribbean and performed his show on both Aruba and Curacao to benefit shark and nature conservation on the islands.

Jörgen, who has always had a great interest in the oceans, dedicated a large part of his show to sharks. He even included a shark quiz! The show on Aruba, held at Cas di Cultura, was attended by 400 people. On Curacao, Jörgen performed his show at Avila Beach for about 900 people. Part of the proceeds were donated to Arikok National Park and the CARMABI Foundation.