

Project Update: July 2017

Field Surveys:

In the first 2 months, February and March, field survey involving SCUBA diving and snorkelling were conducted at 18 sites (proposed study sites). One more sleeping school has been identified in South Andaman corruption point. Bumphead individuals were seen to indulge in some sort of aggressive behaviour during full moon phases. Few juveniles have been spotted during the surveys. Habitat surveys have been carried out too.

Social Interviews:

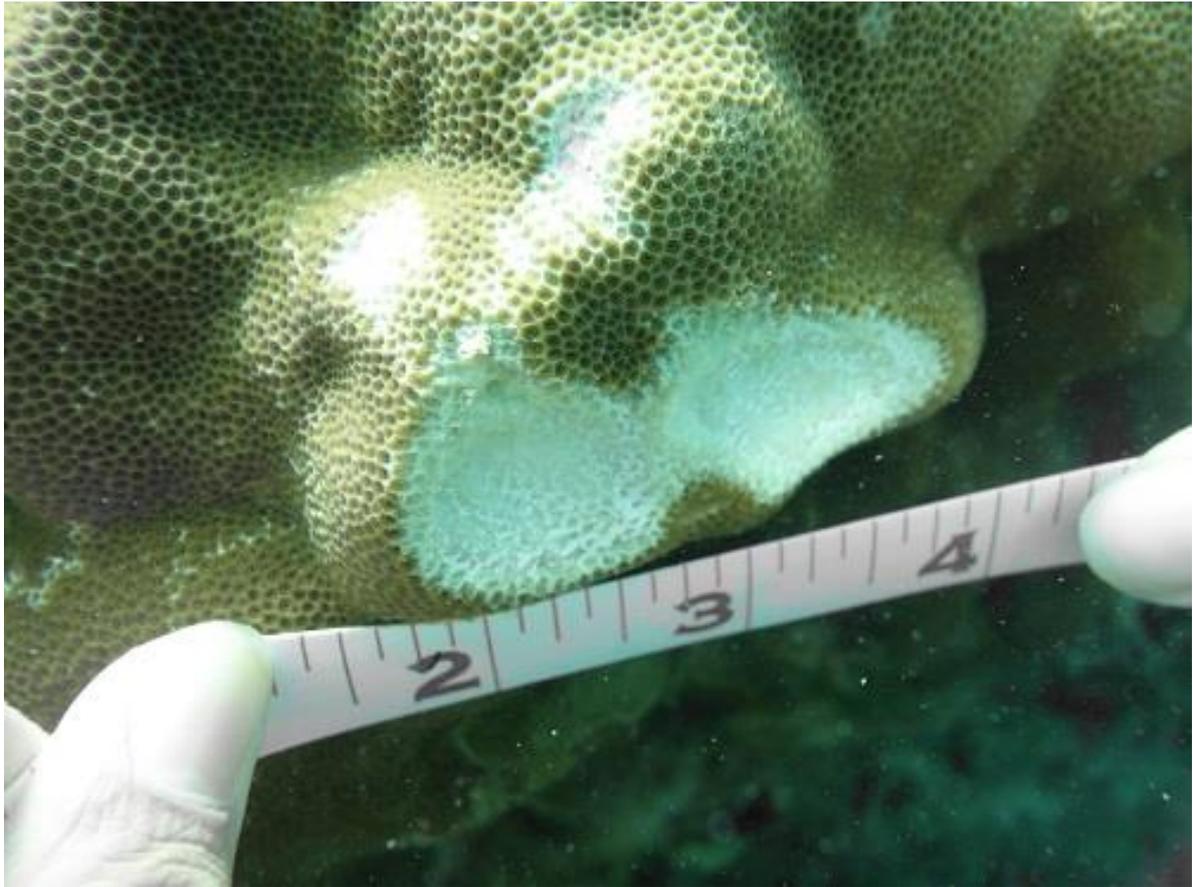
Social interview with 22 people in this season revealed that though bumphead parrotfish is not a target fishery species but local fishermen sometimes catch them for food. This number, although variable, is not harmful to affect the existing population.

Some of the unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project so far:

1. One of the most interesting behaviours exhibited by the bumpheads were sleeping aggregation, aggressive head butting and mating; this was seen during the early hours during full moon phase. It is difficult to dive during full moon phase as there are high tides combined with extremely high currents.
2. Some offshore dive sites are not easily accessible during unpredictable weather conditions.
3. Very few juveniles have been sighted so far making mapping of nurseries difficult.
4. Three most important outcomes of my project so far:
 - a. Till now, two sleeping aggregations have been sighted, each aggregation comprising close to 200 individuals.
 - b. Local fishermen occasionally catch bumpheads. If this rate of fishing increases, it can negatively affect the fish population.



Left: An adult sighted at South Andaman dive site Chidiatapu. Right: A group of bumphead parrotfish sighted at Corruption point, South Andaman



Bite mark of Bumphead parrotfish