

Project Update: June 2018

Our monitoring work in Bocas del Toro has definitely highlighted the need for a multi-method approach in order to get a more complete picture of the elasmobranch communities around the islands. While our underwater visual census or 'snorkeling transects' have given us important information on the distribution, diversity, and relative abundance of several ray species, we generally don't see many sharks using this method. But the use of Baited Remote Underwater Videos or BRUVS has shown to be a much more effective tool for finding out what species of sharks there are in Bocas. Unsurprisingly, nurse sharks seem to be quite common in many of the sites where we set our cameras and are not shy about coming close and stealing the bait. Our most exciting findings however have been not just one, but TWO species of hammerheads! Listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List, these data are critical for forming management and conservation plans for securing the future of these species.



