# 鳥翅

ANNUAL REPORT

# 2016 – 2017

BLOOM ASSOCIATION HONG KONG







# VISION AND MISSION

To resist the fate of an overfished, barren ocean in the future, by proving that dedicated action can reverse the course of environmental and human tragedy. Giving a voice to the voiceless; ensuring that humanity has a future where children have food and fishermen have jobs, by restoring ocean ecosystems to their full biological capacity.

# 4 PRINCIPLES OF OUR WORK

## ONE. SHARING WHAT WE KNOW

Bringing knowledge of the many problems and solutions to ocean conservation issues, both local and global, to people, both local and global.

## TWO. RESEARCH

Creating new information and filling knowledge gaps about ocean conservation and the marine world by carrying out scientifically rigorous research.

## THREE. ADVOCACY

Assisting Hong Kong's progression towards a future of sustainable oceans and fisheries by working with governments in establishing and enforcing marine policies.

## FOUR. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Engaging the public through creative media to spread the word about our work, and restoring a sense of personal responsibility to marine conservation in all levels of the general public.


# Victory for Sharks at CITES CoP17

## New sharks and rays regulated in international trade

Great news! At the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), held at Johannesburg, South Africa, all four proposed species of sharks, including the Big eye thresher (*Alopias superciliosus*), Common thresher (*Alopias vulpinus*), Pelagic thresher (*Alopias pelagius*), and Silky shark (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), as well as all all Mobula rays (Mobula spp., were successfully listed onto Appendix II. This means that, once implemented, these speices will receive added controls in the international trade - a big step forwad in protecting shark populations facing severe threats from the global shark-related trade.

In the months leading up to the CoP, BLOOM HK has worked alongside numerous local and international NGOs to garner support from governmets worldwide, collaborating to host workshops held in South Africa (Cape Town), Sri Lanka, Fiji, St. Maartens, Israel, and mainland China, for audiences of more than 70 governments.

At the CoP17, held from 24 September to 5 October 2016 in Johannesburg, South Africa, Parties to CITES from countries all over the world were represented to give their votes on the listings of proposed speices. Many governments spoke out on their interests to support the protection of sharks and rays.

## Capacity building

Implementation for the CoP17 shark listings will begin in November 2017. Before then, BLOOM HK will continue capacity building exercises for local government departmemts. Jointly with The Pew Charitable Trust and Abercrombie & Fish, 3 days of shark fin identification workshops were held for the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Customs and Excise Department of the governmnet of Hong Kong. The workshops provie training to frontline officers in visually identifying shark fins belonging to CITES-listed shark speices, allowing for greater efficiency and effectiveness during inspections of shipments at port.


Gill plates of manta and mobula rays are also found in Hong Kong's dried seafood market

## Moving forward

With more species receiving protection in the trade under international conventions, illegal trades moving through Hong Kong's ports are also expected to grow. Hong Kong must gear up in both policies and enforcement strategy to face the challenges brought by the new listings.

In the months to come, BLOOM HK will be lobbying political parties and legislative council members to update Hong Kong's wildlife trade policies and legislations, and to introduce new tools to help strengthen the local ability to combat illegal trades of wildlife products.

# Sharks and rays in Research

## Shark fin trade dynamics

How does shark fin travel across the globe from source to market? Who are the key players in the trade? How has the trade changed throughout history? These questions are explored in BLOOM HK's co-authored paper "From boat to bowl: Patterns and dynamics of shark fin trade in Hong Kong - implications for monitoring and management", looking at Hong Kong's available shark fin trade data from 1998 to 2013.

## Manta and mobula ray gill plate research

Gill plates of manta and mobula rays can be found in Hong Kong and Guangzhou markets. Harvest for gill plates are one of the main threats faced by the rays, however study into the markets and sales of these products are extremely limited.

Shedding some light as an introductory study to the Hong Kong and Guangzhou markets, "Rapid survey of Mobulid gill plate trade and retail patterns in Hong Kong and Guangzhou" was completed as a Final Year Project by Mr. Hau Cheuk Yu during the last year of his Bachelor of Science degree at The University of Hong Kong, and overseen by BLOOM HK.

## Species composition through DNA analysis

Most shark fin found at retail markets are unrecognizable by species to the non-expert eye. To understand exactly what species are being sold at storefront, a study was launched in partnership with the Stony Brook University to investigate through DNA analysis, and random sampling from Hong Kong and Guangzhou markets. Initial results are under processed for publication.

Full reports and additional details may be found on BLOOM HK's website: www.bloomassociation.org/en/bloom-hong-kong/research/

The sharks and rays team at CITES CoP17, brought together by The Pew Charitable Trust.


# Humphead wrasse in Hong Kong

## HK Humphead Wrasse Watch

Set up as a project in partnership wih the IUCN Grouper and Wrasse Specialist Group and The University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Humphead Wrasse Watch (HKHHWW) is a Facebook page with a simple idea.

Making use of the power of social media, the HKHHWW is a platform for citizens to participate in spotting out live Humphead wrasse for sale in Hong Kong's restaurants, and reporting these sightings for inspection.

All live Humphead wrasse in Hong Kong, whether kept by a restaurant or other hosts, must be accompanied by a valid possession license. Businesses found keeping live Humphead wrasses without a valid license, or not in accordance with the details set out in their licenses (e.g. number of individuals), are liable to prosecution.

HKHHWW is designed to be not only a platform for reporting, but also an educational tool, spreading conservation messages and biological knowledge about the Humphead wrasse.

### Collaboration

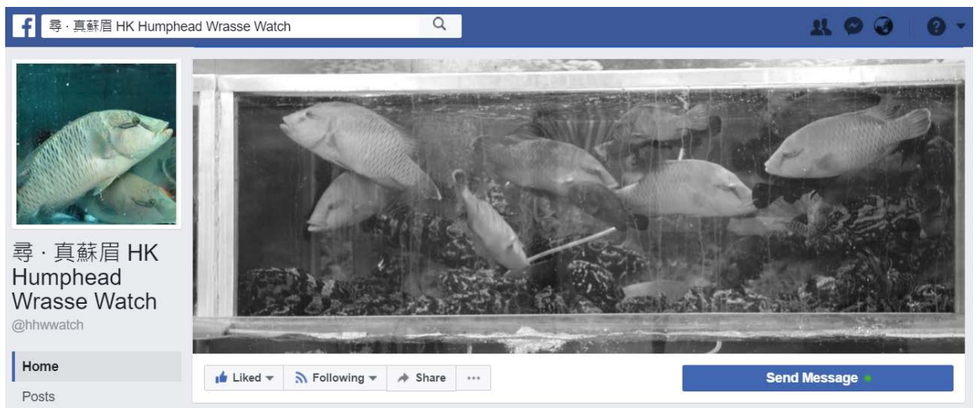
This year, a team of postgraduate students from the School of Journalism and Communication of the Chinese University of Hong Kong made use of the Facebook page as a subject of study to develop a media campaign plan. Features of the plan may be implemented in the years to follow.

### Monitoring

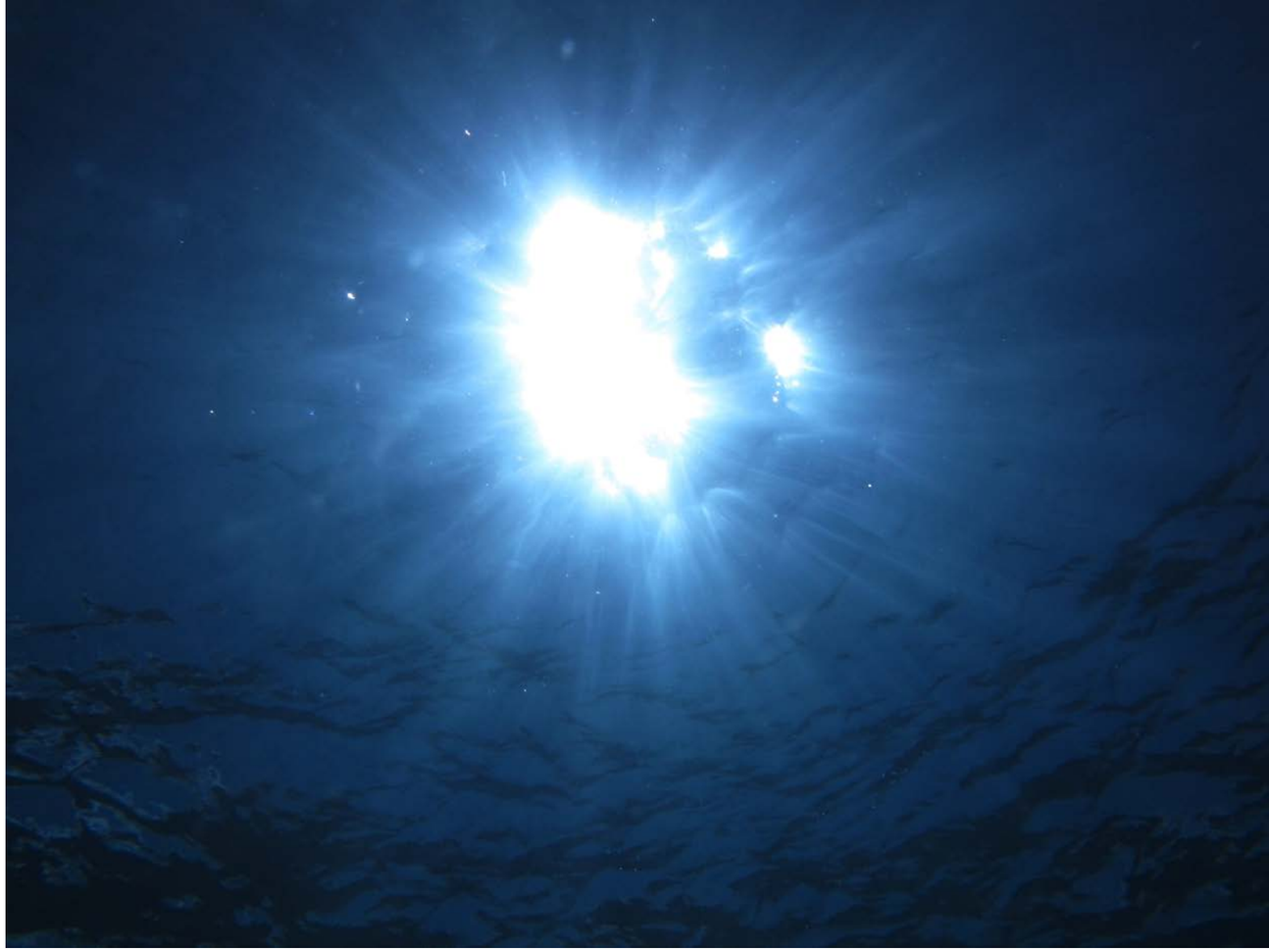
As an additional project, we have completed initial surveys of major seafood restaurant zones in Hong Kong to monitor the turnover of live Humphead wrasse.

It is hoped that a more sophisticated methodology for the long-term and continuous monitoring of live Humphead wrasse in the market can be developed.

*For details of the turnover study, please contact us directly*





# INTO THE WET MARKETS...

## Wet market surveys

A study was conducted from January to June 2017 in two of Hong Kong's major major wet markets: Tai Po Market and Yeung Uk Road.

The objective of the study is to provide an update to the provision of live reef food fish in local wet markets. In particular, it sought to understand the diversity and abundance of species.

Study results found an alarmingly high proportion of hybrid grouper now available in the market, as well as the presence of species recognized as threatened with extinction under the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Furthermore, due to a lack of a consistent labelling system, the accurate identification of fishes to species level is often challenging.

Recommendations for the future monitoring and research of live reef food fish provision in Hong Kong were made at the end of the study, including to establish effective labelling systems at the retail level, including for wet markets, supermarkets and restaurants.

### Future development

Moving forward, we will be partnering with ChooseRightToday and ADM Capital Foundation in developing a wet market live reef food fish species identification guide, to be used as a handbook for students, traders and wet market-goers.

*For details of the wet market study, please contact us directly.*

# 114°E Hong Kong Reef Fish Survey

The 114°E Hong Kong Reef Fish Survey is an initiative to systematically update the marine reef fish biodiversity records of Hong Kong.

Since 2014, surveys were conducted between April and November, recruiting citizen scientists as survey volunteers to help collect data on the qualitative abundance, distribution and diversity of reef fishes in Hong Kong waters.

## Key Highlights

In this year, the project completed 39 survey days, visitng more than 34 dive sites with over 124 volunteer, citizen science divers. Collectively, our team had spent more than 700 hours surveying underwater.

Additionally, the project has conducted night dives more regularly to collect photographs of the nighttime phases of fish species, and ensure that species that are more active at night will not be missed in data collection.

A key highlight is the project's first successful survey dive within the Cape D'aguilar Marine Reserve, which is Hong Kong's only marine reserve. Special thanks is owed to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for issuing the permit for the survey to be conducted within the protected area.

Several sightings of a hybrid grouper, commonly known as the Sabah grouper, were recorded during this year's suveys. This is potentially concerning, as the ecological impacts of the Sabah grouper to local marine habitats and ecologies are yet unstudied and hence unknown. The project will continue to record occurences of the Sabah grouper in the survey for further research purposes in the future.

## Four New-to-HK Speices Discovered

Thank you to our dedicated volunteers

Discoveries of four species new to Hong Kong's publishd records made in this project were published in Marine Biodiversity Records this year.

The discoveries include A*mblyeleotris japonica*, *Halichoeres hartzfeldii*, *Canthigaster papua* and a *Parapriacanthus species*, all observed by volunteers during the survey.

Despite it's knwon diversity, Hong Kong's waters are still largely unexplored, and it is likely that more species will be discovered in the future.

Full reports and additional details may be found on BLOOM HK's website: www.bloomassociation.org/en/bloom-hong-kong/research/



Photo by Kathleen Ho

Photo by Stan Shea

Photo by Stan Shea

## This Year's Top 10 Most Frequently Encountered Species

Photo by Stan Shea

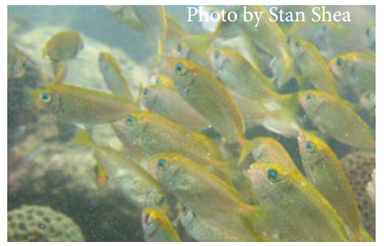


Photo by Stan Shea

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Photo by Kathleen Ho

From top to bottom, left: Pearl-spot chromis (*Chromis notata*), Chinese demoiselle (*Neopomacentrus bankieri*), White-spotted spinefoot (*Siganus canaliculatus*), Bubblefin wrasse (*Haliochoeres nigrescens*), Yellowtail clownfish (*Amphprion clarkii*)

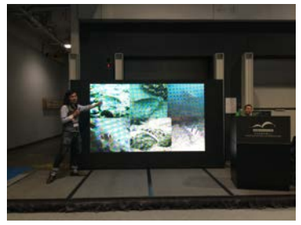
From top to bottom, right: Doublebar cardinalfish (*Apogonichthyoides pseudotaeniatus*), False kelpfish (*Sebasticus marmoratus*), Chocolate hind (*Cephalopholis boenak*), Doederlein's cardinalfish (*Apogon doederleini*), Pointed goatfish (*Parupeneus biaculatus*)

@114EHKREEFFISH

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to the Swire Group Charitable Trust for supporting the continued development of the 114°E Hong Kong Reef Fish Survey, and to the Simon K. Y. Lee Foundation and Subventions for Biodiversity Education under the Agricuture, Fisheries and Conservation Department for sponsoring additional days of survey.

# education & media







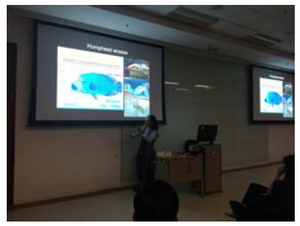


BLOOM HK is dedicated to outreach work to speak about sharks, seafood and local reef fishes with a variety of audiences.

This year, we were invited as speakers for the AFCD Summer series and the Dive Resort Travel Expo to engage members of the general public on marine issues.

We were also fortunate to have been invited by schools, companies and organisations to give tailored talks, including Discovery College, CLSA, the French Consulate, Rotary Club, at the US Consulate Roundtable, and Cathay Pacific.

We have also had the pleasure of collaborating with others having the same goal of conservation, including Take Action! Youth Biodiversity Conservation Leadership Training Scheme, Xiamen University, Conservation International Coral Exhibition, Fish Course of The University of Hong Kong, and the BSAP Marine Pollution Working Group.

Thank you to all partners and invitations for collaborations this year!

BLOOM HK also welcomes media interviews on topics related to our existing projects, or marine conservation in general. We had the pleasure of speaking on programmes for both RTHK and Metro Life Digital.

If you are interested in holding a talk for your company or organisation, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Kathleen Ho at kathleenho@bloomassociation.org.

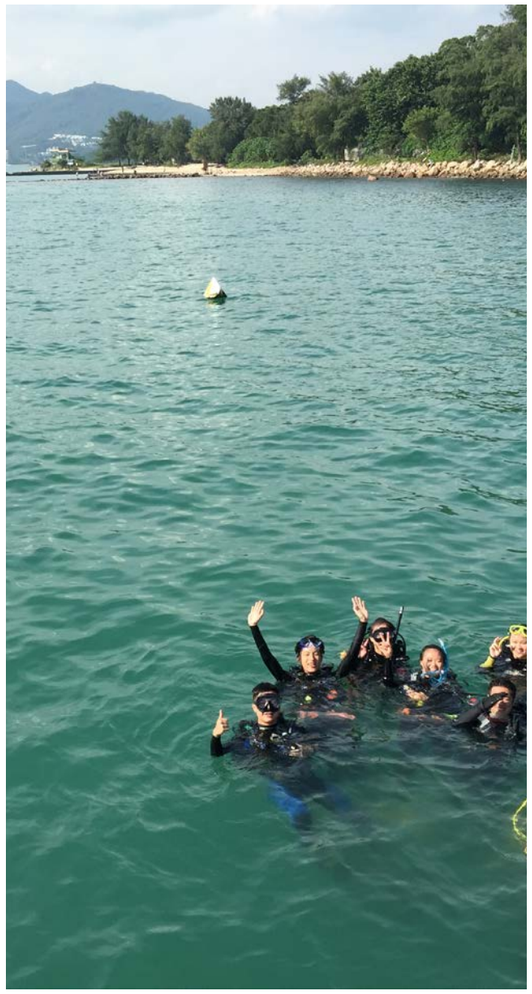


# Publications

To, A.W.L., and Shea, S.K.H. (2016). New records of four reef fish species for Hong Kong. Marine Biodiversity Records 9(82).

To, A.W.L., Ching, K.S.H., and Shea, S.K.H. (2013). Hong Kong Reef Fish Photo Guide. Hong Kong: Eco-Education and Resources Centre.

To, A.W.L., and Shea, S.K.H. (2012). Patterns and dynamics of bêche-de-mer trade in Hong Kong and mainland China: Implications for monitoring and management. TRAFFIC Bulletin 24 (2), pp 65 - 76.



# The Hong Kong Team

Stan Shea

Marine Programme Director, Hong Kong

Stan is the most long-standing member of BLOOM Association Hong Kong. Joined in 2009, he is the face and steer of all of BLOOM's projects in Hong Kong, whether in research, advocacy or outreach. He believes strongly in spreading the message of conservation as a key step in protecting the oceans. To date his seminars have reached over 8000 individuals worldwide.

Stan holds a BSc in Environmental Sciences from Oxford Brookes University and a Master's degree in Ecology and Biodiversity from The University of Hong Kong.

Kathleen Ho

Marine Pogramme Manager, Hong Kong

Kathleen joined the BLOOM Hong Kong office in January 2015, after obtaining a BSocSc degree in Geography and an M.Phil. in environmental ethics, both from The University of Hong Kong.

At BLOOM, Kathleen is chiefly responsible for managing ongoing projects of the marine programme, assisting with field research, engaging the younger audiences for information sharing seminars and communications.

## Funding

This year, BLOOM HK was 100% funded by, in alphabetical order, ADM Capital Foundation, Ocean Park Conservation Foundation Hong Kong, Research Foundation of SUNY, Stony Brook University, Simon K. Y. Lee Foundation, Subventions for Biodiversity Education, Swire Group Charitable Trust, The Pew Charitable Trust and other one-off donations.

## Contact

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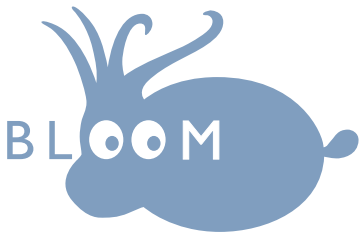
This report was prepared by Kathleen Ho, BLOOM HK
All photos in this report are provided by Stan Shea, BLOOM HK unless credited otherwise.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