

# Mantas, Dolphins and Coral Reefs – A Maldives Cruise

Naturetrek Tour Report

22 February - 4 March 2018



Watching Manta Rays at the back of the boat by Sara Frost



En-route to a snorkel by Sara Frost



Powder-blue Surgeonfish and Kashmir Snapper by Sara Frost



Spinner Dolphin by Sara Frost

Report compiled by Sara Frost  
Images courtesy of John Hepburn, Mike Meadway, Ian Woods and Sara Frost



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Tour participants: Chas Anderson (Cruise leader), Sara Frost (Naturetrek Naturalist)  
With 15 Naturetrek clients

## Summary

Our time spent cruising around the beautiful Maldivian islands and atolls resulted in some superb marine wildlife encounters, as well as memorable purple-red sunsets over remote coral islands, a dazzling variety of colourful fish, and a visual daily feast of innumerable shades of turquoise! The highlight was the group's encounter with a group of Manta Rays. We enjoyed a morning's excitement as the Mantas appeared and disappeared, with most of the group getting fantastic close-up views! To top this off, we spent an entire evening watching two male Manta Rays feeding off the stern of our boat, feeding on the plankton attracted by our lights. Another, unforgettable highlight, was snorkelling with a Whale Shark - a young individual, 5 metres in length, which obligingly swam slowly (for a Whale Shark!), enabling the group to swim with it and marvel at its elegant beauty.

On most mornings and evenings, the group enjoyed a pre-breakfast and pre-dinner snorkel on coral reefs, where the colour and variety of fish was wonderful! Regal Angelfish, parrotfish, sea cucumbers, pufferfish, many different types of butterflyfish, Maldivian Anemonefish, reef squid, triggerfish, Moorish Idols, both White- and Black-tipped Reef Sharks and Green Turtles were just a few of the highlights! Back on board, while cruising between atolls, islands and reefs, three confirmed species of cetacean were seen: a huge group of Pan-tropical Spotted Dolphins, along with numerous Spinner Dolphins (occasionally mixing with the Spotted and all taking it in turn to enjoy pole position on the bow wave) and Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins.

## Day 1

Thursday 22nd February

Most of the group flew out to the Maldives today from the UK on an overnight flight – the exception being a couple of guests who had flown out early to enjoy a few extra days in paradise! Sara, the tour leader, was on the main group flight from Heathrow, meeting several others en route in Dubai where we made our connection.

## Day 2

Friday 23rd February

We landed in Malé at 9:45am and, once having collected our luggage, we made our way to the resort island of Bandos, a 20-minute boat ride from the airport, arriving at 11am. We were welcomed with delightfully refreshing fruit-juice cocktails and were able to wander and explore the island at leisure. Some enjoyed a dip in the pool, while others strolled on the beach and had lunch on the open decking of the Sea Breeze Café, where at least 25 Blacktip Reef Sharks were gently swimming in the shelter of the shallow water just beneath us!



Sea Breeze Cafe, Bandos by Sara Frost

Once everyone had settled into their rooms, Sara did a practice snorkel at 3pm for some of the group, where we saw Peacock Rock Cod, Kashmir Snappers, butterflyfish and Blacktip Reef Sharks, amongst many others!

The group reconvened in the Sea Breeze Café at 6:30pm for drinks and a briefing from Sara where she provided an overview of our plan for the next week, and a taster of the species we could look forward to seeing! Most of the group then stayed at the cafe for a meal together at 7:15pm where we had a table booked for the group, and then we opted for an early night, heading to bed by 9pm.

## Day 3

## Saturday 24th February



Bandos Resort by Sara Frost

We started the day with a lazy morning, for the group to enjoy the tranquillity of Bandos. Breakfast was in the open-air restaurant from 7am – 10am, and the group came along at leisure to enjoy a delicious buffet of fresh fruits, cooked breakfasts and omelettes made to order. Free ‘mini-massages’ were being offered by spa staff under the huge Banyan Tree next to the dining area, which some went and enjoyed! Most then opted for a walk or a snorkel. Occasional Fruit Bats flew in between trees and Asian Koels could be heard calling loudly. There were Coconut and Oil Palms, and some lovely shrubs including Oleander, Bougainvillea, Frangipani and Orchid Tree.

Chas picked us up at 1pm on our own private Dhoni (a traditional Maldivian boat) which would accompany us for the week, and we sailed the 20 minutes to the harbour to join the MV Theia – our home for the next week. Once on board, we took our shoes off – we wouldn’t be needing them again! – and enjoyed a refreshing welcome drink. Once settled into cabins, we sat down for a delicious lunch of local fish, vegetables, mild curry, rice and salad. We then sailed to the nearby island of Embudhoo and had our first snorkel at 4pm, which was a gentle swim along a house reef – a perfect site for a ‘beginner’s snorkel’! We were back on board at 5pm (welcomed by delicious smells coming from the galley!) showered, and met in the bar for 7pm where Chas delivered a talk on the dolphins of the Maldives (mainly focussing on Spinner Dolphins). Dinner was served at 8pm, over which there was lots of excited chatter about species seen so far, and most went to bed by 9:30pm ready for our early morning snorkel next day.

## Day 4

## Sunday 25th February

The boat engines were started at 6:15am, and, while the group were still getting up and enjoying a relaxed cup of tea and biscuits, we were escorted to a nearby reef. At 7:20am we hopped onto the Dhoni which ran us over to the reef for our morning snorkel on Ara Island. We got back on board an hour later and tucked into a hearty breakfast (a buffet – including the delicious traditional breakfast of shredded tuna mixed with coconut and spring onion with roshi, a bread-like wrap) while continuing to sail through Ari Atoll. The sea was calm and the sun shining – another day in paradise!

At 11am we were momentarily joined by a mixed group of Indo-pacific Bottlenose and Spinner Dolphins. The playful Spinner Dolphins came over to the boat to investigate us for a few minutes before disappearing as quickly as they had arrived, but the Bottlenose were feeling a little shy and so kept their distance from us. However, an hour later we were joined by a much larger group of Spinner Dolphins swimming around our boat and exploding out of the water in front of us (to whoops and cheers from all of us on board!). Afterwards, we

were served a delicious lunch of local fish curry, mango chutney, vegetables and lentils and continued sailing for the afternoon across south Ari atoll (observing more distant Spinner Dolphins) and anchored off the island of Mirihi, in the south of Ari Atoll at 4pm for our afternoon snorkel (highlights of which included a crayfish, two Giant Moray Eels and both Black and Whitetip Reef sharks). We were back on board at 5:45pm where, once showered and dried off, the group enjoyed a relaxed drink as the sun went down. The crew set up a bright light on the back deck shining into the water to attract a lot of plankton in the hope that we might attract a Whale Shark later in the evening. Chas then delivered an interesting talk on blackfish (a family of black-coloured dolphins which includes Orca, Pilot Whales, Melon-headed Whales and False Killer Whales) at 7pm, finishing just in time for a delicious dinner at 8pm on the back sun deck, in the warm evening air. After dinner we enjoyed gazing at all of the zooplankton that had accumulated underneath the light which was frantically zipping about. John had brought a plankton net and microscope with him (very well prepared!) so we marvelled at the microscopic specimens he was able to catch and show us.

No Whale Shark appeared (although a crew member would stay up on night watch and wake us up if it turned up!) but we were happily entertained by a single Needlefish (a two-foot long pipe-like fish with a long snout containing formidable teeth) which was hunting the small fish that had been attracted to the plankton, drawn in by our light. Most went to bed at 9:30pm ready for an early snorkel the next day.

## Day 5

## Monday 26th February

No Whale Shark appeared during the night, and we were up at 6:45am for a leisurely cup of tea and biscuit on the deck in the warming morning sun before going back onto the Mirihi reef (although snorkelling a different section from the previous evening). Chas carefully lifted up a Cushion Star (a type of starfish) from the reef to show us in detail. David spotted a long tail protruding from underneath a table coral which, after closer inspection from Sara, turned out to be a Nurse Shark! Most of the group came along to have a look at the slender grey tail poking out from under the coral rather conspicuously. Towards the end of the snorkel, the weather became unusually windy, and just as we decided to get back onto the dhoni it poured down with warm tropical rain for 10 minutes (which was rather refreshing!). We then had breakfast (delicious pancakes, cheese omelettes, cereals, tropical fruits, fresh juices, toast and tea and coffee) and continued to sail to the south of Ari



Group having lunch by Sara Frost

Atoll. Spinner Dolphins made a welcome appearance alongside the boat, and we also saw Black-naped, Greater and Lesser-crested Terns and a Grey Heron.

By late afternoon we anchored at the island of Radiga, had an hour's evening snorkel and enjoyed a knowledgeable talk from Chas on the beaked whales of the Maldives, providing a fascinating insight into these mysterious deep-diving creatures.

## Day 6

## Tuesday 27th February

We were up by 7am and, this morning, were attempting to snorkel with Mantas Rays! Lucile, the friendly on board Dive Master, left us to snorkel on Moofushi reef while she dived onto the Manta Ray cleaning station. She would send her SMB (Signal Marker Buoy) up to signal the dhoni if she saw one. We snorkelled for only 15 minutes before the buoy was up (hooray!) so the dhoni picked us up and quickly escorted us over to Lucile's SMB where we jumped in. The water was green and thick with plankton – Manta food – but sadly this made visibility rather poor! 10 metres beneath us there were at least 5 huge Mantas, mainly only visible when they turned on their sides, exposing their white underbellies and wingtips. However, we were content bobbing about in the gentle waves for an hour (of course having the option to get out at any time, as the dhoni and crew stayed with the group), watching the huge dark shapes on the Mantas appearing and disappearing beneath us – what a sight!

Then we got back on board and continued sailing. After breakfast Sara ran “Fish Club” (to help those interested in identifying the reef species they had photographed on previous snorkels) which was interrupted at 11am by a Chas spotting a huge group of dolphins in the distance, along with 3 boats fishing for Yellowfin Tuna. Upon approaching the boats we found a group of several hundred Spotted and Spinner Dolphins spread out across several kilometres of ocean, with many swimming around the fishing boats. Due to a close association between Yellowfin Tuna and (usually Spotted) dolphins (as they both feed on the same-sized fish), fishermen frequently seek out groups of dolphins in hope of also finding and catching the tuna. We could see the fishermen, lined up at the back of the boat, trailing baited lines in the water behind them in the boat's wake. The fishermen were throwing live fish into the water to attract the tuna, but it appeared that most of it was being happily gobbled up by the dolphins! Chas and Sara explained that the fishermen don't mind the dolphins eating their bait – they accept it as a payment (or a 'tax') to the dolphins, for helping them to find the tuna.

Once we passed the fishing boats, we stayed surrounded by the group of dolphins for about 45 minutes. There were many young calves in the group (some little over a foot long – just days old!) which seemed to be enjoying



Whale Shark by Ian Woods

flinging themselves out of the water in leaps and jumps, getting used to using their fins. Absolutely delighted, we then had lunch (which had gotten delayed due to everyone being out on deck with their cameras!). Later into the afternoon we saw distant splashing off the starboard side, and when we went to investigate we found another group of Spotted Dolphins which charged over towards us to bow ride with us for 20 minutes – as if we hadn't already been spoiled enough!

Only half an hour later we came across a boat with people snorkelling in the water, with a big dark shape next to them... it was a Whale Shark! The shark was moving through the water slowly and the guests from the nearby boat were swimming near it. We didn't want to disturb it by getting in to snorkel with it too (plus we'd only just eaten a huge lunch, so didn't want to risk us all sinking!) so we stayed on board. Instead, we continued south looking for cetaceans off the starboard side and Whale Sharks off our port! We hoped we'd be

lucky and find another Whale Shark that afternoon (as the area is rich in plankton, so a known Whale Shark feeding ‘hotspot’) and to our delight, only 5 minutes later we found another one! All deciding that we’d happily risk a little indigestion for the possibly once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to snorkel with a Whale Shark, we frantically scurried around the boat grabbing our gear, then loaded onto the dhoni and slowly approached the shark before jumping into the water with it. The shark was moving very slowly but, for us, we had to swim constantly to keep up with it. It was about 5 metres long – only a youngster! They usually feed in the deeper waters surrounding the atolls, but come into the shallow areas to warm up every so often, which is what this individual (almost certainly a young male) was doing.

The group spent 20 wonderful minutes in the presence of this truly enchanting and graceful being (some were within touching distance) before getting out and moving onto a nearby reef (Huru Eli) for an afternoon snorkel, a highlight of which was a superb view of a Nurse Shark sitting out in the open on the sea bed. Elated, we got back onto the dhoni and during our ride back to the boat we saw two Manta Rays with their “wings” breaking the surface of the water! We stopped the dhoni and they came right alongside us and underneath the boat. What a day!

We got back on board for 4:30pm, and sailed until 5:15pm before dropping anchor again at Mirihi. The group relaxed over a beer or cocktail, and the back sundeck was alive with excited chatter from the day’s events.

## Day 7

## Wednesday 28th February

This morning we set sail at 6:30am, heading north, and were joined by Spinner Dolphins on our bow at 7:30am – always a welcome start to the day! However, we couldn’t stay with them for long as at 7:45am we departed on the dhoni for another chance to snorkel with Manta Rays (fingers crossed!). As we arrived to our snorkel site (Rangali) we were delighted to see a Manta at the surface, so in our excitement we immediately grabbed our snorkelling gear and jumped in – with varying degrees of elegance - and swam in its direction, hoping it would come towards us – and what a view! We watched, entranced, as a 4-metre wide Manta Ray obligingly swam not only next to us, but rolled around in front of the group doing side turns and somersaults, as if dancing with us. It was feeding, and making sure it caught as much plankton as possible. When it swam out of view, we happily bobbed about in the warm water eagerly scanning for our next one, with the assistance of the dhoni crew spotting from above and directing us. At various times Chas or Sara would also shout and hold their arm up signalling to the group that they had found one, and the group would swim over to have another heart-pounding encounter with these graceful creatures. We stayed swimming with them for well over an hour (also seeing a Green Turtle resting on the sandy seabed), and got back on board, beyond ecstatic!

We then sailed south to Pineapple Island (so called because it has wild pineapples growing on it) where we were ferried onto the beach in a small dinghy and the group went for a stroll on the warm, soft white sand. The island could be walked around in 15 minutes, and we heard Asian Koels calling from the dense trees and a Striated Heron was wading on the reef. Arif, our trusty barman, had brought over a cool box full of drinks and snacks, and so folk were able to either snorkel or sit and



Group on Pineapple Island by Mike Meadway

enjoy a refreshing cold beverage with snacks, and relax in the tranquillity of the white sandy beach, turquoise waters and the soothing sound of waves gently lapping on the shore.



Litter pick, removing washed up debris

Sara and some guests also prompted a beach clean – the washed up plastic and metal debris being an unfortunate result of winds and sea currents washing up litter from various countries across the India Ocean. Sara led the clean-up, and within 10 minutes our conscientious group had filled 3 large black bin bags with waste, mostly plastic bottles, which would be taken back on board our boat and disposed of properly. Three bags-worth of rubbish less to harm the environment which we were there to enjoy and cherish – ecotourism at its best!

As the sun started to set we headed back on board and had our evening talk up on the top deck, where sun loungers, cushions and lanterns had been set out for us, and we lay under the stars listening to Chas telling us a fascinating tale about François Pyrard, a French navigator remembered for his personal written account of his ‘adventures’ in the Maldives from 1602 to 1607, which was part of a ten-year sojourn in South Asia. Chas is certainly a captivating story-teller, and with only the faint glow from the lanterns to provide any light, it was a wonderful

atmospheric evening on the top deck under the night sky.

## Day 8

## Thursday 1st March

We stayed overnight anchored at Pineapple Island and snorkelled the reef again the following morning, and then sailed west out into open water all day searching for cetaceans. Unfortunately the weather was very windy today, creating a lot of ‘white horses’ so conditions for spotting were difficult and Chas and Sara were unable to find anything, despite scanning with binoculars at the front of the boat all day! We anchored in Fesdu Lagoon for the night, and once again set up a bright light at the back of the boat, shining it into the water, this time in hope we would attract Manta Rays.

After our evening snorkel, at 7pm Sara gave a talk on her work surveying cetaceans in the North Sea, showing sightings data that she has collected on maps of the British coast, and also her work as a wildlife guide in the Hebrides, showing a 10-minute wildlife documentary that she produced and presented. Half way through her video we were interrupted by a shout from the crew at the back of the boat. “Manta MANTA!”

We stampeded to the back of the boat (Sara being only too delighted to be upstaged by a Manta Ray), where, in fact, TWO Manta Rays were rolling at the back of the boat, feeding on the abundant plankton that had collected there since we set up the lights. We were ecstatic! We identified them both as males, and, as the spots on a Manta’s underside are unique to the individual, we took photographs of them and sent them to the Manta Trust, who identified them as “Ken” and “Javier”, both of whom had been seen and recorded several times before in the area. It was not only wonderful to sit and watch, truly mesmerised by these wonderful creatures, but to also

know that our sighting was contributing to the data collected by the Manta Trust, helping our understand – and thus conservation – of this species. Reluctantly we pulled ourselves away to have dinner (the kind galley crew had been keeping it warm for us, while we were excitedly peering into the water like eager school children), but to our delight, the Manta Rays stayed with us until 11pm at night – over 4 hours! It was a wonderful end to what had already been a brilliant day.

## Day 9

## Friday 2nd March

This morning we had our final snorkel off a sand bank (some simply enjoyed a paddle and sitting in the warm white sand!), and spent the day slowly making our way back to Malé, looking out for cetaceans en route, but the lingering choppy weather making it difficult for Sara and Chas to spot any. Once we arrived back into Malé, Sara gave a roundup of the highlights of the holiday, as well as showing a video from another of our popular wildlife cruises: 'Bali to Komodo – in search of the Dragon!' We then had dinner and had the rest of the evening to pack and enjoy a final gossip in the bar before bed.

## Day 10

## Saturday 3rd March

This morning we had to say goodbye to Bridget, Mike and Sue, who left at 7am for their flight, and the rest of us left for the airport after breakfast at 8:30am. Jo and Emma had decided that they had fallen in love with the Maldives so much they wanted to stay for an extra few days! So Sara and Chas were able to reschedule their flights and find them a 'water bungalow' on an idyllic remote island – needless to say they were very happy – lucky them!

As we sailed on the dhoni to the airport, we were delighted to be joined by a group of Spinner Dolphins just outside the harbour – as though they had come to wave us off! We arrived at the airport and boarded our plane back to the UK (via Dubai) with wonderful memories of a fantastic holiday, enjoying a last glimpse from the plane window of the tranquil white sandy beaches and idyllic islands beneath us.

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## Species Lists

Cetaceans (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Scientific name	Common name	February/March									
			23	24	25	26	27	28	1	2	3	
1	Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
2	Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops aduncus</i>			✓							
3	Pan-tropical Spotted Dolphin	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>					✓					

## Birds

1	Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>							✓			
2	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>				✓					✓	
3	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>									✓	
4	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>									✓	
5	Lesser Noddy	<i>Anous tenuirostris</i>			✓							
6	Swift (Great Crested) Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>		✓	✓	✓						
7	Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>				✓						
8	Black-naped Tern	<i>Sterna sumatrana</i>			✓	✓						
9	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamis scolopaceus</i>	✓						H			
10	Maldivian House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens maledivicus</i>	✓						✓			
11	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓						H			

## Fish (128 species)

Whale Shark, <i>Rhincodon typus</i> ,	Grey Reef Shark, <i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>
Black-tipped Reef Shark, <i>Carcharinus melanopterus</i>	White-tipped Reef Shark, <i>Triaenodon obesus</i>
Nurse Shark, <i>Nebrius ferrugineus</i>	Black-blotched Stingray, <i>Taeniura meyeri</i>
Manta Ray, <i>Manta alfredi</i> (formerly <i>birostris</i> )	Spotted Eagle Ray, <i>Aetobatus narinari</i>
Whiptail Stingray, <i>Himantura fai</i>	Giant Moray, <i>Gymnothorax javanicus</i>
Gold-spot Herring, <i>Herklotsichthys quadrimaculatus</i>	Tail-spot Lizardfish, <i>Synodus jaculum</i>
Needlefish, <i>Tylosaurus crocodilus</i>	Smooth Flutemouth, <i>Fistularia commersonii</i>
Reef-top Pipefish, <i>Corythoichthys haematopterus</i>	Trumpetfish, <i>Aulostomus chinensis</i>
Splendid Soldierfish, <i>Myripristis botche</i>	Blotcheye Soldierfish, <i>Myripristis murdjan</i>
Crown Squirrelfish, <i>Sargocentron diadema</i>	Spotfin Squirrelfish, <i>Neoniphon samara</i>
Sabre Squirrelfish, <i>Sargocentron spiniferum</i>	Common Lionfish, <i>Pterois volitans</i>
Spotfin Lionfish, <i>Pterois antennata</i>	White-line Lionfish, <i>Pterois radiata</i>
Greasy Grouper, <i>Epiphenephelus tauvina</i>	Lyre-tail Grouper, <i>Variola louti</i>
Black-saddle Coral Grouper, <i>Plectropomus laevis</i>	Peacock Rock Cod, <i>Cephalopholis argus</i>
Slender Grouper, <i>Anyperodon leucogrammicus</i>	Lunar-tailed Grouper, <i>Variola louti</i>
Four Saddle Grouper, <i>Epinephelus spiloticeps</i>	Rainbow Runner, <i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>
Kashmir Snapper, <i>Lutjanus kasmira</i>	Humpback Red Snapper, <i>Lutjanus gibbus</i>
Lunar Fusilier, <i>Caesio lunaris</i>	Variable-lined Fusilier, <i>Casesio varilineata</i>
Oriental Sweetlips, <i>Plectorhinchus orientalis</i>	Orange-finned Emperor, <i>Lethrinus erythracanthus</i>
Two-lined Monocle Bream, <i>Scolopsis bilineatus</i>	Dash-dot Goatfish, <i>Parupeneus barberinus</i>
Speckled Butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon citrinellus</i>	Collared Butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon collare</i>
Double-saddle Butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon falcula</i>	Klein's Butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon kleinii</i>
Oval butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon trifasciatus</i>	Chevron Butterflyfish, <i>Chaetodon trifascialis</i>
Long-nose Butterflyfish, <i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>	Black Pyramid Butterflyfish, <i>Hemitaurichthys zoster</i>
Blue-face Angelfish, <i>Pomacanthus xanthurus</i>	Regal Angelfish, <i>Pygoplites diacanthus</i>

Surge Hawkfish, <i>Cirrhitus pinnulatus</i>	Green Damselfish, <i>Amblyglyphidodon batunai</i>
White-belly Damselfish, <i>Amblyglyphidodon leucogaster</i>	Blackfoot or Maldivian Anemonefish, <i>Amphipron nigripes</i>
Clark's Anemonefish, <i>Amphipron clarkii</i>	Sergeant Major, <i>Abudefduf vaigiensis</i>
Chocolate-dip Chromis, <i>Chromis dimidiata</i>	Surge Damselfish, <i>Crhysiptera brownriggii</i>
Humbug Dascyllus, <i>Dascyllus aruanus</i>	Neon Damselfish, <i>Pomacentrus caeruleus</i>
Redbreasted Maori Wrasse, <i>Cheilinus fasciatus</i>	Bird Wrasse, <i>Gomphosus caeruleus</i>
Checkerboard Wrasse, <i>Halichoerus hortulanus</i>	Six-barred Wrasse, <i>Thalassoma hardwicke</i>
Fivestripe Wrasse, <i>Thalassoma quinquevittatum</i>	Cleaner Wrasse, <i>Labroides dimidiatus</i>
Crescent Wrasse, <i>Thalassoma lunare</i>	Barred Thicklip Wrasse, <i>Hemigymnus fasciatus</i>
Dusky Wrasse, <i>Halichoeres marginatus</i>	Two-colour Cleaner Wrasse, <i>Labroides bicolor</i>
Blackeye Thicklip Wrasse, <i>Hemigymnus melapterus</i>	Queen Coris, <i>Coris formosa</i>
Slingjaw Wrasse, <i>Epibulus insidiator</i>	Bicolour Parrotfish, <i>Cetoscarus bicolor</i>
Roundhead Parrotfish, <i>Chlorurus strongylocephalus</i>	Bullethead Parrotfish, <i>Chlorurus sordidus</i>
Bridled Parrotfish, <i>Scarus frenatus</i>	Red Sea Steep-head Parrotfish, <i>Scarus gibbus</i>
Dusky Parrotfish, <i>Scarus niger</i>	Greencheek Parrotfish, <i>Scarus prasiognathus</i>
Yellowbar Parrotfish, <i>Scarus scaber</i>	Starry Rabbitfish, <i>Siganus stellatus</i>
Coral Rabbitfish, <i>Siganus corallinus</i>	Moorish Idol, <i>Zanclus cornutus</i>
Powder-blue Surgeonfish, <i>Acanthurus leucosternon</i>	Lined Surgeonfish, <i>Acanthurus lineatus</i>
Convict Surgeonfish, <i>Acanthurus triostegus</i>	Lined Bristletooth Surgeonfish, <i>Ctenochaetus striatus</i>
Humpback Unicornfish, <i>Naso brachycentron</i>	Orange-spine Unicornfish, <i>Naso lituratus</i>
Spotted Unicornfish, <i>Naso brevirostris</i>	Brushtail Tang, <i>Zebrasoma scopas</i>
Yellowfin Tuna, <i>Thunnus albacares</i>	Bigeye Barracuda, <i>Sphyrnaena forsteri</i>
Flying Fish, <i>Exocetus spp</i>	Scribbled Filefish, <i>Aluterus scriptus</i>
Clown Triggerfish, <i>Balistapus conspicillum</i>	Yellow-margin Triggerfish, <i>Pseudobalistes flavimarginatus</i>
Orange-Striped Triggerfish, <i>Balistapus undulatus</i>	Titan Triggerfish, <i>Balistapus viridescens</i>
Picasso Triggerfish, <i>Rhinecanthus aculeatus</i>	Red-toothed Triggerfish, <i>Odonus niger</i>
Indian Triggerfish, <i>Melichthys indicus</i>	Yellow Boxfish, <i>Ostracion cubicus</i>
Black or Spotted Boxfish, <i>Ostracion meleagris</i>	Bennett's Sharpnose Puffer, <i>Canthigaster bennetti</i>
Black-spotted Pufferfish, <i>Arothron nigropunctatus</i>	Guineafowl Pufferfish, <i>Arothron meleagris</i>
Saddled Sharpnose Pufferfish, <i>Canthigaster valentini</i>	Spotted Porcupinefish, <i>Diodon hystrix</i>
Blotched Porcupinefish, <i>Diodon liturosus</i>	Tailsport Lizardfish, <i>Synodus Jaculum</i>
Half or White-barred Goby, <i>Amblygobius semicinctus</i>	Bigeye Trevally, <i>Caranx sexfasciatus</i>
Remora, <i>Echeneis naucrates</i>	Clouded or Snowflake Moray, <i>Echidna nebulosa</i>
Gold-spot Emperor, <i>Gnathodentex aurolineatus</i>	Dogtooth Tuna, <i>Gymnosarda unicolor</i>
Phantom Bannerfish, <i>Heniochus pleurotania</i>	Black-blotch Emperor, <i>Lethrinus harak</i>
Ornate Emperor, <i>Lethrinus ornatus</i>	Bigeye Emperor, <i>Monotaxis grandoculis</i>
Freckled Hawkfish, <i>Paracirrhites forsteri</i>	Caerulean Damsel, <i>Pomacentrus caeruleus</i> ,
White-tail Damsel, <i>Pomacentrus chrysurus</i> ,	Long-finned Squid, <i>Sepioteuthis lessoniana</i>
Coral Rabbitfish, <i>Siganus corallinus</i>	Houndfish, <i>Tylosurus crocodilus crocodilus</i>

### Other Taxa,

Fruit Bat, <i>Pteropus giganteus ssp maldivarum</i>	Green Turtle, <i>Chelonia mydas</i>
Ghost Crab species, <i>Ocypodinae spp</i>	Swimming Crab species, <i>Portunidae spp</i>
Reef Octopus, <i>Octopus cyanea</i>	Wire Coral, <i>Cirripathes sp</i>
Ivory cone, <i>Conus eburneus</i>	Hiby's lamellarid (or velutinid), <i>Coriocella hibyae</i>
Cushion Star, <i>Culcita schmedeliana</i>	Crown-of-Thorns sea star, <i>Acanthaster planci</i>
Black Sea Cucumber, <i>Actinopyga miliaris</i>	Spiny Sea Urchin, <i>Diadema setosum</i>

Soft Didemnum, *Didemnum molle*  
 Magnificent sea anemone, *Heteractis magnifica*  
 Edible sea cucumber, *Holothuria (Halodeima) edulis*  
 Plate fire coral, *Millepora platyphylla*  
 Bennett's Feather Star, *Oxycomanthus bennetti*  
 Painted rock lobster, *Panulirus versicolor*  
 Commensal Shrimp, *Periclimenes soror*  
 Sea Squirt, *Pyura Sp.*  
 Feather Star, *Stephanometra sp.*  
 Worm Cucumber, *Synapta maculata*  
 Triangle turbinweed, *Turbinaria decurrens*  
 Pom Pom algae, *Tydemania expeditionis*

Indian Sea Star, *Fromia indica*  
 Slate-pencil urchin, *Heterocentrotus mammillatu*  
 Guilding's sea star, *Linckia guildingi*  
 Galathea Sea Star, *Nardoa galathea*  
 Stripe legged spiny lobster, *Panulirus femorstriga*  
 Blackmouth sea cucumber, *Pearsonothuria graeffei*  
 Varicose wart slug, *Phyllidia varicosa*  
 Christmas tree worm, *Spirobranchus giganteus*  
 Dark green sea cucumber, *Stichopus chloronotus*  
 Common Giant Clam, *Tridacna maxima*  
 Ornate turbinaria, *Turbinaria ornata*

