



CTA-125-Volunteerism and Coral Gardening

Join WFCRC

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation
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For a **Diver**  Every day is **Ocean Day** © 2018 TRENDS

Coral Reef Gardening: Try Volunteerism when next in Paradise



Here's a great idea for your next vacation. Pick a tropical island paradise—Fiji for example. Get wet in the pristine waters and break out the scuba gear. But most important, turn your vacation from tourism to voluntourism. Become a citizen scientist on a mission. Try coral reef gardening.

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These beautiful coral reefs, teeming with marine life that give you such a rush, they are not doing so well. In fact, many of them are in serious jeopardy. It's something that you might see on your first dive. Corals that are now colorless, bleached by rising ocean temperatures. Broken and shattered corals thrown down by dredging or covered with silt. (photo – Michele Westmorland)

Update: Celebrating The Year of the Reef



During 2018 we are celebrating The International Year of The Reef. Over the next few months we will increase the frequency of our articles on the world's coral reef ecosystems. We will include current news on the health of reefs and the worldwide efforts to maintain and restore them. In addition,

we will republish a variety of our past, but still very pertinent and helpful articles on coral reefs. Our hope is that this effort will focus more attention on these very important issues.

Fortunately, concerned individuals and resorts are doing great work to repair this damage. Many of these resorts offer programs that invite you to join in. Take Fiji for instance, you might ask yourself: What can I do as a citizen scientist in Fiji? We have a list of 10 resorts that offer great voluntourism programs so keep reading. But first, here is a little primer on coral reef gardening.

What is Coral Reef Gardening?



Also called coral aquaculture, it's a process of taking young corals when they are most vulnerable and growing them in a nursery. When they are large enough they are replanted in the ocean environment. (photo – Coral Restoration Foundation) Often the corals selected for the nursery are those that exhibit the most resiliency in the face of rising sea temperatures and bleaching. Consequently, this process not only restores a reef but tries to do it with corals that may be stronger and more resistant to climate change.

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Ten Resorts Offer Coral Reef Gardening Programs
Thanks to the Salt Sirens, check out this list of [ten resorts involved with coral reef gardening](#). The list includes the famous Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort (see our [article on Jean-Michel](#)), the Outrigger Fiji, the Intercontinental Fiji, and the Plantation Resort.

That's just four of the ten. Remember that the resorts are located on different islands so make sure to check out connections when booking. (photo – Jean-Michel Cousteau Resort)

Coral Gardening : A New Priority

The New York Times wrote a recent article on many resorts changing their priorities. There is a shift from exploiting the ocean's reefs to actively restoring them. So if you want to holiday somewhere other than Fiji, this list offers some [terrific resorts in very exotic locations](#):

Like the Outrigger Konotta and the Taj Exotica in the Maldives; the Andaman in Malaysia, the Lila Manggis in Bali and Wakatobi Dive Resort in southeast Sulawesi. Wakatobi is run by Henrik Rosen, an old friend of Blue Ocean. Henrik was interviewed in our 2014 Summit and you can read that article [here](#). (photo – Wakatobi Eco Resort)



“Programs like this have to come from the heart,” says Doris Goh, of the Alila Manggis. “We believe in being good neighbors and showing that there is sustainability in tourism and that we will protect the environment and the beauty of it for future generations.”



To date these resorts have transplanted thousands of square feet of coral and are actively growing more everyday. Ms. Fattori, the Outrigger Konotta’s resident marine biologist adds: “It doesn’t matter where people live, how close or far away from the ocean...Everybody is connecting to the ecosystem. If we don’t have healthy oceans, we cannot have life on land. If we are not taking care of the precious treasure now [referring to coral reefs], the next generation won’t have the possibility to admire and be amazed by all the biodiversity of the ecosystem.” (photo – Wakatobi)

If Fiji and the Maldives are a bit far for you and the family, search our website. Blue Ocean Network has been covering coral restoration programs for years. We have featured programs in Florida, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean and Asia. There are lots of possibilities to choose from when you go looking.

This article is one of many that we are bringing to you to celebrate 2018 as [The International Year Of the Reef](#), stay tuned for much more. Make sure to Comment, Like, and Share with hashtags #IYOR2018 and #SustainTheBlue.

By Robert Frerck, Blue Ocean Network

For additional reading see [The WFCRC Document Gallery](#) for articles about:

- Public Service Announcements (PSA)
- Coral Alert Network (CAN)

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- Emergency Reporting Reports (ERR)
- Call to Action (CTA)
- Marine Protected Areas (MPA)
- Marine Life Alert (MLA)
- Seismic and Oil Production Threats
- Natural Science Reports (NSR)
- Oil Spill Alerts (OSA)
- And other miscellaneous documents

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