

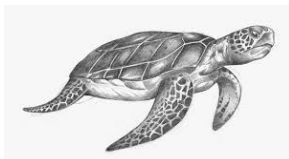


Operation Wallacea

Conservation research through academic partnerships



SIS OPWALL EXPEDITION IN LATE JUNE/JULY 2019 (2.5 Weeks) To FIJI. (Focus on Marine Conservation/Research and PADI Diving)



We are offering an exciting trip in the summer of 2019 with an expedition to Fiji with an organization called Operation Wallacea. (OPWAL). The dates in of the expedition are 23rd June to 5th July 2019 but there will be an estimated 24 hours travel to and from the destination. This Trip is offered to students in Years 11-13 next year (who are currently in Years 10-12 this year)

Operation Wallacea (Opwall) is an organisation that runs a series of biological and conservation management research programmes in remote locations across the world. These expeditions are designed with specific wildlife conservation aims in mind – from identifying areas needing protection, through to implementing and assessing conservation management programmes. What is different about Operation Wallacea is that large teams of ecologists, scientists, academics and postgraduate researchers who are specialists in various aspects of biodiversity or social and economic studies are concentrated at the target study sites.

In July 2017 we returned from an OPWAL trip to Cuba and the students (in Years 11-13) had a really rich experience where they learned to dive, learned about marine ecology, worked with university students and academics to help carry out important research related to conservation. In 2013 the school also ran a very successful trip to Sulawesi in Indonesia. This trip is valuable in many ways and it can be an excellent CAS experience for **Year 12** students as well as a residential project for HKAYP Gold Students.

The various biodiversity surveys being run as part of the Operation Wallacea programme are mostly carried out by university academics and university undergraduates acting as Research Assistants or completing independent research projects. However, there are some tasks that need a much greater amount of manpower than available just from university students. These tasks are being carried out by groups of high school/sixth form groups from the UK, other parts of Europe, North America, Asia and Australia who are generally accompanied by their biology, geography or environmental science teachers (although occasionally teachers from other disciplines go with the group). These groups, known as General Surveyors, join

the mixed teams of scientists and undergraduates but undertake their own programmes as school expeditions.

There are two week expeditions available at each of the sites for 15 – 18 year old students and are ideal for those studying biology, geography, environmental courses or interested in conservation. The two week expeditions have slightly different structures in each country and manuals outlining the programme of skills training, academic lectures, practicals to demonstrate the differing types of surveys being undertaken and the field research to be carried out are provided to the students in advance of the expeditions and are available on each countries page on the website. Training is also given in how to prepare for the expedition and how to fundraise.

We aim to get a group of around 10 students from current years 10-12 to join this trip which will be led by Mr. Morris and another (female) member of staff. It may be that we will combine and run this jointly with another ESF school. Once we arrive on site in Fiji the day to day organization will be managed by experienced OPWAL staff.

Structure of the Expedition

In Fiji the students would spend the first week in a Forest Environment. This would involve Home Stays and also a Tented Jungle Camp. Students would learn about Fijian culture, be briefed on jungle survival and safety and then assist in various research projects. They would also receive a series of lectures and talks on Terrestrial Ecology. In the second week we transfer to OPWALS marine site at Natewa Bay Marine Research Centre. Accommodation here is in tents with showers and flush toilets

where the students will be learning to dive to PADI Open Water level as well as learning how to identify Pacific reef fish and coral species. For those who can already dive they will complete a reef ecology course and assist on research projects. It is also possible to use the expedition to gain extra UCAS points by doing an EPQ, and the expedition covers key aspects of biology and geography syllabuses. In addition if they are applying for UK universities then they automatically qualify by completing the expedition for a University Award that can be included on their UCAS

Clearly Fiji is an exotic “once in a lifetime” destination and expensive to get to but the total length of the trip will be approx. **2 weeks** excluding travel time. The cost we anticipate for this is in the region of 35000 HK dollars depending on numbers exchange rates etc. **OPWALL encourages students to raise funds to partially support their trips.** Included in the trip price are all travel, insurance (1 million pounds medical and evacuation cover) accommodation food as well as the training associated with the diving, basic dive equipment hire, park fees and reef fees. There is limited opportunity for spending on site.

You can find more details about this trip on the very extensive OPWAL website this will give you a lot more detail about OPWAL as well as the location itself.

<http://opwall.com/sixth-form-high-school/options-for-school-expeditions/>



In addition, here is a link to a short video from OPWALL about the FIJI expedition:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNIL9O48NY>

If you are interested, we would ask you to discuss this seriously with your parents over the coming weeks and then attend a student and parents information session in September 2018 where you can meet Pippa Mansell who is OPWAL's Asia Pacific Liaison Officer. She will tell you lots about the experience and you will have the chance to ask questions. We will need a minimum of 8 students to make the trip viable. To secure your place on the trip we are requesting a deposit of \$10000 on or before June 15th 2018 (Cheque Payable to South Island school with Student Name and Tutor Group on the back). Please hand this in in a clearly marked envelope (**OPWALL FIJI 2019**) to School Reception

Any questions may be referred to Mr. Andy Morris (amorris@sis.edu.hk)

Yours Sincerely

Andy Morris
CAS and HKAYP Coordinator

-----Reply Slip -----
**OPERATION WALLACEA EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN EXPEDITION TO FIJI
(June 2019)**

Name of Student _____ Tutor Group _____

I would like my son/daughter to take part in this expedition. We understand the likely costs of this expedition. We will come to full information next September. I have enclosed a cheque for HK\$10000* to reserve a place on this trip. Once we have sufficient numbers (minimum 8) this will be used as a deposit for your place on the trip.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent's Name _____

Student's e-mail address _____

Parent/Guardians email _____

Parent/Guardians Phone _____

Cheque for \$10,000 enclosed (Cheque No. _____)

*This is in order to align with the current trip payment schedule and to secure flights