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New addition at inland dive site ■ Protection for Scottish bay ■ Award for photographer

New wreck for the Seychelles



Artificial wreck the Aldaberan sits in 40m with great visibility

Tony Baskeyfield was blown away by a new artificial reef in the Seychelles – and some of the competition in SUBIOS 2008.

Text and photographs by **Tony Baskeyfield**

The Seychelles has just got better with the sinking of the Aldaberan, the most beautiful wreck in the Seychelles. I went to swim with whalesharks and take part in the week-long SUBIOS underwater festival – and found a lot more than the usual underwater photo competition.

SUBIOS was devised to promote and educate awareness of the Seychelles underwater environment and to educate the nation's youth on the islands' marine eco-systems. They have banned just the taking of shark fins. Fishermen now have to land the whole shark or face prosecution. Whalesharks are a protected species in the Seychelles and fishing them is completely banned. So the 'little' Seychelles are making a big statement and educating their children in the process.

During SUBIOS the Seychelles children have writing, painting, music and poetry competitions, culminating in swimming events, trydives and boat trips, alongside the international photographic competition. Speakers



Whalesharks are protected in Seychelles and fishing is banned



from all over the world came to make presentations in the conference centre and schools around the islands.

The theme for SUBIOS was 'Wrecks as Ocean Habitats' and it kicked off with the sinking of a confiscated fishing boat to form an artificial reef. The 45-metre Aldaberan was sunk in Willys Bay on 11 July 2008. And what a beauty she is. I dived her and loved every minute. Sitting bolt upright in 40m, the deck levels are at 32m, with the top of the bridge at 28m. This is the most beautiful wreck in all of the Seychelles and in time will just get better when it matures and is festooned with all kinds of coral. Already after two months she has attracted large batfish and schools of jacks, with lionfish and moray eels on the decks. This wreck is a real beauty, which looks just like a sunken ship should do with everything intact, masts

included. Internally the ship has been cleaned and made safe for divers. It is so good I had to go back for another dive as my first sighting left me wishing I had spent more time at the bows. This area is lovely, with pelagic fish appearing from out of the blue. From the bows, I could see the bridge and almost to the stern.

In many ways the Aldeberan is very similar to the Scylla near Plymouth, cleaned out and sunk with explosives for divers to enjoy. The difference is that this is a better-looking wreck in tropical waters, with great visibility.

SUBIOS RESULTS

Image Contest:

- 1 Patrick Toressan – The Lion Fish
- 2 Elizabeth Fideria – Mr Turtle
- 3 Ms Katsia Stelczyk – Nest

Best Image Shot in the Seychelles:

Elisabeth Fideria – moray eel

Public Choice Award for Image:

Pedro Vierya – Smiley

Video Shoot Out:

- 1 Gino Rosiers – Macro Predators
- 2 Edward Snidjers – Eau de Bretagne
- 3 Edward Snidjers – One

Public Choice Award for Video:

Gino Rosiers – Macro Predators

Best Video Shot in the Seychelles:

Edward Snidjers – Macro Predators

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