

Cultivating Ocean Stewardship: Empowering Community through Swimming Lessons and Environmental Awareness

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Conclusion of the inaugural swimming lessons course (Photos by Andre Phillip)

In a joint endeavour aimed at fostering environmental awareness and cultivating a deeper connection with the ocean, the Elkhorn Marine Conservancy partnered with the Wadadli Aquatic Racers Swim Club to provide affordable ocean-based swimming lessons to the Antiguan community. The aim of this initiative was to teach essential swimming skills and help foster a greater appreciation for the marine ecosystems that surround our island.

Tailored for adults, the 8-hour course was undertaken over three weekends where participants learned essential water safety competence and swimming techniques. The program was run by Edith Clashing, a swim coach from Wadadli Aquatic Racers Swim Club with 20+ years of experience, her daughter Christal Clashing, a former Olympic athlete and rower, and one EMC team member on hand to assist. The attendees, some of whom had prior water-related trauma or a genuine fear of open waters, courageously confronted their fears during the course. Upon completing the program, they not only gained valuable aquatic skills but also emerged with newfound confidence in the water.



following the tour was one of sheer astonishment at the hidden underwater beauty, revealing a world previously unknown to many of the participants.





Photos by Andre Phillip

Elkhorn Marine Conservancy – The Elkhorn Marine Conservancy (EMC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the resilience and local stewardship of Antigua’s marine ecosystems through restoration, collaborative management, and conservation. Named after the iconic elkhorn coral that once defined many of Antigua’s reefs, EMC focuses on 4 pillars:

- Science – Scientifically rigorous methodologies, monitoring practices and data collection for ecosystem restoration and conservation.
- Engagement – Collaboration with local ocean users, government authorities, and community and regional restoration experts.
- Advocacy – Advocacy for policy and behavioural change that minimize human impacts on the environment

established in 2006 to promote competitive swimming. Over the years its mission has been to introduce year-round swimming to Antiguan children from the ages of 4 and up in a guided step-by-step progression of skill acquisitions, working with novice swimmers to the most competitive and skilled swimmer; promoting discipline, goal setting and accountability. It promotes a strong culture of water safety, making our population able to enjoy our 356 beaches and water experiences in a fun and safe

way. We work together and play together. We are a family-oriented club, where many families become one.

