



SCIE:NCE Highlights

September – October 2021 Edition 1

Welcome to the SCIE:NCE Highlights for the months of September and October! SCIE:NCE stands for Sustainability and Conservation of Island Ecosystems through Nurturing Collaborative Endeavours. We are a young team within Soneva (1 year old!), which covers Marine Biology, Integrated Pest Control, Astronomy and the Soneva Academy. Our focus is on life below water, life on land, stars in the sky, plastic pollution and life-long learning.



Team Soneva Jani



Team Soneva Fushi



BIG NEWS! \$200,000 contribution to SCIE:NCE



One of our villa owners, Mr. Gratian Anda and family, donated \$200,000 to SCIE:NCE.

The agreement was signed with Sonu on 8 October 2021. This donation will be used to support the construction of the SCIE:NCE centre, which is planned to start in May 2022. We are most grateful for this generous donation!

The SCIE:NCE centre will be located in the gardens near the Fresh in the Garden restaurant and will open its doors for anyone curious to learn about (and even become involved in) Soneva's research and conservation efforts. It will have a laboratory, small library, lecture room and office space. We can't wait to see the centre come to life! More news in upcoming newsletters, so stay tuned!





Dr. Becky visits Soneva Jani

Dr. Becky Smethurst is an astrophysicist at the University of Oxford and star of astronomy-themed YouTube channel "Dr Becky".

She hosted stargazing experiences in Soneva Jani together with Soneva's in-house Astronomer, Maavin Munthasir.

Full-time Astronomer in Soneva Fushi

We have a new in-house Astronomer!

Laisa is joining us as the full-time in-house astronomer. she will develop all of the astronomy experiences at Soneva Fushi in collaboration with Maavin, our in-house astronomer in Soneva Jani.



Celestial events in September – October 2021

Epsilon Perseids Meteor Shower: 5/9/2021 to 21/09/2021

Epsilon Perseids meteor shower radiates from the Epsilon Persei in the central Perseus and can produce about five meteors per hour and unlike August Perseids emanating from 109P Comet, the parent body of this meteor shower is an unknown long period comet.

Harvest Moon: 17/09/2021

This is the full moon closest to the Autumn Equinox and also referred to as the Strawberry moon, associated with strawberry harvesting season. Harvest moon rises earlier than an average and can be observed several evenings in a row.

Andromeda Galaxy: 02/10/2021 onwards

This is a very popular object and also the most distant object visible to the naked eye. The galaxy is a spiral galaxy and also sometimes considered a nebula and is 2.5 million light years away.

Orionid Meteor Shower: 2/10/2021 to 7/11/2021

Orionids are long lasting meteor showers and at its peak you can see up to 20 meteors per hour! However, this year the Orionid meteor shower peaked during the full moon, hindering the the shooting stars from our view.

Moon in Conjunction with Venus, Saturn and Jupiter: 9/10/2021, 14 and 15/10/2021

A conjunction is an event that occurs when two or more space objects are visible to each other and takes place between the Moon and the planets.

Terrestrial Updates

Bird Compendium

Do you want to know what species of birds can be seen on Soneva Fushi? Check out the [Soneva Fushi mobile app](#)! There you can find all the birds of Soneva Fushi, their behaviour, their habitat and their sounds.



Hi to Tom!

Tom is a second year Biology Student from the Netherlands. He will be assisting us with the bird course and coral propagation work at Soneva Fushi.

Tree Pipit seen at FIG: Second observation ever in the Maldives!

This tree pipit is the second recorded observation in the Maldives ever! We are proud that they visit us during their migration season.



WHO Maldives

We presented Soneva's mosquito work during a workshop (8 Sept) for WHO/HPA Maldives and discussed trapping and genetic control strategies.



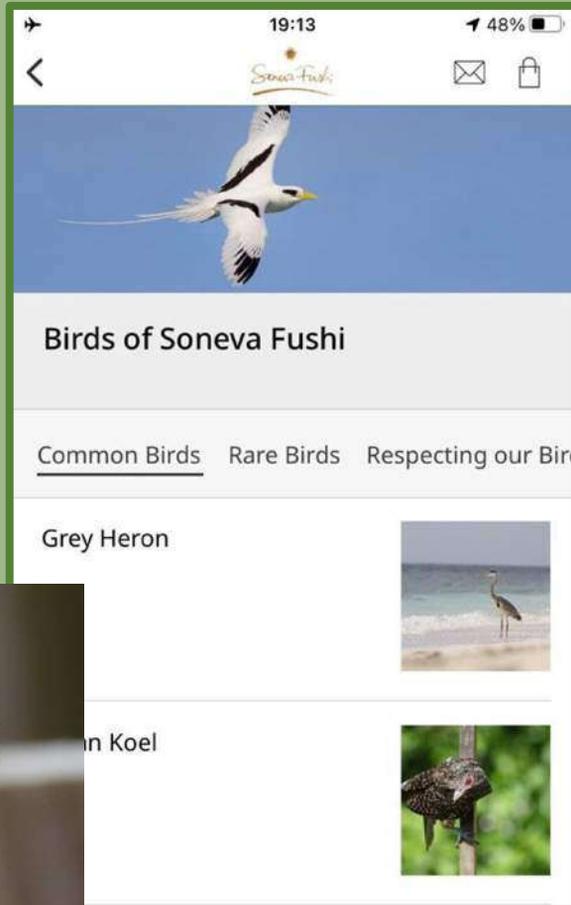
Mosquito projects on local islands

Meetings were held with Dharavandhoo (24 Oct) and Kihaadhoo (28 Oct) island councils to start mosquito management projects on their islands. Sponsored by the Soneva Foundation this will reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease.



Taxon Expedition at Soneva in 2022

Taxon Expeditions will conduct a biodiversity expedition in search of new animal species at Soneva Fushi in July 2022. You can be Darwin too! A unique guest experience!



Birds of Soneva Fushi

[Common Birds](#) [Rare Birds](#) [Respecting our Birds](#)

Grey Heron



Green Koel



Mosquito project expansion to different resorts



Hurawalhi MALDIVES



In September & October, we submitted proposals for mosquito management to four more resorts (Bandos, Hurawalhi, Waldorf Astoria and Kudadoo)

Dragonflies are back on the island!

The Globe Skimmer dragonfly was observed at Soneva from 21st October onwards. For more on dragonfly migration, check out our islander magazine!



Tom Knols
Photography

Marine Updates

Welcome to the Coralive team!

Since the start of October 2021, the Coralive Team has been operating at Soneva Fushi to set up what will become the largest coral nursery in the world, with a planned 50,000 pieces of coral produced every year. The project uses Mineral Accretion Technology to propagate coral on underwater structures.



KAUST delegation visits SFR and SJR

Four coral experts from King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) in Saudi Arabia visited Soneva Fushi and Soneva Jani to discuss the future project on assisted evolution for coral propagation. At Soneva we are looking at various technologies to preserve coral reefs and regenerate the marine ecosystem.



Finding Nemo Report and new collaboration with University of Alabama

We finished the mapping of sea anemones and the two species of anemone fish on the edge of the reef at Soneva Fushi. We are in close contact with Alabama University and the American Museum of Natural History regarding a study genomes of sea anemones around the island.



We received permits from the Maldives Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for monitoring sea turtle nesting activities in Soneva Jani and Soneva Fushi. These permits will enable us to research turtle nesting and ultimately will contribute to the protection of nesting sites of these endangered animals.



Sponsored by:



In October, we successfully placed 432 tables in the water and installed a smart buoy!



Mini Symposium on Coral restoration

On 12 October 2021 we organised a mini-symposium titled: **Building a future for coral reefs in the Maldives**. The symposium aimed to share experiences and expertise in the coral field between KAUST, Coralive and Soneva's marine teams.

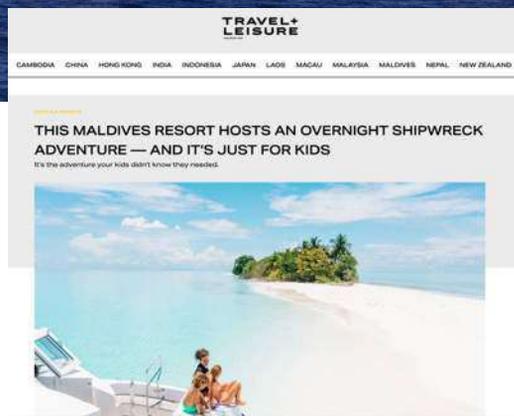


Adventure of the Corbin on SIA

We finalised the “Adventure of the Corbin” experience, a 3,5 day adventure to the Goidhoo atoll, which teenage guests can now book. The experience is now also on offer with Soneva’s yacht, Soneva in Aqua (SIA), which adds 4 additional hours to teach kids navigation skills, delivered by SIA’s experienced Captain and Crew. A magical and unforgettable learning experience!

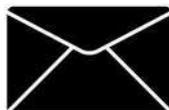
Travel+Leisure showcases the Adventure of the Corbin experience!

Travel+Leisure covered the Adventure of the Corbin in three of their websites (Travel+Leisure [Global](#), [Asia](#) and [India](#)), providing great promotional exposure for us.



Teenagers: You’ve got mail

Upon arrival, every teenage guest now receives a personalised invitation to join the Soneva Academy. We now also answer their questions every Tuesday and Saturday (16:00-16:30 hrs) at Out of The Blue.



Jannah, our ‘Science Educational Guide’...



Jannah joined Soneva to develop online educational materials for the Soneva Academy.

Her work will showcase the beauty of the natural world at Soneva to kids around the world! Jannah has many years of experience as a guide in a Safari Park.

Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution course

This month the Knight family joined us in the Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution course. They were delighted with the learning offered and look forward to taking more courses when they come back!



Young Wildlife Explorers

The 1.5-hour walk to learn about the flora and fauna in the jungle of Soneva Fushi received positive feedback from our guests. We conducted 3 different exploration trips in October and look forward to taking more young explorers into the jungle during the festive season!



SCIE:NCE Weekly Launched!

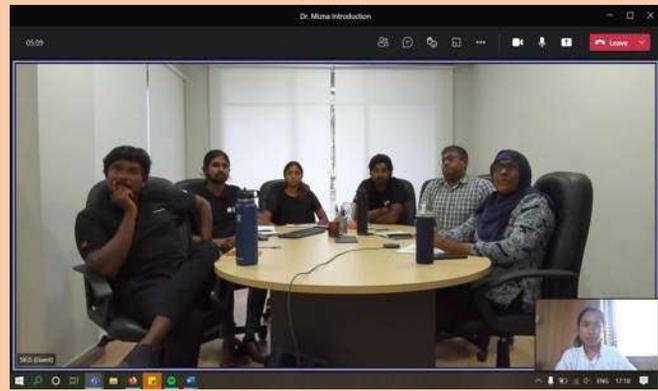


Since October, we provide weekly bite-size information on marine life, waste to wealth, terrestrial life, vegetables in our garden, and astronomy for all hosts in Soneva. We have received a lot of positive feedback on this! Several hosts share this information with relatives and friends. The idea is that learning should be fun! Educated hosts will better inform our guests about all the great that Soneva has to offer.

...and there's more

Hulumale to start waste reduction

Nila is in contact with SIGS Maldives, an organization that plans to initiate a zero waste household project in Hulumale. We are supporting them by sharing knowledge and approaches that can be implemented by households supported by the organisation.



News flash: Upon arrival in Malé, guests can now find information about all Soneva academy courses in Soneva's airport lounge

SLOW LIFE Talk by the Bar

We re-named the "Sustainability Talk" into "SLOW LIFE talk" to stand by our philosophy and opening opportunities for other topics to be presented during buffet nights. These talks are quite popular especially for guests with children.

Soneva's hand sanitizer now for sale!



Course: Zero Waste and Plastic Pollution in the Maldives

Modules: Four (three sessions, one exam)
Time involved: Three x 2 to 2.5 hours, one x 20 minutes (exam)
Certification level: Basic - "Skillset 1" Expert
Age: 12+
Cost: USD 150++ per module per participant (USD 450++ in total)
Course available at: Soneva Fushi and Soneva Iani

In this course we will learn about the world of plastic, the use, and the actions towards reduction of single-use plastic. Learn about plastic pollution and the movement of waste reduction globally. We will also teach you how you can directly contribute to climate action from your home and comfort zone with the zero-waste lifestyle.

There will be three modules in the course, followed by an exam.

Module one: Plastic and our life
 Today we will learn about plastic and its use in our daily life. What is plastic? Why do we use it? Is it bad? In this session, we will have an interactive presentation and discussion, we will discuss our daily use and consumption of plastic. We will also learn how to recognize various types of plastic.

Module two: Plastic pollution in the Maldives
 On the second day, we will talk about the negative impact of plastic especially on small island nations like the Maldives. What is the problem? How can we do something about it? What is the correct action that is being taken? In this session, we will learn everything related to collaborative action between government, businesses and the community to tackle the plastic pollution issues and learn about the impact of waste on island nations.

Module three: Zero Waste Lifestyle. Can you?
 After learning about plastic and the impact of it, you must be wondering, what else can we do? Can we stop using disposable items? If yes, how? In this session we will learn about practical action with the zero waste lifestyle, which you can implement in your own home. You will also learn to make your own products such as soap and body scrub from waste materials!

Exam: Let's see what we've learned!
 Time for a review of the knowledge you have gained. Don't worry, we will not make it too difficult for you... If you pass your test, you will receive a certificate. Furthermore, we will show you what the next course (to reach the 'skilled' level) will encompass.

Please sign up and we look forward to welcoming you to the course soon!

Nila Patty, M.Sc. (Innovation and Sustainability Manager and Plastic Hunter at Soneva Fushi)

After months of optimization, internal testing, independent laboratory evaluation (by three different labs), we finally have Soneva's Scented Hand Sanitizer ready for sale in the gift shop. Guests will be able to purchase 30 ml bottles at the gift shop and soon we will have the same hand sanitizer available for use in all Soneva outlets.



Towards a plastic-free Soneva

The Plastic-Free Committee has continued seeking ways to reduce items packaged in plastic in both resorts in the Maldives. This month's highlight goes to Engineering for replacing some of the AC packaging and metal rather than plastic paint buckets. Good work also by F&B for discovering Halo as a replacement for the Nespresso cups. In addition to that, the IPC team has started replacing the PET water bottles with sturdy PP ketchup containers. This is a great reuse practice! We also have found suppliers for nuts without plastic, which will reduce plastic packaging drastically.



Colophon: This bi-monthly newsletter is produced by Soneva's SCIE:NCE team. Text and images: Nila Patty and Bart Knols

