

# Mantas, Dolphins & Coral Reefs – A Maldives Cruise

Naturetrek Tour Report

26th January – 4th February 2024

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Striped Dolphin



Hawksbill Turtle



Whale Shark



Emperor Angelfish

Tour report and photos by Alison Steele

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Tour participants: Alison Steel and Chas Anderson (leaders) with 13 Naturetrek clients.

After a relaxing night at an island resort, our Maldives cruise got underway, departing from an anchorage near Male and heading to the southern atolls for a week filled with some amazing wildlife encounters. A number of the reefs had excellent coral growths and formations, with many different fish and marine species to be seen. Despite the slightly breezy conditions, we were able to find five species of cetacean: Spinner, Common Bottlenose, Indo-Pacific Bottlenose and Striped Dolphins as well as Short-finned Pilot Whales. Some of the Spinner Dolphins showed very acrobatic behaviour, with fast spins, leaps and bow-riding at the front of the boat. However it was our Striped Dolphin experience that was particularly memorable. It had been a fairly quiet afternoon for sightings and we were about to head in, when splashes were spotted about a mile away. This pod of around 70 animals was particularly energetic, with some huge jumps out of the water that resulting in resounding splashes, showing off their bellies that were blushed pink from their exertions. Once anchored for the night, there was still more to see, with fruit bats flying from some islands, then both Whale Shark on a couple of nights and Manta Rays on another night, coming up right by the back of the boat, where the lights were attracting in aggregations of plankton. It's a unique and memorable experience to be in the water after dark with these wonderful, large sea creatures!

## Day 1

**Friday 26th January**

Alison met most of the group in Heathrow, in time for our direct evening flight bound for Male.

## Day 2

**Saturday 27th January**

This morning, we landed into Male Airport. Having completed the formalities and collected our luggage, we transferred by boat to the nearby resort island of Bandos. On arrival we checked in, but needed to wait for most of the rooms to be ready, so many went to get refreshments or lunch while they waited.

Later in the day, those who wished met for an introductory snorkel near the dive centre. We had a good introduction to some of the local fish species, with Black-tipped Reef Shark, Spotted Unicornfish, Powder Blue Surgeonfish and triggerfish among the fish species seen.

As we relaxed or explored, around the island Asian Koel were calling, fruit bats squabbled in the tree tops and lizards scuttled across the paths. We all reassembled in the evening for dinner. Following a congenial meal, it was time to retire and get a good night's sleep.

## Day 3

**Sunday 28th January**

It was a relaxed morning, with people going to breakfast as they chose. Quite a few went for either a morning swim or snorkel, with time to relax before check out. Having made sure that all of the luggage was in the correct place, we relaxed in the reception area while we waited for the dhoni to arrive.

Chas came with the dhoni crew to meet us and, once the bags were loaded, we stepped aboard and headed for the harbour, where we boarded the MV Keana, our home for the next week. A short briefing then we had a little time to get settled into our cabins before lunch.

When we had finished eating, the boat got underway, heading south for South Male Atoll. It got a little more rolling when we left the shelter of North Male Atoll, travelling under the bridge connecting the airport island to the city, as we aimed for the gap that allows access to South Male Atoll. Some tuna were spotted by the surface in the channel between the islands. A number of seaplanes flew overhead and we could see some parasails being used. At one point some very distant Spinner Dolphins were seen briefly. Our destination was Gulhi, where we had a short, late-afternoon snorkel. A Tawny Nurse Shark swam below just as we got in. Although it was not a very pristine reef, it was a good place to make sure that we were familiar with the procedures on the dhoni and that we were all happy with the kit, as well as start spotting marine life. Some of the fish species included Maldivian Anemonefish in their anemone home, Humbug Dascyllus sheltering in a coral formation and a pair of Blotched Porcupinefish.

Having got back to the boat and dried off, there was a short talk on starting to identify reef fish before we had dinner. The light at the back of the boat was attracting plankton and aggregations of small fish and a snake eel.

## Day 4

## Monday 29th January

This morning the boat started engines about 0630, which gave us around an hour before we arrived at the morning snorkel site at Vilivaru. The reef curved round, giving us a good length to explore. There were various starfish, Painted Rock Lobster, squirrelfish, Yellowhead Butterflyfish, Oriental Sweetlips, Regal Angelfish and lots more to see.

Back aboard it was time to dry off and get breakfast. We then headed from South Male Atoll across to Ari Atoll. There was a bit of a swell on the crossing, so only a few birds were seen during the few hours. After lunch, we followed the southern edge of the atoll where we paused briefly to reel in a fish - a Wahoo. A little while later we then found a pod of Spinner Dolphin, which we stayed with for quite some time. There were around 120 animals, some showing spinning, jumping and tail slapping. There were also jumping Mobula Rays.

Eventually we needed to head on to our anchorage inside the atoll. There was time for a short snorkel before sunset at Mirihi. There were some nice coral formations, with Long-nosed Butterflyfish and Black-tipped Reef Sharks. This evening there was a talk on Maldivian Dolphins from Chas. Just as he started, we heard shouting from below: a Whale Shark had turned up at the back of the boat and we had a brief view of it. During dinner, lots of Remora were around the back of the boat. An Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin also showed up. It was after the small fish that were feeding on the plankton.

Most of the remainder of the evening was spent watching over the back of the boat, while small Conger Eel showed up. Some flying fish also flew through the lights at the back of the boat. Much later on, another Whale Shark made a short appearance. Most retired to bed, however around midnight the bell rang. This time the Whale Shark stayed around for some time, allowing some adventurous people to get in the water near it. Over the next hour or so another couple arrived too, so at one point there were three at the same time, but we frequently had sightings of two together.

## Day 5

**Tuesday 30th January**

The boat moved a short distance this morning, to allow a snorkel at Hurasdhoo. A few chose to go ashore on the island for a short visit, but most enjoyed the underwater world. The snorkel produced Giant Moray, Nudibranchs and plenty more fish.

Once dry, it was time for breakfast as the boat set off out of Ari Atoll. Following round the outside of the atoll, we picked up the pod of Spinner Dolphin a little further offshore than where we'd seen them yesterday. We stayed with them for a while, watching them bow riding the boat, before we had to continue on our journey towards Faafu Atoll, to the south. Following the outside of this atoll, we continued to look out for cetaceans: however, it was fairly quiet, so we headed inside the atoll a little early in order to have a longer snorkel.

This afternoon this was at Minimasgali, a lovely sand fringed island topped with palm trees. We followed the edge of the reef, where the plankton rich water had a green tinge. A good selection of marine life had us watching sea cucumber, surgeonfish, octopus, sea urchin and many more. Fish included Black Pyramid Butterflyfish, Forster's (or Blacksided) Hawkfish, Rockmover Wrasse and Striped Surgeonfish.

There was time this evening to watch the sunset while enjoying a drink on deck. Following on from the fish list, we headed to the upper deck to enjoy a talk on seasons in the Maldives, while watching the stars appear from behind the thin cloud layer.

After dinner, we again returned to watching the plankton and other sea life that appeared in the light at the back of the boat.

## Day 6

**Wednesday 31st January**

Our morning snorkel was on a reef to the front of where the boat was moored. There was some great coral growth with some sandy patches where some saw Garden Eel. Four-saddled Grouper, Long-nosed Butterflyfish and Sailfin Tang were among the fish species.

As breakfast got underway, we set off out of the atoll to the south. As we went, we were scanning the ocean for signs of life. The swell and slightly windy conditions made this a little challenging. We were able to pick up large flocks of Lesser Noddy, some feeding above a tuna school, and a few Black-napped Terns. After lunch a few Saunder's Tern were seen, as well as both Great and Lesser Crested Terns. Just as we started to head back towards the atoll, some splashes then a jumping shape were spotted on the horizon, so we headed for that area. As we got closer, more splashing and jumping were evident. This was a new species of dolphin: the Striped Dolphin. This was a very playful pod, and it was difficult to know which was to look, as many were simultaneously leaping and tail slapping. It was possible to see the striping along the side and their pink bellies.

Eventually it was time to leave them, so we set off north, ending up in Dhaalu Atoll. Once anchored, we transferred to the dhoni for a snorkel on the reef at the edge of Rinbudhoo Island, which has a local village. We could hear sounds of sports going in as we got into the water. This was another superb reef, with lots of coral growth and plenty of fish. Lots of Black Pyramid Butterflyfish, Neon Fusiliers, Red-mouthed Triggerfish, Gold Lined Emperors, anthias and so many more.

We watched from the deck of the boat as the sun went down again, in a glow of oranges and pinks. After looking at a few fish, we listened to Chas talk about corals and reef life. During and after dinner time was spent watching the light at the back of the boat as fish, squid and Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin appeared.

## Day 7

## Thursday 1st February

We started this morning with a walk around the village on Rinbudhoo. Although it was early, school was already beginning lessons. Maryam and Siday showed us around. There were lots of House Crows, Asian Koel, Common Myna, White-breasted Waterhen, terns and herons.

Back aboard, we had breakfast as we set off north for Faaflu Atoll. There were no cetaceans to be found so, once we arrived, we headed for a snorkel on the reef we'd been at yesterday morning. The light was excellent and the water warm in patches with some cold upwellings. Garden Eel were seen on a sandy patch. Plenty of Golden and Bluegreen Chromis on the edge of the reef and a couple of people briefly saw a Green Turtle. Travelling north between the atolls, there was a lot of splashing. It was a mix of large tuna and some dolphins. However, these proved fairly elusive, so we needed to keep going.

As we came up the side of Ari Atoll there was a flock of Black-naped Tern. Inside the atoll we could see some other boats watching Spinner Dolphin, however as we neared the deep channel into the atoll, some Short-finned a Pilot Whale were picked up. These were also travelling with Common Bottlenose Dolphin. We watched one pod come towards us, but lost them when they dived. A few minutes later we picked up two distinct groups, one some way back where we'd come from and another off the port side. After watching them travel south for a while, we needed to make a push on to the anchorage. On entering the atoll, we passed a small group of Spinner Dolphin heading out for the night to hunt.

Once anchored, we started to relax for the night. Drinks were had in the bar, and a fish list was done. Chas started to share a talk on Black Fish, but a couple of minutes in a Whale Shark appeared at the back of the boat, which put paid to that! We all enjoyed watching this huge fish coming up to feed, taking in great gulps of plankton and water each time.

Another wonderful dinner was enjoyed, the Whale Shark returned, so much of the evening was spent watching, or swimming with, this huge creature. Occasionally a second (or third) individual would also appear. Out at the edge the light pool, some Indo-Pacific Bottlenose chased fish. Some of the crew also returned with a haul of fish, showing off the catch.

## Day 8

## Friday 2nd February

Our morning snorkel was on the reef off Mirihi Island. It had a broad, gently sloping reef before dropping off. Another good selection of corals and marine life, including reef sharks, Nudibranchs, sea urchins, Christmas tree worms and lots of fish: White-line Lionfish, Yellow-head Butterflyfish, colourful parrotfish, wrasse and snapper were among these.

We then headed up the west side of South Ari Atoll, scanning the ocean as we went. There were a few terns, but unfortunately not much else. In the late morning we arrived at a Manta cleaning site, by Moofishi. There were some divers getting out of the water as we arrived, so we waited for them to reach their boat before we got in. Way down there was one Manta circling; however, the visibility wasn't great, so we headed up the reef slope, into the surge zone. There were some new fish, such as Sharp-nosed Puffer and Picasso Triggerfish, but the highlight was a couple of Hawksbill Turtles. Around the boat we caught some glimpses of a small pod of Spinner Dolphin.

The outside of the atoll remained quiet, other than some terns. Turning into the atoll, we headed to the lagoon at Maayafushi to moor for the night. Just as Chas was about to start his talk, some Reef Mantas appeared at the back of the boat, so the talk was abandoned (again!) in favour of watching, or swimming with, the mantas. They remained intermittently during dinner, proving to be almost hypnotic to watch. Some stayed up very late, enjoyed watching these magnificent rays.

## Day 9

## Saturday 3rd February

The boat's engine started early again this morning, taking us to Bthala Giri reef for our morning snorkel. There were quite a few sharks, including a Tawny Nurse Shark hiding under a rock. A few Lionfish were under overhangs, and a lot of fish were on the edge of the reef, by the drop off.

Back on board, we headed out of Ari Atoll, to the north east, bound for Male. Part way across, we came across a large group of Spinner Dolphin. They weren't overly-active, but swam alongside and were bow riding for some time. Eventually we needed to leave them and headed on towards Male. Almost immediately, we passed another pod, so quite a few were around today.

An early lunch set us up for a mid-afternoon snorkel on the reef just outside of Male, at Oolamale. There were some lovely fish again, and John was delighted to find an octopus.

Back in the harbour, some did a quick change to catch the dhoni into Male proper. It was very busy after our fairly tranquil few days. A visit to the vegetable market was very interesting, but behind the building we found a large group of around 20 Whiptail Stingray over the harbour wall. The fish market was just about over for the day, but there were still some fish around to be sold. On the side streets were some tourist shops whose owners very actively tried to get us to come in. By the mosque were lots of children playing in the square, near a small cemetery complex. Back at the dhoni we had a short wait for supplies to arrive, which some filled by getting ice cream.

Once everyone was on the main boat, we got some formalities done for those flying out tomorrow, then spent a little time reflecting on the highlights of the past week. After another great dinner, it was time to thank all the crew for their hard work. They had really looked after us well over the roughly 300 nautical miles that we've covered this week.

## Day 10

## Sunday 4th February

After breakfast, it was sadly time to make sure that everything was packed up and loaded onto the dhoni for the journey back to the airport. Saying farewell to the crew, we headed off. Those who were staying on headed off to



catch their flights or boat transfers, while everyone else joined the queue for check in. After an uneventful flight, the group arrived back at Heathrow, where we said goodbye and went our separate ways.



Foursaddle Grouper

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## Species lists

### Fishes

| Common name                         | Scientific name                                   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Black-tipped Reef Shark             | <i>Carcharinus melanopterus</i>                   |
| White-tipped Reef Shark             | <i>Triaenodon obesus</i>                          |
| Nurse Shark                         | <i>Nebrius ferrugineus</i>                        |
| Whale Shark                         | <i>Rhincodon typus</i>                            |
| Manta Ray                           | <i>Manta alfredi</i> (formerly <i>birostris</i> ) |
| Whiptail Stingray                   | <i>Himantura fai</i>                              |
| Mobula Ray                          | <i>Mobula thurstoni</i>                           |
| Giant Moray                         | <i>Gymnothorax javanicus</i>                      |
| Snake Eel sp.                       | <i>Ophichthidae</i> spp.                          |
| Black-spotted Garden Eel            | <i>Heteroconger hassi</i>                         |
| Conger Eel sp.                      | <i>Conger</i> spp.                                |
| Gold-spot Herring                   | <i>Herklotsichthys quadrimaculatus</i>            |
| Fringe-lip Mullet                   | <i>Oedalechilus labiosus</i>                      |
| Slender Lizardfish                  | <i>Saurida gracilis</i>                           |
| Reef Lizardfish                     | <i>Synodus variegatus</i>                         |
| Needlefish                          | <i>Tylosaurus crocodilus</i>                      |
| Smooth Flutemouth                   | <i>Fistularia commersonii</i>                     |
| Trumpetfish                         | <i>Aulostomus chinensis</i>                       |
| Red-spotted Blenny                  | <i>Blenniella chrysospilos</i>                    |
| Blotcheye Soldierfish               | <i>Myripristis murdjan</i>                        |
| Violet Soldierfish                  | <i>Myripristis violacea</i>                       |
| Crown Squirrelfish                  | <i>Sargocentron diadema</i>                       |
| White-tail Squirrelfish             | <i>Sargocentron caudimaculatum</i>                |
| Spotfin Squirrelfish                | <i>Neoniphon samara</i>                           |
| Sabre Squirrelfish                  | <i>Sargocentron spiniferum</i>                    |
| White-line Lionfish                 | <i>Pterois radiata</i>                            |
| Smallscale Scorpionfish             | <i>Sebastapistes oxycephala</i>                   |
| Peacock Rock Cod                    | <i>Cephalopholis argus</i>                        |
| Slender Grouper                     | <i>Anyperodon leucogrammicus</i>                  |
| White-spotted Grouper               | <i>Epinephelus caeruleopunctatus</i>              |
| Camouflage Grouper                  | <i>Ephinephelus polyphekadion</i>                 |
| Four Saddle Grouper                 | <i>Epinephelus spiloticeps</i>                    |
| Yellow-tailed Basslet               | <i>Pseudanthias evansi</i>                        |
| Orange Anthias                      | <i>Pseudanthias squamipennis</i>                  |
| Bluefin Jack                        | <i>Caranx melampygus</i>                          |
| Rainbow Runner                      | <i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>                       |
| Small-spotted Dart                  | <i>Trachinotus baillonii</i>                      |
| Striped Remora (Slender Suckerfish) | <i>Echeneis naucrates</i>                         |
| Longtail Silverbiddy                | <i>Gerres longirostris</i>                        |
| One-spot Snapper                    | <i>Lutjanus monostigma</i>                        |
| Kashmir Snapper                     | <i>Lutjanus kasmira</i>                           |
| Two-spot Red Snapper                | <i>Lutjanus bohar</i>                             |
| Blackspot Snapper                   | <i>Lutjanus fulviflamma</i>                       |
| Humpback Red Snapper                | <i>Lutjanus gibbus</i>                            |
| Midnight Snapper                    | <i>Macolor macularis</i>                          |
| Black-and-white Snapper             | <i>Macolor niger</i>                              |



| Common name                        | Scientific name                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Lunar Fusilier                     | <i>Caesio lunaris</i>                |
| Neon Fusilier                      | <i>Pterocaesio tile</i>              |
| Striped Fusilier                   | <i>Pterocaesio trilineata</i>        |
| Oriental Sweetlips                 | <i>Plectorhinchus orientalis</i>     |
| Harlequin Sweetlips                | <i>Plectorhinchus chaetodonoides</i> |
| Blackspot Emperor                  | <i>Gymnocranium harak</i>            |
| Gold-striped Emperor               | <i>Gnathodentax aureolineatus</i>    |
| Big-eye Bream                      | <i>Monotaxis grandoculis</i>         |
| Two-lined Monocle Bream            | <i>Scolopsis bilineatus</i>          |
| Yellowstripe Goatfish              | <i>Mulloidichthys flavolineatus</i>  |
| Yellow-saddle Goatfish             | <i>Parupensis cyclostomus</i>        |
| Dash-dot Goatfish                  | <i>Parupeneus barberinus</i>         |
| Lagoon Goatfish                    | <i>Upeneus taeniopterus</i>          |
| Threadfin Butterflyfish            | <i>Chaetodon auriga</i>              |
| Spotted Butterflyfish              | <i>Chaetodon guttatissimus</i>       |
| Citron Butterflyfish               | <i>Chaetodon citrinellus</i>         |
| Collared Butterflyfish             | <i>Chaetodon collare</i>             |
| Double-saddle Butterflyfish        | <i>Chaetodon falcula</i>             |
| Klein's Butterflyfish              | <i>Chaetodon kleinii</i>             |
| Racoon Butterflyfish               | <i>Chaetodon lunula</i>              |
| Blackback Butterflyfish            | <i>Chaetodon merlannotus</i>         |
| Meyer's Butterflyfish              | <i>Chaetodon meyeri</i>              |
| Oval Butterflyfish                 | <i>Chaetodon trifasciatus</i>        |
| Triangular Butterflyfish           | <i>Chaetodon triangulum</i>          |
| Yellow-head Butterflyfish          | <i>Chaetodon xanthocephalus</i>      |
| Long-nose Butterflyfish            | <i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>        |
| Black Pyramid Butterflyfish        | <i>Hemitaenichthys zoster</i>        |
| Reef Bannerfish                    | <i>Heniochus acuminatus</i>          |
| Indian Bannerfish                  | <i>Heniochus pleurotinia</i>         |
| Schooling Bannerfish               | <i>Heniochus diphreutes</i>          |
| Emperor Angelfish                  | <i>Pomacanthus imperator</i>         |
| Three-spot Angelfish               | <i>Apolemichthys trimaculatus</i>    |
| Regal Angelfish                    | <i>Pygoplites diacanthus</i>         |
| Semicircle Angelfish               | <i>Pomacanthus semicirculatus</i>    |
| Forster's (Blackside) Hawkfish     | <i>Paracirrhites forsteri</i>        |
| Arc-eye Hawkfish                   | <i>Paracirrhites arcatus</i>         |
| Green Damselfish                   | <i>Amblyglyphidodon batunai</i>      |
| Blackfoot or Maldivian Anemonefish | <i>Amphiprion nigripes</i>           |
| Clark's Anemonefish                | <i>Amphiprion clarkii</i>            |
| Sergeant Major                     | <i>Abudefduf vaigiensis</i>          |
| Chocolate-dip Chromis              | <i>Chromis dimidiata</i>             |
| Golden Chromis                     | <i>Chromis ternatensis</i>           |
| Blue-green Chromis                 | <i>Chromis viridis</i>               |
| Surge Damselfish                   | <i>Crhysiptera brownriggii</i>       |
| Humbug Dascyllus                   | <i>Dascyllus aruanus</i>             |
| Indian Dascyllus                   | <i>Pomacentrus indicus</i>           |
| Neon Damselfish                    | <i>Pomacentris caeruleus</i>         |
| Redbreasted Maori Wrasse           | <i>Cheilinus fasciatus</i>           |
| Axilspot Hogfish                   | <i>Bodianus axillaris</i>            |

| Common name                           | Scientific name                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bird Wrasse                           | <i>Gomphosus caeruleus</i>         |
| Checkerboard Wrasse                   | <i>Halichoerus hortulanus</i>      |
| Rockmover Wrasse                      | <i>Novaculichthys taeniourus</i>   |
| Moon Wrasse                           | <i>Thalassoma lunare</i>           |
| Blunthead Wrasse                      | <i>Thalassoma amblycephalum</i>    |
| Six-barred Wrasse                     | <i>Thalassoma hardwicke</i>        |
| Cleaner Wrasse                        | <i>Labroides dimidiatus</i>        |
| Blackeye Thicklip Wrasse              | <i>Hemigymnus melapterus</i>       |
| Queen Coris                           | <i>Coris formosa</i>               |
| Roundhead Parrotfish                  | <i>Chlorurus strongylocephalus</i> |
| Bullethead Parrotfish                 | <i>Chlorurus sordidus</i>          |
| Dusky Parrotfish                      | <i>Scarus niger</i>                |
| Greencheek Parrotfish                 | <i>Scarus prasiognathus</i>        |
| Ember Parrotfish                      | <i>Scarus rubroviolaceus</i>       |
| Longnose Parrotfish                   | <i>Hipposcarus harid</i>           |
| Two colour / Spotted Parrotfish (juv) | <i>Cetoscarus ocellatus</i>        |
| Spot-tailed Sandperch                 | <i>Parapercis hexopthalma</i>      |
| Maldivian Sandperch                   | <i>Parapercis signata</i>          |
| Circular Batfish                      | <i>Platax orbicularis</i>          |
| Longfin Batfish                       | <i>Platax teira</i>                |
| Starry Rabbitfish                     | <i>Siganus stellatus</i>           |
| Coral Rabbitfish                      | <i>Siganus corallinus</i>          |
| Moorish Idol                          | <i>Zanclus cornutus</i>            |
| Powder-blue Surgeonfish               | <i>Acanthurus leucosternon</i>     |
| Lined Surgeonfish                     | <i>Acanthurus lineatus</i>         |
| Eye-stripe Surgeonfish                | <i>Acanthurus nigricauda</i>       |
| Dark Surgonfish                       | <i>Acanthurus nubilus</i>          |
| Convict Surgeonfish                   | <i>Acanthurus triostegus</i>       |
| Lined Bristletooth Surgeonfish        | <i>Ctenochaetus striatus</i>       |
| Ringtail Surgeonfish                  | <i>Acanthurus auranticavus</i>     |
| Pale-lipped Surgeonfish               | <i>Acanthurus leucocheilus</i>     |
| Orange-spine Unicornfish              | <i>Naso lituratus</i>              |
| Spotted Unicornfish                   | <i>Naso brevirostris</i>           |
| Brushtail Tang                        | <i>Zebrasoma scopas</i>            |
| Sailfin Tang                          | <i>Zebrasoma desjardini</i>        |
| Yellowfin Tuna                        | <i>Thunnus albacares</i>           |
| Skipjack Tuna                         | <i>Katsuwonus palamis</i>          |
| Sailfish                              | <i>Istiophorus platypterus</i>     |
| Wahoo                                 | <i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>      |
| Flying Fish                           | <i>Exocetus spp</i>                |
| Clown Triggerfish                     | <i>Balistapus conspicillum</i>     |
| Orange-Striped Triggerfish            | <i>Balistapus undulatus</i>        |
| Titan Triggerfish                     | <i>Balistapus viridescens</i>      |
| Picasso Triggerfish                   | <i>Rhinecanthus aculeatus</i>      |
| Red-toothed Triggerfish               | <i>Odonus niger</i>                |
| Indian Triggerfish                    | <i>Melichthys indicus</i>          |
| Yellow Boxfish                        | <i>Ostracion cubicus</i>           |
| Black or Spotted Boxfish              | <i>Ostracion meleagris</i>         |
| Bennett's Sharpnose Puffer            | <i>Canthigaster bennetti</i>       |

| Common name                  | Scientific name                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Black-spotted Pufferfish     | <i>Arothron nigropunctatus</i> |
| Guineafowl Pufferfish        | <i>Arothron meleagris</i>      |
| Starry Pufferfish            | <i>Arothron stellatus</i>      |
| Saddled Sharpnose Pufferfish | <i>Canthigaster valentini</i>  |
| Blotched Porcupinefish       | <i>Diodon liturosus</i>        |

## Crustaceans & others

| Common name             | Scientific name                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Swimming Crab species   | <i>Portunidae spp</i>                |
| Red-spotted Coral Crab  | <i>Trapezia rufopunctata</i>         |
| Painted Rock Lobster    | <i>Panulirus versicolor</i>          |
|                         |                                      |
| <b>Others</b>           |                                      |
| Common Octopus          | <i>Octopus vulgaris</i>              |
| Robust Seasquirt        | <i>Atrium robustum</i>               |
| Worm Cucumber           | <i>Synapta maculata</i>              |
| Edible Sea Cucumber     | <i>Holothuria (Halodeima) edulis</i> |
| Spiny Sea Cucumber      | <i>Stichopus chloronotus</i>         |
| Common Giant Clam       | <i>Tridacna maxima</i>               |
| Boring Clam             | <i>Tridacna crocea</i>               |
| Variable Thorny Oyster  | <i>Spondylus varius</i>              |
| Goose Barnacle sp.      | <i>Lepadidae spp.</i>                |
| Pom Pom algae           | <i>Tydemania expeditionis</i>        |
| Geography Cone          | <i>Conus geographus</i>              |
| Nudibranch sp.          | <i>Phyllidiella rosans</i>           |
| Nudibranch sp.          | <i>Chromodoris gleniei</i>           |
| Magnificent Sea Anemone | <i>Heteractis magnifica</i>          |
| Pencil Sea Urchin       | <i>Heterocentrotus mammillatus</i>   |
| Lister's Star Coral     | <i>Astreopora listeri</i>            |
| Cushion Star            | <i>Culcita schmideliana</i>          |
| Red Starfish            | <i>Fromia elegans</i>                |
| Granulated Sea Star     | <i>Choriaster granulatus</i>         |
| Blue Sea Star           | <i>Linckia laevigata</i>             |
| Bennett's Feather Star  | <i>Oxycomanthus bennetti</i>         |
| Black Feather Star      | <i>Colobometra perspinoas</i>        |
| Bushy Feather Star sp.  | <i>Comasterinia spp.</i>             |
| Sea Star sp.            | <i>Linckia spp</i>                   |
| Black Coral Whip        | <i>Cirripathes sp.</i>               |
| Christmastree Worm      | <i>Spirobranchus giganteus</i>       |

## Birds, Cetaceans and other mammals (H = Heard only)

| E= Endemic N=Near-endemic I=Introduced |  | Jan-Feb 24 |    |          |    |    |    |   |          |
|--|--|------------|----|----------|----|----|----|---|----------|
| Common name                            | Scientific name                          | 27         | 28 | 29       | 30 | 31 | 1  | 2 | 3        |
| <b>Birds</b>                           |  |            |    |          |    |    |    |   |          |
| Asian Koel                             | <i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>             | H          | H  | H        |    | H  | 5  |   | H        |
| Feral Rock Dove - I                    | <i>Columba livia</i>                     |            |    |          |    |    |    |   | ✓        |
| White-breasted Waterhen                | <i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>            |            |    |          |    |    | 1  |   |          |
| Common Sandpiper                       | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>                |            |    |          |    |    | 3  |   |          |
| Brown Noddy                            | <i>Anous stolidus</i>                    |            |    |          |    | ✓  | ✓  |   |          |
| Lesser Noddy                           | <i>Anous tenuirostris</i>                |            | ✓  | ✓        | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  | ✓ |          |
| Greater Crested Tern                   | <i>Thalasseus bergii</i>                 |            |    |          |    | ✓  | ✓  |   |          |
| Lesser Crested Tern                    | <i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>            |            | ✓  |          | ✓  | ✓  | ✓  |   |          |
| Saunders's Tern                        | <i>Sternula saundersi</i>                |            |    |          |    | ✓  |    |   |          |
| Black-naped Tern                       | <i>Sterna sumatrana</i>                  |            | ✓  | ✓        |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓ | ✓        |
| Tropical Shearwater                    | <i>Puffinus bailloni</i>                 |            |    |          |    | ✓  | ✓  |   |          |
| Striated Heron                         | <i>Butorides striata didii</i>           |            | ✓  | ✓        |    |    | ✓  | ✓ | ✓        |
| Grey Heron                             | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>                     | ✓          | ✓  | ✓        | ✓  |    | ✓  | ✓ | ✓        |
| Crimson Rosella - I                    | <i>Platycercus elegans</i>               |            | 1  |          |    |    |    |   |          |
| House Crow                             | <i>Corvus splendens</i>                  | ✓          | ✓  | ✓        |    | ✓  | ✓  | ✓ | ✓        |
| Common Myna - I                        | <i>Acridotheres tristis</i>              |            |    |          |    |    | ✓  |   | H        |
| <b>Cetaceans</b>                       |  |            |    |          |    |    |    |   |          |
| Spinner Dolphin                        | <i>Stenella longirostris</i>             |            | ✓  | 100<br>+ | ✓  |    | ✓  |   | ~20<br>0 |
| Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin        | <i>Tursiops aduncus</i>                  |            |    | 1        |    | 3  |    |   |          |
| Common Bottlenose Dolphin              | <i>Tursiops truncatus</i>                |            |    |          |    |    | 20 |   |          |
| Striped Dolphin                        | <i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>             |            |    |          |    | 70 |    |   |          |
| Short-finned Pilot Whale               | <i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>        |            |    |          |    |    | 30 |   |          |
| <b>Non-fish vertebrates</b>            |  |            |    |          |    |    |    |   |          |
| Fruit Bat                              | <i>Pteropus giganteus ssp maldivarum</i> | ✓          | ✓  |          |    |    | ✓  |   | ✓        |
| Green Turtle                           | <i>Chelonia mydas</i>                    |            |    |          |    |    | ✓  |   |          |
| Hawksbill Turtle                       | <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>            |            |    |          |    |    |    | ✓ |          |
| Common Spiny Lizard                    | <i>Coletes versicolor</i>                | ✓          | ✓  |          |    |    | ✓  |   |          |