

Mantas, Dolphins & Coral Reefs – A Maldives Cruise

Naturetrek Tour Report

2nd – 12th February 2024



Heteractis magnifica with Blackfoot Anemonefish



Spinner Dolphin



Pantropical Spotted Dolphin



Hawksbill Turtle

Tour report by Eric Barnes, photos by Eric Barnes & Chas Anderson



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Tour Summary

Our exploration of the stunning Maldivian islands and atolls provided unforgettable encounters with marine wildlife and serene evenings anchored near secluded tropical islands. We marvelled at a rich array of vibrant fish, and acrobatic dolphins, all set against a backdrop of mesmerizing turquoise waters. The highlight of our journey was a captivating encounter with two enormous Whale Sharks and a Reef Manta Ray. Witnessing their graceful movements and feeding frenzy on plankton was a breathtaking experience for everyone.

Each morning and evening, the group embarked on snorkelling adventures amidst coral reefs, marvelling at the kaleidoscope of fish species. From Regal Angelfish to Powder Blue Surgeonfish, and from White- and Black-tipped Reef Sharks to Hawksbill Turtles, the diversity of marine life was truly awe-inspiring. While cruising between atolls, islands, and reefs, we were delighted to spot around 1000 cetaceans: Spinner Dolphins, including several massive pods, Pantropical Spotted Dolphins, the rare Pygmy Killer Whales, Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins, and two groups of Short-finned Pilot Whales.

Our journey was a magnificent odyssey which will forever be cherished and remembered.

Days 1 and 2

Friday 2nd & Saturday 3rd February

London Heathrow to Malé, Maldives

Nine of us, hailing from various parts of the UK, embarked on our journey from Heathrow, boarding a direct 10.5 hour flight bound for Malé, Maldives. Five people were lucky enough to get their seats upgraded!

Upon arrival at Malé, we gathered the group and made our way to Bandos Island Resort, but there was a delay, as British Airways had left Jacky's luggage in London!

Our arrival on the island occurred around noon. Eager to shake off the travel fatigue, some of us wandered off for a brief stroll and a quick dip, while others tackled the necessary paperwork before we could check in at 2.00pm. The remainder of the afternoon was dedicated to unwinding amidst the serene tropical surroundings of the island. In the lush foliage of the Banyan tree, Maldivian Flying Foxes engaged in playful squabbles. Intermittently, Koels' calls filled the air, adding to the enchanting ambience. Meanwhile, Oriental Garden Lizards darted across the sandy pathways between the chalets, and a family of White-breasted Waterhens foraged in the heat.

The accommodations themselves proved to be both spacious and luxurious, providing a welcome retreat for the weary travellers.



White-breasted Waterhen with chick and airport jetty

Those who ventured into the crystal-clear waters or took leisurely strolls along the shallows were treated to an unexpected display of marine life. Among the enchanting creatures encountered were the elegant Black tipped Reef Sharks, vibrant Picasso Triggerfish, Convict Surgeonfish, Eye-line Surgeonfish, Threadfin Butterflyfish, Mangrove Whipray, and huge Titan Triggerfish, to name just a few. As the day waned and the sun dipped below the horizon, the Breeze Café treated us to the captivating sight of rays being fed, including two impressive 1.5-meter Blotched Fantail Rays which glided gracefully at our feet.

Following this spectacle, we gathered for a lovely dinner, savouring the flavours of the island cuisine, before retiring to our comfortable accommodations.



Breeze Café, Bandos Island Resort



Mangrove (Whitespotted) Stingrays (*Urogymnus granulatus*)

Day 3

Sunday 4th February

MV Keana from Bandos Island to Gulhi, South Malé Atoll

It was another fine day in paradise, and many among us eagerly seized the opportunity to snorkel and immerse ourselves in the wonders of the morning. With Jacky's luggage finally making its long-awaited arrival, our spirits lifted, and we felt truly ready for the adventures that lay ahead. We were soon whisked away on a dhoni, bound for MV Keana, with the professorial Chas Anderson, an authority of the region's marine life.

After a quick briefing from Chas, we had a delicious lunch cooked by our Sri Lankan chef. Our journey continued as we set sail for Gulhi in South Malé atoll. Over the turquoise waters, Lesser Noddies and Black-naped Terns graced the skies. For the fortunate few, a sighting of a Hawksbill Turtle added a touch of magic to our excursion. We eagerly embarked on our introductory snorkelling adventure, exploring the vibrant underwater world for a delightful 40 minutes. Despite the reef not being at its prime, the marine life was abundant and diverse. Among the myriad species encountered were Long-nosed, Yellow spot, Double saddled, and Threadfin Butterflyfish, alongside majestic Emperor Angelfish, Bird Wrasse, and sea cucumbers, each adding their own charm to the underwater landscape. We anchored nearby, surrounded by the tranquil beauty of the ocean. A short bird talk was followed by another delightful dinner.

Before calling it a night, we ran-through our checklist. With the day's excitement and anticipation still lingering in the air, we retreated to our cabins around 21:30, ready to rest and rejuvenate for the adventures that awaited us.

Day 4

Monday 5th February

Villivaru to South Male Atoll

While we were anchored, a trio of Grey Herons glided past. In the distance, atop a cluster of low rocks, a roost of 250-300 Black-naped Terns, accompanied by a scattering of Noddies, created a picturesque scene. While most of the group ventured out for a captivating snorkelling session at Villivaru, the shoreline beckoned with its own array of natural marvels. Along the sandy expanse, six Striated Herons stood sentinel, their sleek forms poised amidst the coastal landscape. Joining them were Grey Herons, a Common Sandpiper darting along the water's edge, and Great Crested Terns drifting over. In the distance, a Koel sang, adding a harmonious touch to the serene ambience.

The snorkelling excursion was a resounding success, with vibrant underwater vistas. Energized by our morning adventures, we gathered for breakfast, which included a delightful Maldivian coconut-based dish with tuna, vegetables, and chilli.

Our journey continued as we set course for South Ari Atoll, on a quest to encounter cetaceans. A magnificent pod of 50+ Spinner Dolphins stole the show with a mesmerizing display of aquatic grace. We were treated to unforgettable views as the dolphins riding the bow wave, leaving an indelible imprint of wonder and awe.

As we slowed down in a sheltered area for lunch, the serene surroundings unfolded, revealing sand spits adorned with a bustling congregation of 150 Black-naped Terns and a dozen Lesser Noddies, creating an idyllic backdrop for our lunch stop.

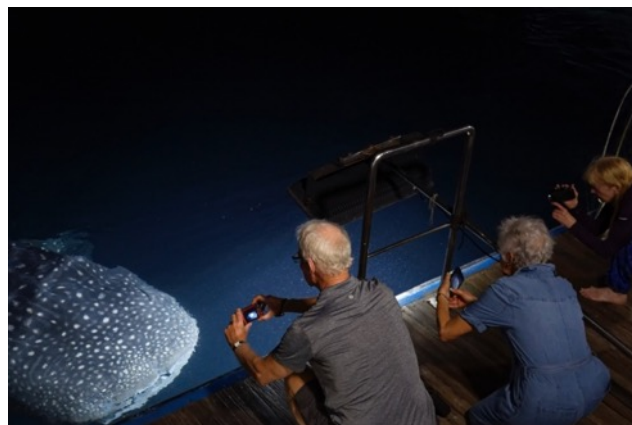
Following our meal, our quest for dolphins resumed, leading us to encounter a distant small group of Spinner Dolphins. Soon after, another 15 Spinners joined us, gracefully riding the bow wave, their playful antics a testament to the beauty of the natural world. The wind picked up, and our journey encountered a temporary setback, as the dhoni was out of action.

We dropped anchor around 5.00 pm in South Ari Atoll. Against the backdrop of a breath-taking sunset, Sarah's startled exclamation broke the stillness as a majestic Whale Shark emerged from the depths, its gargantuan mouth agape as it glided beneath the ship. A handful of fortunate onlookers lined up on the back railing were treated to this spectacle, while others, further back, caught only a fleeting glimpse or missed the event entirely.

With Chas offering reassuring words, those who had dipped circled the ship in hope of catching another glimpse, but to no avail. Fortunately, another Whale Shark made a grand appearance, but once again two people missed it! Amidst the excitement, Chas commenced his talk while the staff remained vigilant, watching for the magnificent creature's potential return. It was a wonderful talk on dolphin identification: beautifully illustrated, and making so much more sense than any of the multiple field guides!

On cue, at the end of the talk a couple of Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins appeared to feed off the stern. They hunted fish with their bellies towards the sky (as that helped their echolocation in this situation).

Dinner was served, and fortunately the Whale Shark put on a spectacular display for everyone during the checklist, remoras and all. What a night to remember!



Whale Shark feeding off the stern of MV Keana

Day 5

Tuesday 6th February

Mirihi to Minimasgali, Faafu Atoll

The morning snorkel excursion around Mirihi was productive. A magnificent school of over 600 Convict Surgeonfish gracefully split into three groups as our snorkel guide Siday swam into sight. Whilst most witnessed smaller gatherings of around 200 individuals, the diversity of marine life continued to astound us. Sightings including the striking White-lined Lionfish, the ubiquitous Powder Blue Surgeonfish, Rounded Batfish, the delicate Long-nosed Butterflyfish, Lined Surgeonfish, Blotched Porcupinefish, and an array of other fascinating species.

Following the snorkelling adventure, we returned to the mother ship for a hearty breakfast, where an interesting, large rice pancake awaited those with gluten-free dietary needs. Energized by our morning endeavours, we embarked on a quest to scour the seas for cetaceans. After several challenging hours, our efforts were rewarded with the sighting of five Pygmy Killer Whales: tiny black whales with rounded melons and tall dorsal fins. Although they typically shied away from the boats, we were fortunate to observe them for a brief yet memorable 5-8 minutes.



Blue-striped Snappers (*Lutjanus kasmira*)

As we adjourned for lunch and resumed our sea watch, our fortunes continued to soar. Before long, we encountered a large group of perhaps 70+ Spinner Dolphins and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins, their tiny young adding a touch of joy to the vast expanse of the ocean. For the better part of half an hour, they rode the waves with exuberance, at times seeming to approach us from all directions, a testament to the boundless wonders of the marine world.



Left - Pygmy Killer Whales, Right – Pantropical Spotted Dolphins

Due to the unseasonal winds, the spotting conditions were tough, but we carried on. The top deck had a high-flying flock of 50 Sooty Terns.

The afternoon swim was at Minimasgali. There was a bit of a swell but we managed a great afternoon snorkel. Our underwater experience for that day added Marbled Octopus, Clark's Anemonefish, Lemon Meringue Wrasse, Blunthead Wrasse, Moon Wrasse, Spotted Boxfish, Feather Starfish and Pincushion Starfish, to name a few.

Another beautifully illustrated evening talk on 'The Blackfish' of the Maldives was informative and entertaining. An array of small manic fish and crab larvae dashed frenetically beneath the stern's light as we retired to recharge our batteries.

Day 6

Wednesday 7th February

Minimasgali to Rinbudhoo, Dhaalu Atoll

The morning began with another captivating pre-breakfast snorkelling expedition, this time exploring a nearby coral reef that unveiled a plethora of highlights beneath the azure waters. As we marvelled at the underwater wonders, those who opted to remain aboard the vessel were treated to a peculiar sight: a miniature northward migration of several Yellow-headed Carpenter Bees and large Widowed Carpenter Bees, adding a unique dimension to the morning's observations.

The local House Crows entertained us by trying to hijack the dinghy, as they do. Unfortunately, Sally managed to cut her shin in a couple of places on some coral. The surgery didn't open till after breakfast, but there was an array of useful First Aid material at hand until it did.



House Crows commandeering our dinghy and feeding flock of Lesser Noddies

As MV Keana set sail northwards with purpose, our spirits soared with anticipation. Despite the occasional showers and brisk winds, our determination remained unwavering. Along the journey, we were greeted by large groups of Lesser Noddies. Occasionally, the sight of Common Noddies added to the spectacle, yet the elusive Tropical Shearwaters remained beyond our grasp, a reminder of the unpredictable nature of wildlife encounters at sea.

Twice during our voyage, MV Keana came to a sudden halt, signalling the capture of a Dolphinfish (Dorado, also known as Mahi-mahi), and they were duly pulled in, the amassed crowd cheering for their dinner.

Amidst the thrill of the catch, our attention was soon diverted by the sighting of a large group of distant dolphins. As we approached them, they gracefully converged around the boat, seemingly coming from all directions to join us in a mesmerizing display of bow riding. Among them were Spinner and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins, numbering at least 150 individuals, including many very small young ones. For over 45 minutes, we were entranced by their playful antics. Ultimately, we bid farewell to our aquatic companions as they journeyed in the opposite direction from our planned destination!



Pantropical Spotted Dolphins

We headed to a sheltered area for lunch. During that period, we picked up a distant group of Short Finned Pilot Whales and we slowly headed to meet them. There were seven individuals, but sadly they were not particularly cooperative for the photographers.

Later we connected with a more cooperative pod, which we watched for an hour. The key features Chas described in his talk last night on ‘blackfish’ were all evident. At one point one individual gave a blow and a rainbow was seen in the spray. Soon after that one, Chaz and Eric were treated to the smell of squid from a blow near the boat.



Short-finned Pilot Whale

We left them for our planned anchor spot for the night near Rinbudhoo Island. The snorkel was phenomenal, with a beautiful reef including the common Oriental Sweetlips, Splendid Soldierfish, Peacock Rock Cod, Collared Butterflyfish, Meyer’s Butterflyfish, Regal and Three-spot Angelfish, Blackside Hawkfish, Lined Surgeonfish, Clown Triggerfish and many more species.



Short-finned Pilot Whale

In the evening we were treated to a talk on the natural history of the Maldives, Francois Pyrard de Laval 17th century account of the islands, and Darwin’s theory on atolls.

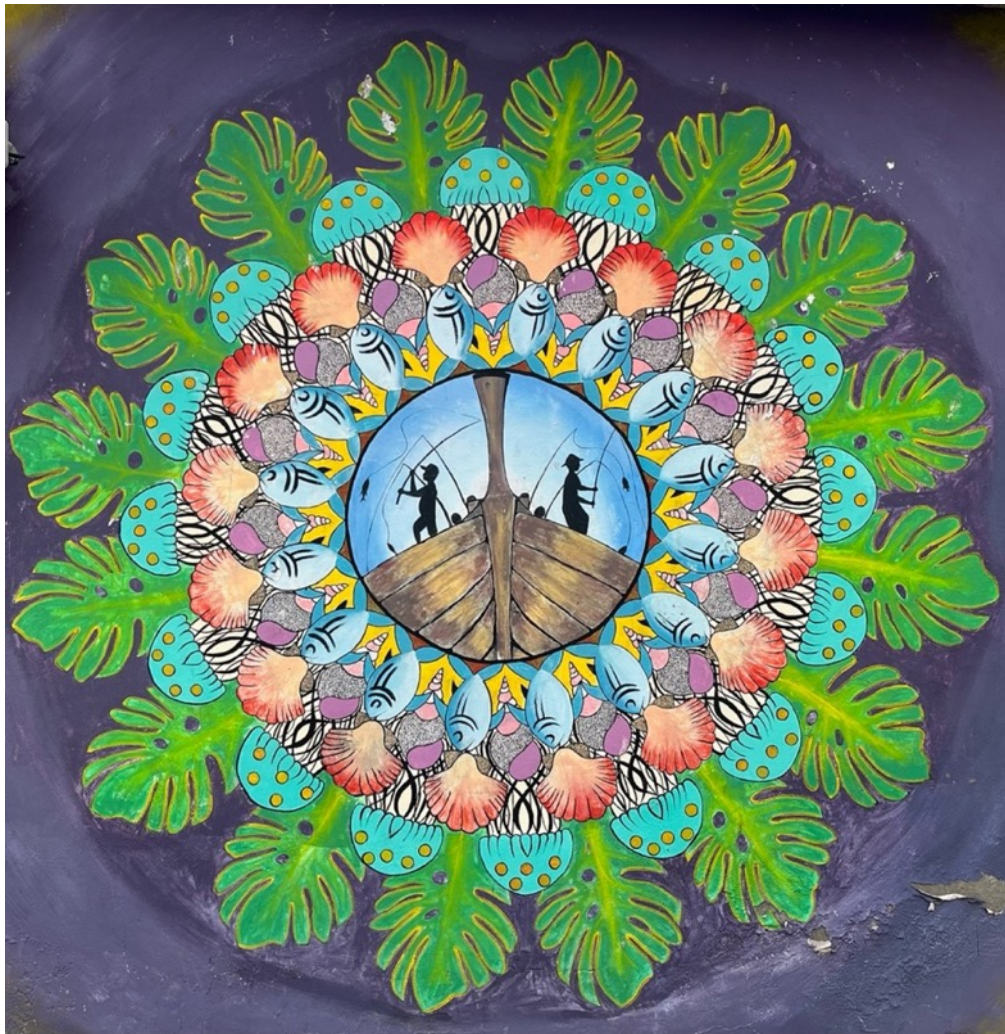
A late dolphin appearance came in the form of an Indo Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin which hovered intermittently round the light off the stern.

Day 7

Thursday 8th February

Rinbudhoo Island walk, snorkel at Bandifushee Finolhu and then back to Mirihi

We got on the dhoni just after 7.00am, headed for Rinbudhoo Island. It seemed relatively birdy with Black-naped and Great Crested Terns by the jetty. We split into two groups for a tour of rural life. Children's assembly was just starting up and there was quite a local art group, with dynamic murals decorating the walls. Koels were sprinkled through town, plus White-breasted Waterhens, a Common Evening Brown Butterfly and Wandering Glider Dragonflies. One group even managed a Hawksbill Turtle, and Jacky got nipped by an overly-friendly Ring-necked Parakeet!



Wall mural of Maldivian Pole line fishing

After a leisurely stroll lasting about an hour, we gathered to board the dhoni, where a (not so) Common Noddy perched on a nearby marker post caught our attention. Both groups saw an Indian Pond Heron, which sent Eric hurtling back to catch a glimpse of it.

By 8.15am, we were back on the boat, ready to enjoy a satisfying breakfast as we continued our journey northward, albeit slowed by the prevailing winds. Our destination was Bandifushee Finolhu reef, nestled off a sand bar, with an array of terns numbering at least 500. Among them, Lesser Noddies predominated, accompanied by a strong congregation of 150+ Saunders Terns, around 40 Great Crested Terns, and several Black-naped Terns.

Despite the slightly rougher waters than anticipated, the reef proved to be a haven of underwater marvels. Highlights included the vibrant Orange-spined Unicornfish and the elusive Zebra Moray, all part of the richness of the marine ecosystem that thrived beneath the waves.

After the snorkel we headed north in search of more dolphins. We struggled because of the wind. After lunch the winds relented slightly, and our efforts were rewarded with the sighting of a 200-strong pod, comprising both Spinner and Spotted Dolphins. Throughout the afternoon, further sightings of these magnificent creatures peppered our journey, each encounter serving as a poignant reminder of the untamed beauty that thrives beneath the waves.



Viewing a large mixed group of Pantropical Spotted and Spinner Dolphins



We had to head back to Mirihi, as there were few anchoring sites given the weather conditions. Parking was tricky and we had to jostle for position as a small group of Spinner Dolphins steamed past. The evening lecture was another treat on coral reefs, nudibranchs, and starfish, rudely interrupted by a couple of teenage Whale Sharks.

Day 8

Friday 9th February

Bulalohi to Maaya Fushi , North Malé Atoll

An early breakfast at 7.00am set the tone for an adventurous day ahead, allowing us ample time to reach our snorkelling spot. By 8.30am, we arrived at our destination and embarked on a marvellous snorkelling excursion. For those concerned about the swell, a lifebuoy was readily available, towed by one of the attentive crew members, ensuring everyone's safety as we explored the underwater wonders.

As we delved into the depths, sightings of moray eels and a plethora of butterflyfish species delighted our senses. Norbert managed to spot a majestic Napoleon Wrasse.

After this exhilarating experience, we set course towards our next destination, propelled forward against a moderate wind. It wasn't until after lunch that we were greeted by the sight of six fishing vessels hunting Yellow-finned Tuna. A mixed group of Spinners and Pantropical Spotted Dolphins made a swift appearance, their synchronized movements reflecting a sense of urgency as they dashed towards their next meal. Witnessing the traditional Maldivian pole and line fishing technique, a method steeped in centuries-old tradition, reminded us of the rich heritage that defines these beautiful islands.



Spinner Dolphins

We made the decision to anchor early, around 3.30pm, to avoid the risk of the tide dropping too low in the narrow channel. By 4.00pm, we were already off on another exhilarating snorkelling adventure. The underwater world welcomed us with open arms, revealing a plethora of new fish species and providing many of us with a Hawksbill Turtle. The allure of the underwater paradise made it difficult for us to tear ourselves away from its enchanting embrace.

The evening talk was an unexpected gem on the different methods of tuna fishing and the regional bycatch of dolphins, mantas and turtle. The talk was intermittently interrupted by a Reef Manta Ray, and later by a Nurse Shark.



Reef Manta Ray, feeding off the stern of MV Kaena

Day 9

Saturday 10th February

Reef with sand bar near Maaya Fushi to Hulumale

The day commenced with a refreshing 7.30am snorkel. Terns were lined up on the quiet sand bars, 'waiting' to be pushed off by the tourists. 40+ Common Terns with some Black-naped Terns were a little distant. The dhoni took us to a nearby reef with an isolated sand bar. There were 250+ terns there, mainly Saunder's Terns, Black-naped and Great Crested. As the first of us entered the water, a majestic Reef Manta Ray made a grand appearance, extending a warm welcome to our underwater adventure. The reef itself was a sight to behold, bathed in the gentle glow of the morning sun and teeming with life, from White-tipped Reef Sharks to the vibrant Clown Triggerfish, and delicate pink Seacumbers. Amidst the kaleidoscope of colours, Chas's keen eye managed to catch sight of a Mobula Ray.

After an hour of revelling in the wonders of the reef, it was time to return for breakfast and to commence our journey northward. Back on the dhoni, Eric's excitement was palpable as he spotted a dark-backed bird with pale underparts: a Bridled Tern! This was a not so gentle reminder always to be prepared with binoculars, even while snorkelling.

As we raised anchor, our journey was greeted by the delightful sight of three Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins. Despite the windier conditions than we had hoped for, we persevered, determined to make the most of our time at sea. Before lunch, we were rewarded with the sight of a group of about 20 Spinner Dolphins.

In the early afternoon, our luck continued as over 100 Spinner Dolphins surrounded the boat, their acrobatic movements a spectacle against the backdrop of the open sea. However, our joy was tempered by the realization that we were rapidly approaching Malé, where we would dock for the night. As we entered the harbour, we were greeted by the lively chatter of House Crows and the familiar sight of a Black-naped Tern, a Grey Heron, and a Little Egret, welcoming us as we settled for the night.

That evening, we gathered to bid farewell to the crew, expressing our gratitude for their dedication and hospitality, which had made our journey both enjoyable and successful. Their efforts had truly enriched our experience, leaving us with memories to cherish for a lifetime.



Black-naped Terns



Kumar the chef and Saiful our waiter

Day 10

Sunday 11th February

Malé to Heathrow

As dawn broke over urban Malé, the chorus of Koels reminded us that avian life can find a toehold even in the midst of the city. Amidst the hustle and bustle, the presence of House Crows, Little Egrets, Grey Herons, and Striated Herons underscored the abundance of food and shelter available for the birds along the urban waterway. Our final glimpse of a Black-naped Tern overhead served as a poignant farewell to the tropical paradise we had come to love.

After an early breakfast, we reluctantly made our way to the airport, where Sally, perhaps more reluctant than the rest of us to leave, had made the decision earlier to extend her stay and return to Bandos Island Resort. The rest of us braved the long queues, reflecting on the memories we had made and the adventures we had shared.

The daytime flight back to the UK was pleasant enough, filled with reflections of the wonderful experiences we had enjoyed during our time in paradise. As we touched down in the UK early in the afternoon, our hearts were full of cherished memories, a testament to the beauty and tranquility of the Maldives and the bonds forged during our journey.

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Species lists

Fish

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>
Black-blotched Stingray	<i>Taeniura meyeni</i>
Reef Manta Ray	<i>Manta alfredi</i> (formerly <i>birostris</i>)
Mangrove Whipray	<i>Urogymnus granulatus</i>
Mobula Ray	<i>Mobula thurstoni</i>
Ringed Moray Eel	<i>Echidna polyzona</i>
Giant Moray	<i>Gymnothorax javanicus</i>
Zebra Moray	<i>Gymnomuraena zebra</i>
Banded Snake Eel	<i>Myrichthys colubrinus</i>
Reef Lizardfish	<i>Synodus variegatus</i>
Needlefish	<i>Tylosaurus crocodilus</i>
Splendid Soldierfish	<i>Myripristis botche</i>
White-tail Squirrelfish	<i>Sargocentron caudimaculatum</i>
Spotfin Squirrelfish	<i>Neoniphon samara</i>
Sabre Squirrelfish	<i>Sargocentron spiniferum</i>
Common Lionfish	<i>Pterois volitans</i>
Spotfin Lionfish	<i>Pterois antennata</i>
Black-saddle Coral Grouper	<i>Plectropomus laevis</i>
Peacock Rock Cod	<i>Cephalopholis argus</i>
Four-saddle Grouper	<i>Epinephelus spiloticeps</i>
Yellow-tailed Basslet	<i>Pseudanthias evansi</i>
Crescent tailed Bigeye	<i>Priacanthus hamrur</i>
Singlestripe Cardinalfish	<i>Apogon fraenatus</i>
Big-eyed Jack	<i>Caranx sexfasciatus</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Short Suckerfish)	<i>Echeneis naucrates</i>
Blacktail Snapper	<i>Lutjanus fulvus</i>
Black-and-white Snapper	<i>Macolor niger</i>
Neon Fusilier	<i>Pterocaesio tile</i>
Oriental Sweetlips	<i>Plectorhinchus orientalis</i>
Blackspot Emperor	<i>Lethrinus hara</i>
Gold-striped Emperor	<i>Gnathodentax aureolineatus</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>
Collared Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon collare</i>
Double-saddle Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon falcula</i>
Klein's Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon kleinii</i>
Raccoon Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon lunula</i>
Meyer's Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon meyeri</i>
Oval butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon trifasciatus</i>
Triangular Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon triangulum</i>
Chevron Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon trifascialis</i>
Teardrop Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon unimaculatus</i>
Yellow-head Butterflyfish	<i>Chaetodon xanthocephalus</i>
Long-nose Butterflyfish	<i>Forcipiger flavissimus</i>
Very Long-nose Butterflyfish	<i>Forcipiger longirostris</i>
Reef Bannerfish	<i>Heniochus acuminatus</i>
Indian Bannerfish	<i>Heniochus pleurotaenia</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>
Forster's (Blackside) Hawkfish	<i>Paracirrhites forsteri</i>
Blackfoot or Maldivian Anemonefish	<i>Amphipron nigripes</i>
Clark's Anemonefish	<i>Amphipron clarkii</i>
Sergeant Major	<i>Abudefduf vaigiensis</i>
Chocolate-dip Chromis	<i>Chromis dimidiata</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>
Yellowtail Wrasse	<i>Anampses meleagrides</i>
Napoleon Wrasse	<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>
Bird Wrasse	<i>Gomphosus caeruleus</i>
Variiegated Wrasse	<i>Coris batuensis</i>
Checkerboard Wrasse	<i>Halichoerus hortulanus</i>
Lemon Meringue Wrasse	<i>Halichoerus leucoxanthus</i>
Moon Wrasse	<i>Thalassoma lunare</i>
Blunthead Wrasse	<i>Thalassoma amblycephalum</i>

Common name	Scientific name
Six-barred Wrasse	<i>Thalassoma hardwicke</i>
Cleaner Wrasse	<i>Labroides dimidiatus</i>
Queen Coris	<i>Coris formosa</i>
Slingjaw Wrasse	<i>Epibulus insidiator</i>
Bicolour Parrotfish	<i>Cetoscarus bicolor</i>
Roundhead Parrotfish	<i>Chlorurus strongylocephalus</i>
Bullethead Parrotfish	<i>Chlorurus sordidus</i>
Green nosed Parrotfish	<i>Scarus viridifucatus</i>
Bridled Parrotfish	<i>Scarus frenatus</i>
Dusky Parrotfish	<i>Scarus niger</i>
Greencheek Parrotfish	<i>Scarus prasiognathus</i>
Yellowbar Parrotfish	<i>Scarus scaber</i>
Maldivian Sandperch	<i>Parapercis signata</i>
Circular Batfish	<i>Platax orbicularis</i>
Longfin Batfish	<i>Platax teira</i>
Moorish Idol	<i>Zanclus cornutus</i>
Powder-blue Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus leucosternon</i>
Lined Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus lineatus</i>
Elongate Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus mata</i>
Eye-stripe Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus nigricauda</i>
Convict Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus triostegus</i>
Night Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus thompsoni</i>
Yellowfin Surgeonfish	<i>Acanthurus xanthopterus</i>
Vlaming's Unicornfish	<i>Naso vlamingii</i>
Orange-spine Unicornfish	<i>Naso lituratus</i>
Spotted Unicornfish	<i>Naso brevirostris</i>
Flying Fish	<i>Exocetus spp</i>
Clown Triggerfish	<i>Balistoides conspicillum</i>
Orange-Striped Triggerfish	<i>Balistapus undulatus</i>
Yellow-margin Triggerfish	<i>Pseudobalistes flavimarginatus</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>
Bridled Triggerfish	<i>Sufflamen frenatus</i>
Black or Spotted Boxfish	<i>Ostracion meleagris</i>
Black-spotted Pufferfish	<i>Arothron nigropunctatus</i>
Saddled Sharpnose Pufferfish	<i>Canthigaster valentini</i>
Blotched Porcupinefish	<i>Diodon lituosus</i>
Black spotted Porcupinefish	<i>Diodon hystrix</i>
Black tailed Grubfish	<i>Parapercis hexophthalma</i>
Dolphin Fish	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>
Coral Hogfish	<i>Bodianus mesothorax</i>
Decorated Sand Goby	<i>Istigobius decoratus</i>

Other marine species

Other marine species	
Marbled Octopus	<i>Amphioctopus aegina</i>

Pincushion Starfish	<i>Culcita novaeguineae</i>
Black spotted Sea Cucumber	<i>Pearsonothuria graeffei</i>
Porcupine Sea Urchin	<i>Diadema setosum</i>
Featherstar	
Foliaceous Coral	
Table Coral	

Mammals

Common name	Scientific name	February 2024									
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Pygmy Killer Whale	<i>Feresa attenuata</i>				5						
Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>		80	50 +	75 +	12 0	10 0	12 0			
Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops aduncus</i>		2		1					3	
Pan-tropical Spotted Dolphin	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>			12	75 +	10 0	10 0	20			
Short-finned Pilot Whale	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>				20						

Birds (H = Heard only, I = Introduced)

Common name	Scientific name	February 2024									
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>	6	H	H			7		1	H	
Feral Rock Dove - I	<i>Columba livia</i>								6	3	
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	3					3				
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		2	1			3				
Brown Noddy	<i>Anous stolidus</i>					3	1		5		
Lesser Noddy	<i>Anous tenuirostris</i>		8	250 +	6	250 +	350 +		7		
Greater Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bergii</i>			2		2	40		20		
Lesser Crested Tern	<i>Thalasseus bengalensis</i>		2		1						
Saunders's Tern	<i>Sternula saundersi</i>						150 +		170 +		
Bridled Tern	<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>								1		
Sooty Tern	<i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i>				50						
Black-naped Tern	<i>Sterna sumatrana</i>	73	200 +	25		24+	25	25	5		
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>						1	40			
Striated Heron	<i>Butorides striata</i>		2	6			2			1	
Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>					1					
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>		1								
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	1	2	6+	1	3	4	5	2	1	
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>								1	1	
Brahminy Kite	<i>Haliastur indus</i>			1							
Ring necked Parakeet	<i>Platycercus elegans</i>								1		
House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	4	3	16	9	12	15		30		
Common Myna - I	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>		H				5				

Others

Common name	Scientific name
Insects	
Wandering Glider	<i>Pantala flavescens</i>
Common Evening Brown	<i>Melanitis leda</i>
Yellow headed Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa pubescens</i>
Widowed Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa fenestrata</i>
Other Groups	
Fruit Bat	<i>Pteropus medius ariel</i>
Hawksbill Turtle	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>
Oriental Garden Lizard	<i>Coletes versicolor</i>
Common House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>
Ghost Crab species	<i>Ocyrodinae spp</i>
Fiddler Crab	<i>Ocyrodidae family</i>
Swift footed Rock Crab	<i>Leptograpsus variegatus</i>