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# The ReefDoctor Research and DiveMaster Intern Programme Guide

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# An Introduction to the Research and DiveMaster Intern Programme

The Research and DiveMaster Internship is on offer for those looking to make a significant time commitment to ReefDoctor. This position allows people with a keen interest in tropical marine conservation but with limited experience, to gain their first steps in this exciting but demanding field. We offer 6-12 month internship positions, suitable for both non divers and qualified divers.

Though we accept interns to join us in any expedition month spaces are limited to 2 places every 6 months.

Following an intensive science training period ( your first 3 months) and the DiveMaster certification (~2 months), interns become a valuable member of the ReefDoctor team, helping the core project staff with the marine research programme, training and management of ReefDoctor Eco-Divers and Research Assistants and general camp duties.

The position allows interns to use their own experiences and qualifications to concentrate on particular ReefDoctor objectives, from the marine research and management side to education or socio-economic development work, allowing them to gain work experience tailored to their future career and personal development requirements.





# Who joins?

We recruit interns from all walks of life as long as they are over the age of **18**. All we ask is that you're reasonably fit and healthy; you'll need to have passed a diving medical before your arrival (medical forms provided by ReefDoctor).

No prior skills are required, just a general enthusiasm to commit to becoming an integral member of the ReefDoctor team.



This programme is suitable for a wide range of people including:

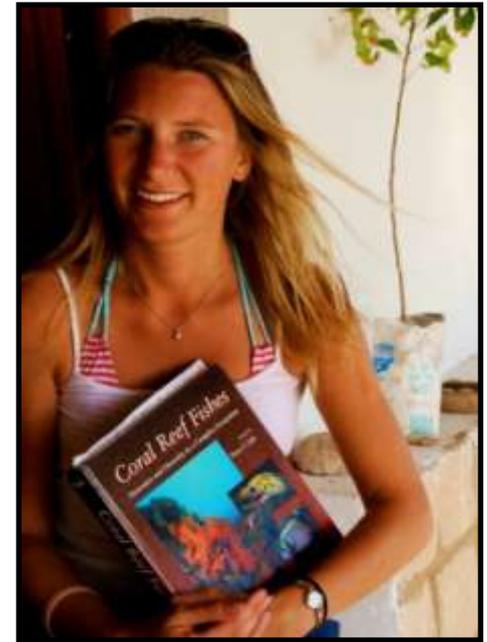
- Those completing a gap year.
- Those who wish to train and work as DiveMasters within a marine conservation organisation.
- Those who wish to devote a significant amount of time to learn about marine science and actively participate in marine research, conservation, management and/or community development work.
- Marine and environmental science graduate students who wish to gain extensive, practical field based experience to further their career.
- Those who are on sabbatical leave.
- Those who are looking for a new career path.



# Intern Training

The first **3** months of the internship includes the following training and activities:

- General introduction to ReefDoctor: it's projects, the local area and basic camp management protocols.
- PADI dive training; Open Water, Advanced, EFR, and Rescue certification (if required).
- Intensive science training: marine science lectures, species identification (fish, invertebrate and benthic, at expert level), coral reef surveying techniques and data management.
- Participate in coral reef surveys.
- Marine science guide training; ReefDoctor science officers will help you become competent coral reef guides to enable you to be able to pass on your knowledge to our Eco-Diver and Research Assistant volunteers, helping to train them to become members of the surveying team.





# Dive Master Training

Your DiveMaster training will begin after your 1<sup>st</sup> 3 months at ReefDoctor, following completion of the core science training. On average this course will take around 1-2 months. The aims of the programme are as follows:

- Develop diving skills, rescue skills and professional-level dive theory knowledge.
- Gain competence and experience as a certified dive assistant, develop dive management and supervision abilities and learn how to conduct PADI programs.
- Develop the knowledge, attitudes, judgment and skills necessary to become a working PADI professional.

The basic structure of the PADI Divemaster course:

- Knowledge Development
- Water skills
- Practical Application





## Knowledge development:

Mainly conducted through Independent study, using the Divemaster crew pack:

- Divemaster manual – 9 knowledge Reviews.
- Encyclopedia of Recreational Diving
- Diving Knowledge Workbook

Instructor led presentations, Quizzes and Final Exam

## Water skills:

Four Stamina Exercises:

- 800m snorkel,
- 400m swim,
- 100m inert diver tow,
- a 15min tread water and equipment exchange.

25 Basic scuba and skin diving skills ( Skill Circuit )

## Practical Application:

- Dive site management and set up
- Mapping Project
- Dive Briefings
- Search and Recovery Scenarios
- Diver Rescue
- Deep Dive scenario or Deep Specialty

Workshops in Conducting and Assisting with:

- Scuba Review,
- Skin diving and Snorkeling Supervision,
- Discover Scuba Diving,
- Discover Local Diving,
- Open Water Diver Course,
- Advanced Or Rescue Courses
- Guiding Certified Divers





# After your core training.....

As a trained Intern you will become a core staff member in the ReefDoctor Team and your responsibilities and activities will include:

- Support ReefDoctor's science team with their core research programme (reef surveys, coral nursery maintenance, fisheries catch monitoring, data entry).
- Support ReefDoctor's Dive Officers in the daily operation of the dive shop and diving schedules (tank filling, dive shop maintenance etc.).
- Assist with volunteer dive and science training.
- Assist with data analysis and report writing.
- Help create information packages / leaflets / posters etc. to relay our projects, findings and news to the local stakeholders, NGOs, government ministries and institutions.
- Help to create ReefDoctors newsletter and update our blogs.
- Help create educational packages / leaflets / posters on the marine environment for local school children and community members.
- Assist with ReefDoctors marine management, education and community development projects (see website)





# Daily Life as an ReefDoctor Intern

Working as an intern means you will be following the working times of core staff. The staff working week runs from Monday to Friday with a half a work day on Saturdays. Fun dives occur on Saturdays, and you will be assisting the dive officers with this. Whole weekends can be taken off, this occurs on a rotational basis between staff. The working day can start early (between 5-7 am). We break for lunch at 12 noon, after which you are expected to be back at work by 1.30pm.



Your days finish at around 6pm though like all staff you will always be on hand to help out with any required work or assistance with volunteers.

Following fun dives on Saturdays, the weekends are free time to do as you wish; simply relax in the peaceful surroundings on site, go into Ifaty for drinks and dancing, go to a local hotel for a nice meal or go to Mangily for the evening with the ability to stay overnight in a hotel.

As a working intern you will also be allowed to take holiday for the opportunity to explore this fascinating and beautiful country. Interns on a 6 month placement will receive 14 days holiday, 12 month placements receive 21 days. All Interns upon signing up to the programme will have to sign a standard work agreement which will outline the working/holiday entitlements, accommodation, equipment provision etc.





# Local Area

We work in the Bay of Ranobe, southwest Madagascar. The bay is protected from the open ocean by an extensive fringing/barrier reef system creating a shallow lagoon, 32km long by 8km wide, containing a series of patch reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves. The ReefDoctor site is located on the periphery of Ifaty village in the south of the Bay, 27km north of the main provincial town of Toliara. This is a small and traditional Malagasy fishing village; there is no mains electricity or running water, and life there is very basic.



Behind Ifaty village is the spiny forest, considered one of the most endangered habitats worldwide. The flora of our region consists of dry weather plants such as cacti, shrubs, baobab trees, tamarind trees and the infamous octopus tree. The white sandy beach outside the ReefDoctor site stretches northwards for miles. After an hour's walk you'll reach the main tourist destination for the region, Mangily.





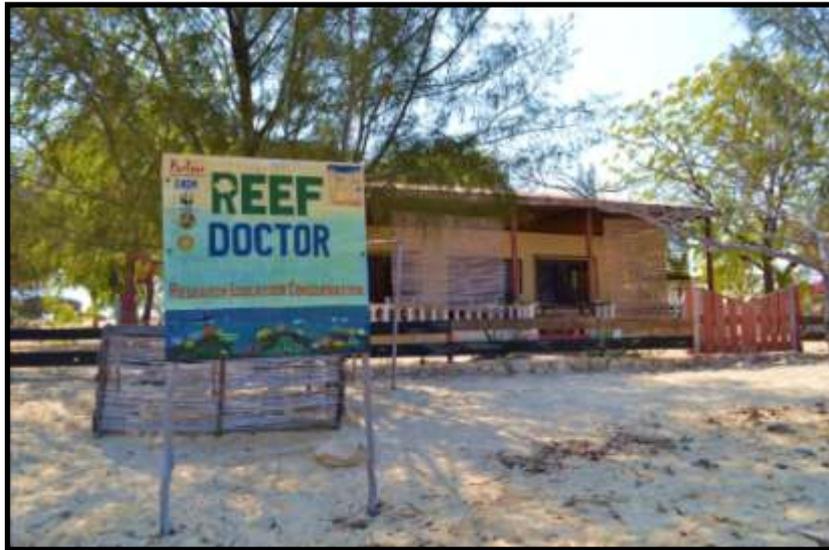
# ReefDoctor Project Site

The ReefDoctor compound is situated on a white sandy beach with beautiful views of the Bay of Ranobe. The enclosed compound is made up of one main house, 8 brick bungalows, a volunteer dormitory, kitchen area, dive shop and utility room for the dive compressor and generator. The main house is used as an office for all volunteer and staff work. A generator along with solar panels and a wind turbine provides electricity for the compressor, pumping water to the house and bungalows, lighting, charging appliances and computer/internet use.

ReefDoctor Interns will share accommodation which will be in one of our 8 brick bungalows. These are en suite and situated directly on the beach front. However, on rare occasions, interns may be required to sleep temporarily in the volunteer dormitory, for example, when we hold training events for external visitors that will need accommodation. The volunteer dormitory is a newly built reed beach hut with cement floor. The communal hut has dividers for privacy and plenty of windows for staying cool. Showers are taken in enclosed shower stalls using water from the well. There are two toilet stalls housing hygienic drop toilets.

All of our meals are lovingly cooked by our chefs Victor and Azy who serve up a unique mix of Western/Malagasy cuisine, which consists of the staple Malagasy diet of rice and beans, fresh vegetables, fish, meat, and fruit. Coffee and tea are brewed every morning and the local traditional rice tea is served with each meal. Our drinking water is locally sourced and treated on site (bottled water is available but expensive and we try very hard not to contribute to the growing amount of plastic waste in Madagascar).

The ReefDoctor Office



Volunteer Dormitory



ReefDoctor's Beach Bungalows





# Camp Safety

Ensuring your safety at ReefDoctor is our top priority. There have been no serious incidents at ReefDoctor during the decade it has been operating in Madagascar. Whilst our project site is in a semi-remote location, hospital care is readily available in Toliara which can be accessed within an hour. We focus heavily on accident prevention; providing safety information, training and advice to all research assistants and staff when they arrive.

We have conducted a full risk assessment of our Ifaty campsite and created rules and procedures designed to promote safety in all aspects of our daily life. Due to our semi-remote location we have easy access to the medical care available in Toliara. We keep extensive medical supplies on site and all of our staff are trained in the provision of emergency first aid.

Because of our semi-remote location we have introduced a series of safety procedures designed to minimise risk at all times. All of our diving is run under the strict guidelines laid down by PADI International with additional rules and regulations created by us for operating in our area. All rules and regulations are enforced at all times by the dive officers and boatman. A copy of our dive regulations is given to each person entering the ReefDoctor camp, and training in our emergency procedures is completed before working diving commences. All scuba regulators are serviced annually in the UK. Our dive tanks are inspected by qualified staff on site using the most advanced visual inspection equipment available, we are the only NGO in Madagascar with this equipment. Oxygen and first aid equipment is taken on every dive with emergency drill practices conducted monthly for staff and volunteers. We keep a 75L oxygen cylinder on camp and have two 10L tanks for use on our dive boats.

ReefDoctor's buildings and facilities are enclosed within a secure compound which is guarded at night by three local security personnel.

Working in a remote location means that we need to ensure that when help is needed we can contact the right people quickly. For communications we keep the following charged and ready for emergency use at all times:

- VHF radios, one base station in camp and one on each dive boat;
- two mobile phones, one in camp and one in each boat;
- an emergency phone in camp.

For our emergency plan and evacuation procedures, we liaise with the Divers Alert Network (DAN) in Europe and South Africa. Our evacuation plan is reviewed monthly to ensure that information is correct and training is up-to-date. All Interns and staff receive training with the plan on arrival.



# Ifaty Seasons



<b>Month</b>	<b>Season (according to Europe seasons)</b>	<b>Risk of Malaria</b>	<b>Average Temp. C Day</b>	<b>Average Temp. C Night</b>
<b>January</b>	Summer (cyclone)	High	36	33
<b>February</b>	Summer	High	40	35
<b>March</b>	Summer	High	38	30
<b>April</b>	Autumn	Medium	35	28
<b>May</b>	Autumn	Medium	30	20
<b>June</b>	Winter	Low	26	17
<b>July</b>	Winter	Low	23	15
<b>August</b>	Winter	Low	23	15
<b>September</b>	Spring	Low	25	20
<b>October</b>	Spring	Low	25	25
<b>November</b>	Spring	Medium	30	28
<b>December</b>	Summer (cyclone)	Medium	32	28



## Expedition start dates

Unqualified divers	PADI Open Water and Advanced (or equivalent) qualified divers
1 <sup>st</sup> February	8 <sup>th</sup> February
1 <sup>st</sup> March	8 <sup>th</sup> March
1 <sup>st</sup> April	8 <sup>th</sup> April
1 <sup>st</sup> May	8 <sup>th</sup> May
7 <sup>th</sup> June	15 <sup>th</sup> June
1 <sup>st</sup> July	8 <sup>th</sup> July
1 <sup>st</sup> August	8 <sup>th</sup> August
13 <sup>th</sup> September	21 <sup>st</sup> September
15 <sup>th</sup> October	23 <sup>rd</sup> October
1 <sup>st</sup> November	8 <sup>th</sup> November
1 <sup>st</sup> December	8 <sup>th</sup> December



**N.B.** These dates are when you need to arrive on site in Ifaty, please allow extra time to get here (depending on flight times 1-2 days, from the capital Antananarivo)



# Research and DiveMaster Intern Programme Fees

Duration	Non-certified divers	Open Water certified	Advanced certified
6-12 months	£4,000	£3,900	£3,800





## **Services included in the Internship costs:**

- Airport pick-up in Toliara and transport to the ReefDoctor site in Ifaty
- Arrangement of hotel in the capital city Antananarivo, if required, includes free pick up by hotel from airport.
- All meals, Monday-Sunday.
- Filtered water, coffee and tea.
- Lodging: shared bungalows with bed sheets, pillows and mosquito net provided.
- First-aid medical care.
- Electricity for charging cell phones, laptops, etc. and limited internet connection.
- Dive training, certification fees and PADI materials for ALL PADI Open Water, Advanced, Rescue, EFR, DiveMaster courses.
- PADI dive instruction manuals and PIC cards for all courses.
- PADI DiveMaster Membership fee (£80).
- Project equipment and educational materials: dive slates, paper, pens etc., all required for your working activities.
- Dive equipment, including: Buoyancy Control Device (BCD), full regulator set, weights and tanks.
- Occasional excursions to help some of our conservation partners in the area, such as HONCO (mangrove conservation and re-plantation) and HO AVY (forestry re-plantation of the famous spiny forest).
- Science training.
- Pre-departure support and pre-departure guides: advice on flights, equipment, Madagascar, medicals, vaccines, insurance etc.
- UK based support/communication throughout the expedition for the intern's friends and family.
- Fuel, equipment and in-country personnel to make this all happen!

## **Services NOT included in the expedition costs:**

- Round-trip airfare and visa.
- Diving, travel and medical insurance and cost of vaccines.
- ReefDoctor standard recreational dive medicals (forms provided by us to be filled in by a medical professional).
- All interns must bring their own wetsuit, mask/snorkel, fins and booties, time piece and/or dive computer, weight belt.
- Any personal excursions (often groups of staff and volunteers plan excursions to nearby national parks or other areas of interest).
- Anti-malaria drugs.



# Why become a ReefDoctor Intern?



- 98% of your programme fees goes directly into our conservation work and the local economy.
- Our core staff are professionals in their respective fields, their knowledge and experience will be passed on to you throughout your ReefDoctor training.
- Undertaking this programme will give you the ability to go off and work as a fully qualified DiveMaster at any dive operation worldwide with extensive coral reef ecological knowledge.
- Become a competent coral reef researcher and acquire first hand experience in marine management and conservation. You will acquire the ability to teach others coral reef ecology and surveying, skills which can be transferred to future employment.
- Malagasy culture is vibrant and memorable. During your stay you'll experience it first hand; through getting to know ReefDoctor's local Malagasy staff members, visits to Ifaty village, staying for a few nights with a local Vezo family or from participating in our social development projects.
- A ReefDoctor expedition attracts people from all walks of life and all over the world, you will make new friends with whom you will share memorable life experiences.
- Our work is part of a larger, global effort. It helps develop understanding of marine resource management in developing countries and contributes scientific information to a much wider conservation community.
- Our programmes are designed with the community at their heart; our work is directed at helping local communities develop and grow while conserving their unique resources. A ReefDoctor expedition is all about making a difference and you'll be contributing to helping us fulfil our long term ecological and social objectives in the Bay of Ranobe.
- As a ReefDoctor intern you'll learn new skills, walk away with unique experiences and a whole new level of scientific knowledge and ,ultimately you'll have contributed to helping protect threatened marine ecosystems and the future livelihoods of the Vezo people.



ReefDoctor has two intern positions available every 6 months. To find out if you are eligible to become a ReefDoctor intern please download our volunteer questionnaire from **[www.reefdoctor.org](http://www.reefdoctor.org)** and send it along with your C.V to **[staff@reefdoctor.org](mailto:staff@reefdoctor.org)**

For further information or any questions:

- Email: [staff@reefdoctor.org](mailto:staff@reefdoctor.org)
- speak directly someone from our UK headquarters:  
+44 (0)7866250740
- Skype, username: reefdoctor





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