

## PRESS RELEASE



Whale Shark Awareness Red Sea  
Hurghada, Egypt  
+20 11 1926898  
[info@whalesharkredsea.com](mailto:info@whalesharkredsea.com)

Egypt, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **EMPEROR DIVERS FIND 12<sup>th</sup> RED SEA WHALE SHARK!**

Emperor Divers, one of the first centres to support Whale Shark Awareness REDSEA have successfully enabled the 12<sup>th</sup> Red Sea whale shark to be photo tagged.

Spotted on 7<sup>th</sup> February during a week of calm weather in the southern Red Sea, Emperor's Divers daily boat, Rachel was returning to the centre based at Coral Beach, Port Ghalib when the huge fish was seen swimming on the surface near to the coastal dive site, Shoni Soraya.

Heading north and only around 10m away from the reef plate near to Ras el Torfa, the juvenile whale shark looked like it wanted to play, coming to the surface and nudging the zodiac with its huge tail out of the water. Emperor Dive Guides briefed guests to keep a safe distance and assessed the conditions as safe, guests were snorkeling and keeping their distance from the whale shark, the whale shark however seemed more curious and kept swimming towards them!

The snorkelers stayed for about 20 minutes which was long enough for guest Jennifer Edwards to take the photos which have enabled identification. "At no time did the giant fish attempt to swim away, even when we got back on the boat, it didn't swim off or dive down" said Jennifer.

Photos of the left and right side flanks were analysed by ECOCEAN and found to be a previously unidentified whale shark. Now known as R-012 (or Jen) whale shark awareness hopes for a re-sight in future months.

The Photo Identification database ECOCEAN, currently holds information on over 1100 photo tagged whale sharks worldwide. This Library database will help efforts to understand and further protect this threatened species.

The seawater was very cloudy, with lots of jellyfish and plankton, “ideal conditions for hungry whale sharks and a contributing factor for the recent sightings” Whale Shark Awareness Red Sea project organiser Helen Chambers said “This is good news for Emperor and one of three sightings for 2008 already which is a great start to the year” This year the project aims to reach more divers and dive centres to capture photographs and data to add to the research for whale sharks world wide.

**For more information contact:**

Helen Chambers  
[info@whalesharkredsea.com](mailto:info@whalesharkredsea.com)

Permission sought and photo credits to Jennifer Edwards.