



Oceanic Society
Annual Report
2023–2024

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Letter from the President

I stepped into a new role as grandparent recently, and it caused me to reflect on the generational scale of my profession. In 1969, very few of the world's 3.6 billion people felt the urgency to protect the oceans. But, a handful who did care had the vision to create Oceanic Society as America's first nonprofit dedicated to healthy seas. As a pre-teen youth in Iowa at the time, and thanks to a supportive mother who put a check in the mail, I became a member of Oceanic Society and joined the conversation.

Fifty-five years later, on a planet with 8.2 billion people, ocean conservation is now on the lips of many, and it is a priority for governments, aid agencies, corporations, and the public alike. Researchers make daily advances that help us better understand the importance of healthy oceans. From 1969 to 2024, the panoply of nonprofits tackling the issue grew to hundreds nationally and thousands globally. And the ocean conservation conversation today is amplified by countless social influencers, traditional media, online platforms, and international summits hosting tens of thousands of experts at the numerous annual COP conventions (addressing Climate since 1979, Biodiversity since 1994, and Plastic Pollution since 2019, to name just a few). Ocean health is now undeniably on the world's agenda.

Yet, despite the growing conversation, the billions of dollars expended, and 5.5 decades of good intentions, our planet's oceans continue to suffer. Earth's burgeoning human population puts unprecedented demands on natural resources. Improved science, talk, treaties, planning, and a rise in nonprofits have made a difference, but they aren't enough. We must grow the conversation to include all of humanity and, more importantly, we must move from talk to action at all scales.

Since 1969, Oceanic Society has focused on the root cause of ocean decline: human behavior. We embrace the tenet that conservation is everyone's responsibility, and that the keys to lasting ocean health stem from the daily actions of individuals, communities, corporations, and governments – each audience making conscious decisions and small behavior changes relating to what humans put into and take out of the sea. We are driven by the conviction that humankind can – and must – become a more oceanic society.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Mast', with a stylized flourish at the end.

RODERIC B. MAST
PRESIDENT & CO-CEO



About Us

As America's oldest non-profit organization dedicated to ocean conservation, Oceanic Society has worked for more than 50 years to inspire and empower people worldwide to take part in building a healthy future for the world's oceans.

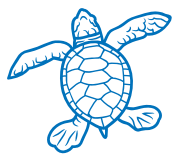
Our mission is to improve ocean health by deepening the connections between people and nature to address the root cause of its decline:

human behavior.

Through our work, we are:



Bringing the ocean into our daily lives with Blue Habits—a science-based effort to motivate simple, daily choices that lead to healthier oceans.



Supporting efforts worldwide that engage coastal communities in protecting threatened marine species and their habitats.



Leading expeditions that give people life-changing experiences in nature, support ocean research and conservation, and shape the travel industry.

Together, these strategies "move the needle" in ways that measurably improve ocean health and reduce the hazards that humans pose to oceans over time.



Behavior Change

In 2024, our Behavior Change program (formerly called Blue Habits) engaged millions worldwide in protecting the ocean by reducing plastic waste, choosing sustainable seafood, and lowering carbon footprints.

Through efforts like the Global Ocean Cleanup, partnerships to restore critical marine habitats, and art created from collected waste, we expanded the Oceanic Society community, supported impactful organizations, and harnessed behavioral science to inspire online and offline action.

To date, this campaign has removed 85.5 tons of marine debris from 18 ecologically important coastlines, driving tangible progress for ocean conservation.



“Not only did we learn about the theories behind behavior change, but we also had the opportunity to apply them in real life case studies. The tools and resources provided will undoubtedly be instrumental in shaping my future conservation projects.”

- Behavior Change Training Workshop Participant



Behavior Change

by the numbers

51 cleanups facilitated
covering 54 miles
of coastline

39 tons of marine debris removed

\$32,674 in grants provided to
partners for behavior
change related work

20+ partnerships
created



42,690+ people reached with
campaign content

7 behavior change
events led for 137
participants

2,348 volunteers engaged

1 behavior change capacity
building workshop led for 42
participants



Conservation Travel

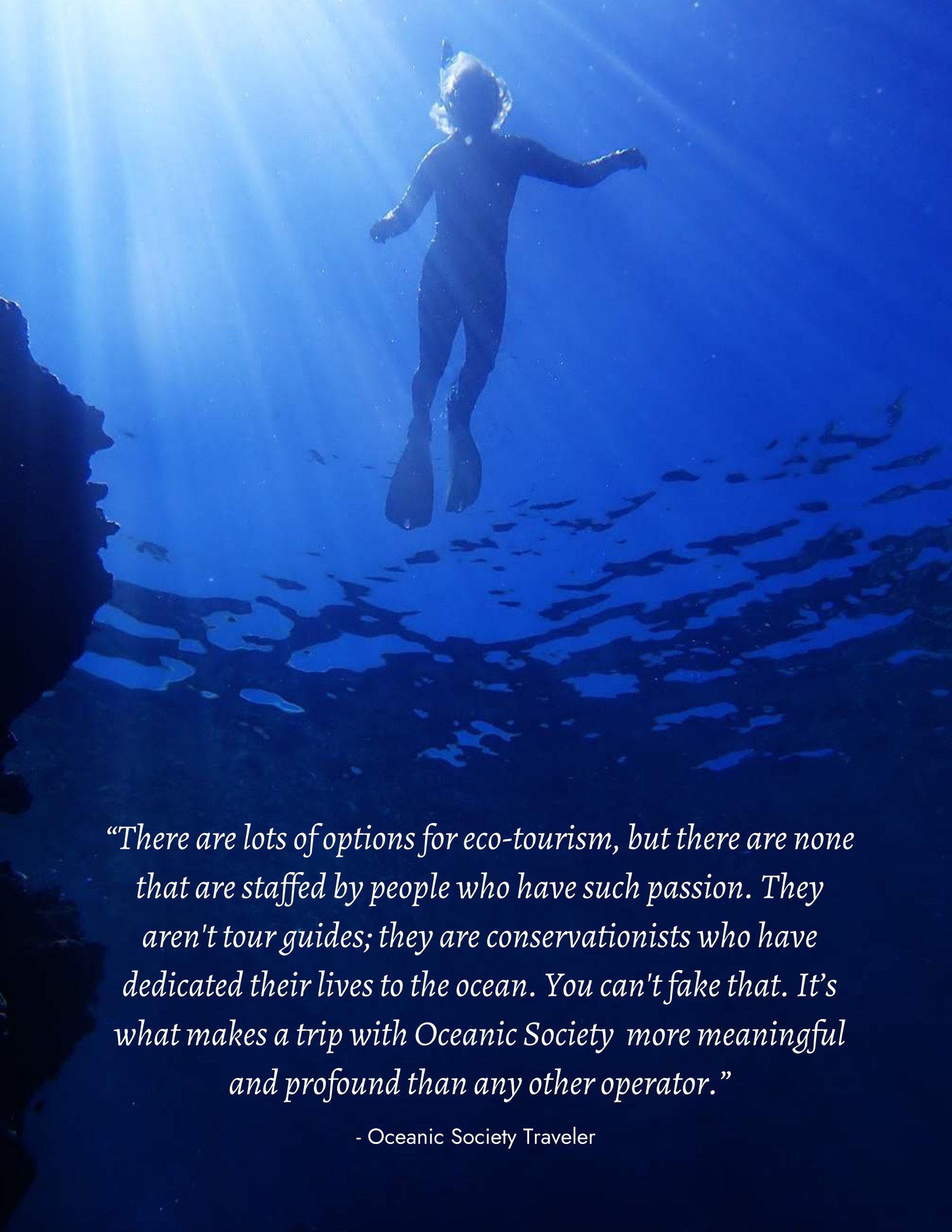
Since 1969, Oceanic Society has been at the forefront of nature-based travel, becoming one of the first organizations to offer whale watching tours and international ecotourism and voluntourism trips. Our founders believed that first-hand experiences with the ocean were the most powerful way to inspire stewardship and care for marine environments.

Over the decades, we have seen how responsible nature travel can drive conservation and support sustainable local livelihoods. In many destinations, tourism has helped recover endangered species, secure permanent protections for sensitive habitats, and provide economic opportunities for local communities.

Through our California whale watching tours and international expeditions, we've connected tens of thousands of people to ocean wildlife and habitats while generating millions of dollars for conservation and research in the areas we visit.

In 2024, we continued our groundbreaking Traveler Plastic Pollution Offset Program, which has funded the removal of 70 tons of marine debris to date, further advancing our mission to protect our oceans.





“There are lots of options for eco-tourism, but there are none that are staffed by people who have such passion. They aren't tour guides; they are conservationists who have dedicated their lives to the ocean. You can't fake that. It's what makes a trip with Oceanic Society more meaningful and profound than any other operator.”

- Oceanic Society Traveler

Conservation Travel

by the numbers

89 educational travel experiences led

2,829 hours of volunteer work facilitated

65,800 lbs of marine debris removed from the marine ecosystem via Plastic Pollution Offset Program

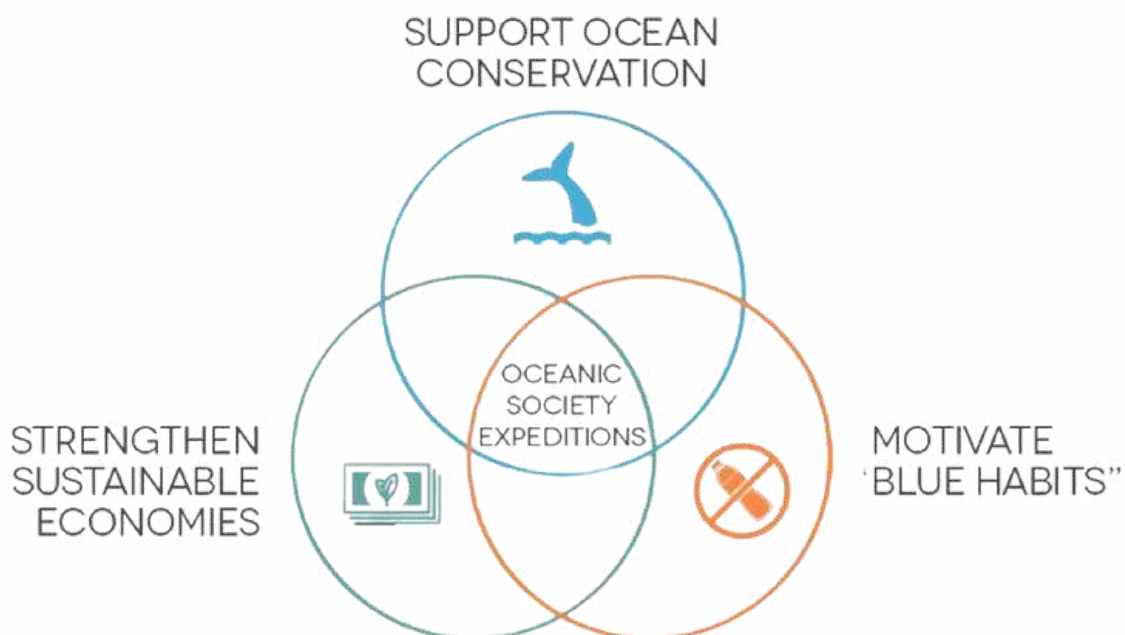
\$10,825 awarded in small grant support

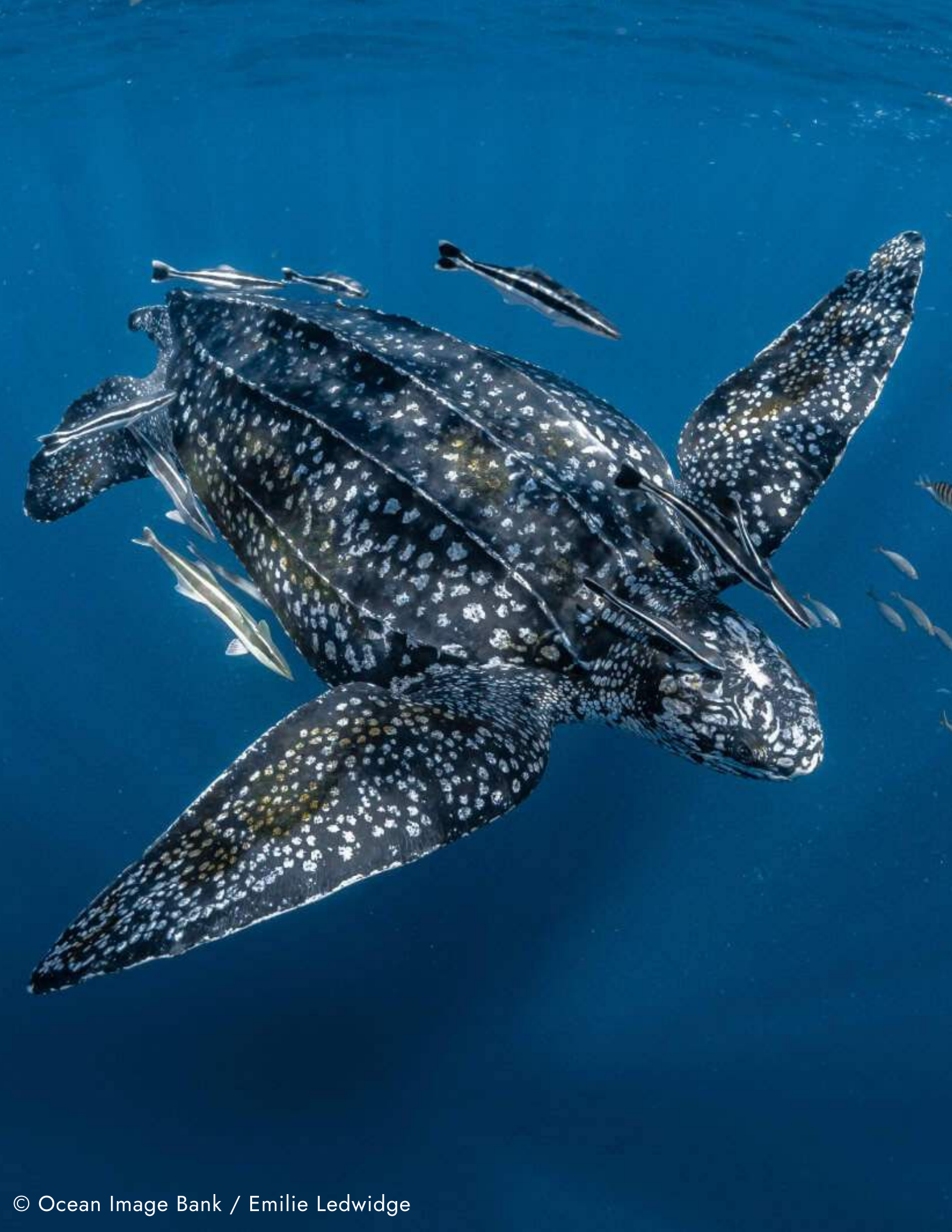
1,559 passengers

171 individual whale flukes identified

\$273,730 generated for community-based conservation

OUR TRAVEL PROGRAM MODEL





Global Sea Turtle Conservation

Our State of the World's Sea Turtles (SWOT) Program is a global effort to study and protect sea turtles and their habitats, and to leverage the amazing charisma of sea turtles to drive ocean conservation action. In 2024 we published the 19th volume of the award-winning State of the World's Sea Turtles (SWOT) Report, which is distributed free-of-charge to research and conservation programs worldwide.

In addition, the SWOT program provides small grants to field-based partners worldwide to accomplish high-priority research and conservation goals. To date, 160 grants have been awarded to 125 applicants in more than 60 countries and territories.





“Both the small grants and the public exposure through the SWOT report, have been invaluable towards our work within the communities.”

- SWOT Grant Recipient

Sea Turtles *by the numbers*

SWOT Report vol. 19
published

19 grants awarded in
11 countries

234 satellite-tracked
turtles mapped

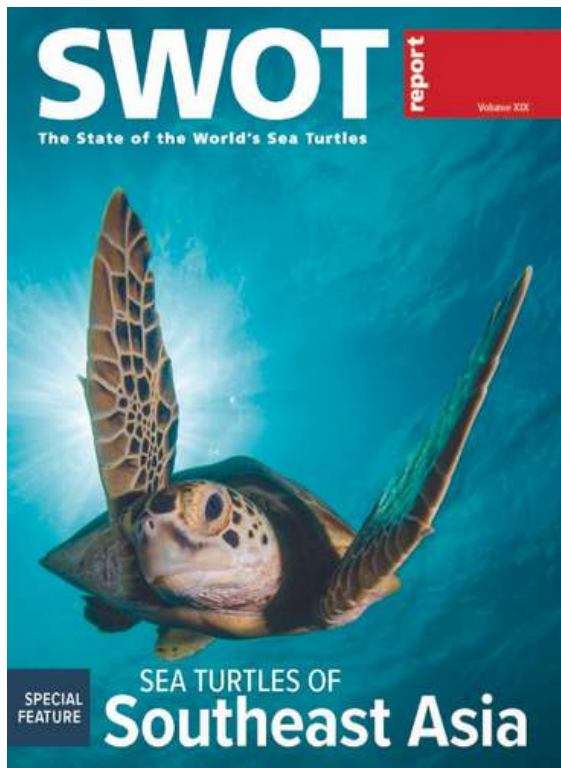
\$20,000 provided in small
grant support

642 sea turtle nesting sites in
Southeast Asia mapped

1 short film produced

48 new and improved Regional
Management Units finalized and
published

340 registered sea turtle
projects globally



2,000+ hard copies
distributed

1 peer-reviewed article published
in Endangered Species
Research

20 articles published by 80
global experts

100,000+ people reached
online



Conservation Scholars

Oceanic Society's Conservation Scholars Program (formerly called Critters Scholars Program) gives life-changing ocean experiences to students and educators from underserved communities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Through this program, Oceanic Society provides free boat trips to student groups that would otherwise not have the means to participate in such an activity. On board, students and educators see wildlife, learn about ocean ecology and conservation issues, and discover environmental career pathways in ways that integrate into age-appropriate learning standards.

To date, we have led 28 trips for 1,035 students.



“I’ve never even been on a boat before. But now I get it, why people are always looking happy on their boats. It’s cool out there, man. I wanna do it again!”

- 2023 Conservation Scholar



Conservation Scholars

by the numbers



533 students attended CSP trips

15 trips led for 13 schools from under-represented communities

80% of students experienced the ocean on a boat for the first time

“The best part of the trip? Umm, seeing plankton from Spongebob is real!! This is the most fun school’s been, like, ever.”

- 2023 Conservation Scholar

88% of scholars expressed an increased desire to learn more about marine life and marine science

92% of students improved their understanding of how to take care of the environment in their daily life

100% of students made individual pledges to support environmental conservation in their communities

FY24 Financials

| Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2024 | |
|---|--------------------|
| Cash | \$2,284,794 |
| Fixed Assets and Other Assets | \$419,479 |
| Total Assets | \$2,704,274 |
| Payables | \$36,197 |
| Unearned & Restricted Revenue | \$1,061,010 |
| Other Liabilities | \$65,247 |
| Total Liabilities | \$1,162,454 |
| Beginning Net Assets | \$1,239,020 |
| Current Year Change | \$302,800 |
| Total Net Assets | \$1,541,820 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$2,704,274 |



FY24 Financials

| Revenue vs. Expenses: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 | |
|--|--------------------|
| Revenue | |
| Earned Revenue | \$2,736,799 |
| Unrestricted Revenue | \$526,867 |
| Restricted Revenue: | |
| Sea Turtle Conservation Program | \$280,947 |
| Behavior Change Program | \$163,618 |
| Conservation Scholars Program | \$137,130 |
| In-Kind (Advertising) | \$207,866 |
| Total Revenue | \$4,053,227 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Expenses | |
| Conservation Travel Programs | (\$2,687,500) |
| Sea Turtle Conservation Program | (\$339,753) |
| Behavior Change Program | (\$250,729) |
| Conservation Scholars Program | (\$99,471) |
| In-Kind (Advertising) | (\$207,866) |
| Fundraising and Communication | (\$139,433) |
| Management and Operations | (\$25,676) |
| Total Expenses | (\$3,750,427) |
| Revenue vs. Expenses | \$302,800 |

"Oceanic Society has an excellent track record of impactful conservation work... They are deeply committed to protecting our oceans and the incredible creatures that call them home."

- 2024 Oceanic Society Donor



Oceanic Society Staff

Rod Mast | President & Co-CEO

Brian Hutchinson | Co-CEO

Nicole Bouharb | VP, Finance

Wayne Sentman | Director, Conservation Travel

Chris Biertuempfel | Associate Director, California Programs

Lindsay Mosher | Associate Director, Behavior Change

Rosie Jeffrey | Manager, Strategic Growth & Partnerships

Ashleigh Bandimere | Manager, Sea Turtles

Pei Lun Lee | Coordinator, Conservation Travel

Linda Sue Brown | Associate, Accounting

Board of Directors

Zachary Rabinor | Board Chair

Dr. Charles Betlach II | Board Vice Chair

Finn Torgriksen Longinotto | Secretary

Dr. Sylvia Earle

Mark Stanley

Marilyn Pearson

Hari Balasubramanian





Oceanic Society

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