



# Coral Finder Workshops with the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area Network

*Enhancing coral identification skills for reef surveys and resource monitoring*



THE FIJI LOCALLY MANAGED MARINE AREA NETWORK, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CORAL IDENTIFICATION CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM, HOSTED TWO 4-DAY CORAL IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS. SPONSORED BY THE PACKARD FOUNDATION, THE WORKSHOPS WERE RUN AT UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN SUVA, FIJI IN FEBRUARY 2010.

## About the Fiji workshops

In February 2010, over 45 people were trained in coral identification to genus level. The workshops were based around a new underwater coral identification tool, the **Coral Finder**.

The Coral Finder workshops promote techniques for rapid learning and revision both topside and underwater.

Workshop participants were nominated by the **FLMMA** (Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area network) from a broad range of backgrounds spanning community monitoring, industry, science institutions, NGO's, Fisheries and resource survey professionals.

The workshops were led by **Russell Kelley**, science communication professional and author of the Coral Finder, with support and contributions from expert coral taxonomists - **Lyndon Devantier** and **Emre Turak**.

The workshops were designed to provide fast start learning for

beginners and skills enhancement for intermediate / advanced participants.

People attending the workshops were provided with the Coral Finder and a suite of take-home learning resources. The emphasis was on a staged learning pathway and transfer of skills to surveys and monitoring.

## Evaluation framework

An evaluation framework has been developed to understand how the learning pathway and associated resources are working, and to improve the program.

Questions being evaluated include:

- (1) What are the specific coral identification needs of end users and are these needs met by the Coral Finder and associated resources?
- (2) What is the difference in identification effectiveness if the Coral Finder is used in isolation or in concert with a workshop?

The training aimed to increase the number of people actively and accurately contributing coral identification data to coral reef resource management in Fiji.

(3) How can the Coral Identification Capacity Building Program and resources be refined?

(4) Do workshop participants use their new skills and the training resources including the Coral Finder after training?

(5) Do monitoring and survey programs using the Coral Finder return higher performance (accurate data)?

## Acknowledgments

The Program is being delivered through partnerships with the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area Network and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, with administrative support from Reef Check Australia.

## Contact:

Program Director of the CICBP  
[russellkelley@mac.com](mailto:russellkelley@mac.com)  
Int. + 61 (0)7 47804380

## Preliminary results and feedback

Formal evaluations demonstrated significant improvements in coral identification skills. The Coral Finder puts coral identification to genus level within reach of beginners.

Intermediate level participants also dramatically improved their coral identification skills and recommended the tool for rapid revision and ongoing learning.

Feedback about the workshops and resources from participants was very positive. Many of the participants intend to apply their improved skills to FLMMA activities. There is strong interest in further coral identification training in Fiji.

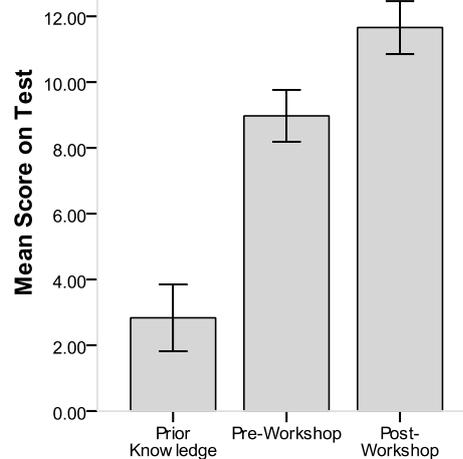
## Next steps

The CICBP is developing detailed analysis of the workshops & strategies to reinforce the skills acquired by the workshop participants.



# SUMMARY RESULTS

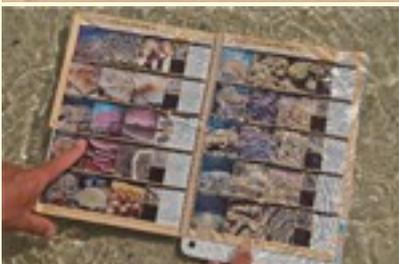
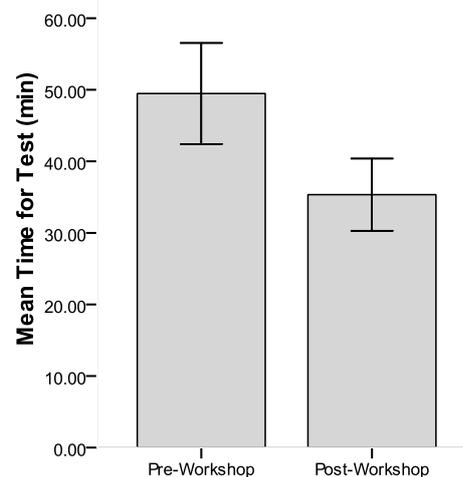
## Coral ID scores



Participants were evaluated for **Prior Knowledge** and again after a one hour introduction to the Coral Finder (**Pre-Workshop**). The final evaluation (**Post-Workshop**) took place at the end of the 4 day workshop. Coral identification **accuracy improved rapidly** after exposure to the Coral Finder and **continued to improve** throughout the workshops (Top left).

(Below left) Time taken to identify corals **decreased substantially** over the course of the workshop.

## Time for ID



The Coral Finder is available from [www.byoguides.com](http://www.byoguides.com)

## Coral Identification Capacity Building Program: where to from here...

- ★ A full analysis of the evaluations and feedback is underway and will be reported later in 2010.
- ★ On completion the CICBP will deliver a revised Coral Finder Toolkit to FLMMA and workshop participants - a disc and web based suite of Teach Yourself resources to build capacity in coral identification and monitoring.
- ★ These resources will enable self-learning by motivated individuals beyond this program into the future.
- ★ Additionally, guidelines will be identified for developing other visual learning tools (like the Coral Finder).