

# MANTA - Marine Science And Nautical Training Academy

## Coral Reef Summer Field Studies — Virgin Islands 2025



### Program Dates:

**June 2 - 16**

**June 18 - July 2**

### MANTA Program Fee:

**\$5495**

[www.manta-online.org](http://www.manta-online.org)



### *Intro to Marine Science Diving and Coral Reefs*

#### Highlights

- ◇ **Live-aboard, island-hopping exploration**
- ◇ **PADI Scuba certifications**
- ◇ **AGRRA scientific dive training**
- ◇ **Coral reef instruction and training from college professor**
- ◇ **Perform research via SCUBA**

### Program Information:

Students study the diversity, ecology, and conservation of the Caribbean coral reef ecosystem. Lecture and labs will train students on coral reef taxonomy, learning field ID of reef fish, corals, inverts, and algae. The emphasis is placed on SCUBA field methods and labs, standardized coral reef survey techniques, and other observational field experiments. The program is conducted aboard a modern yacht, DayDream, which is a 62 foot sailing catamaran. This vessel serves as the accommodations, transportation, classroom, and diving platform to explore tropical ecosystems. Each day the class will cruise to a new island in the archipelago of the British Virgin Islands to investigate new habitats. Students also receive practical nautical training (seamanship, navigation, small boat handling, knots) to better prepare them as deckhands aboard a research vessel, they will earn their PADI Open Water and PADI Advanced scuba certifications, and gain hands-on research diving experience learning methodologies of the industry leading Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA). Students are required to complete the classroom portion of PADI's diver training online prior to departure for the trip. [www.manta-online.org](http://www.manta-online.org)

Students participating in this course should expect the following conditions/activities: snorkeling, SCUBA diving, swimming, hiking, tropical summer heat, lifting scuba tanks, living aboard a boat, and prolonged physical activity. Students are also expected to contribute to the running of the vessel as a crew member, and foster an environment of teamwork, personal accountability, competence, respect, curiosity, open-mindedness, knowledge, service, kindness, and adventure.

### Program Director:

**Dr. Rusty Day, Biology Department/Grice Marine Lab, [rusty.day@manta-online.org](mailto:rusty.day@manta-online.org), 843 817-7791**

Dr. Rusty Day is an Adjunct Professor of Biology at CofC and the Executive Director of MANTA. He has a diverse scientific background that includes tropical field ecology, fisheries, wildlife toxicology, and chemical and isotopic tracers in marine organisms. Dr. Day has directed the BVI study abroad program since 2009 and is also a PADI Master Scuba Diver Trainer, and licensed Master 200 gross ton U.S. Coast Guard Captain.

**MANTA Application:** <http://manta-online.org/high-school-application/>

The Program fee is all-inclusive of room, board, scuba training/certification/gear, ground transportation, and all program activities. Round-trip airfare not included. Inquire about scholarships and financial aid at [rusty.day@manta-online.org](mailto:rusty.day@manta-online.org).

College of Charleston Magazine Article:

<https://today.cofc.edu/2016/11/02/marine-science-british-virgin-islands/>

Video preview of the MANTA experience and student testimonials:

<https://youtu.be/1wLMeJyzIIA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U16yFIw8WX0&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGfV8YiaPUU&feature=youtu.be>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQUJhi96A7Q&t=>

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