



The entire team at WildAid are delighted to present you with some materials documenting our successful trainings for Park Rangers of the Galápagos National Park Service. With Overbrook's support and the support of other generous contributors, we have made great strides in ensuring that the Galápagos is the best-protected marine reserve in the world.

The Galápagos Marine Reserve possesses exceptional biodiversity, including hammerhead sharks, penguins, incredible varieties of marine birds, and species that are not found anywhere else in the world. Darwin's "living laboratory" brings thousands of visitors, students and scientists every year from around the globe to view and study the native flora and fauna.

The Park Rangers are the backbone of the Park and protect its natural resources every day. They face the constant dangers of patrolling in the harsh marine environment, sometimes for weeks at a time, day and night, often with only old, worn out equipment. These dedicated individuals work and risk their lives to conserve the Galapagos.

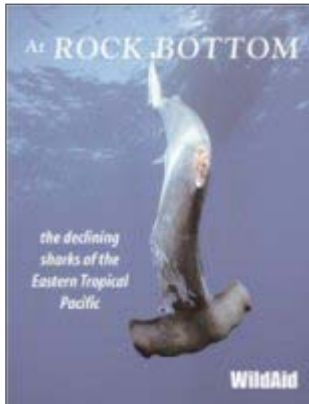
With the support of the Overbrook Foundation, WildAid hosted the **First International Training for Marine Reserve Park Rangers** course in August 2005. This was the largest class ever taught at the GNPS, with students from the Galápagos, Colombia, Panama, and Costa Rica. Due to the highly migratory nature of marine species within the Galápagos' Cocos Island Marine Corridor, WildAid and partners used this opportunity to promote regional cooperation to protect key species, especially sharks.

With the help of this training, Rangers have become more professional in their enforcement efforts and more skilled in all aspects of their jobs. The Galápagos Marine Reserve is better protected by these well-trained GNPS rangers. Students from Colombia, Panama and Costa Rica have also taken the skills they learned back to their respective countries and are currently putting those skills to work improving conservation in the areas that need it most. Continued formal training is essential, because successful conservation cannot take place without the support of skilled law enforcement personnel to provide protection.



In addition to training the Park Rangers, WildAid is building capacity in other branches of the wildlife law enforcement agencies of the Galápagos. WildAid with support from Wildlifeline donated two **specially trained sniffer dogs** to the Environmental Police. "Aggie" and "Buck" are trained to detect drugs coming in and sea cucumbers and shark fins going out. They are stationed in Puerto Ayora on the island of Santa Cruz monitoring baggage coming in and out of the Islands through the main airport.

The dogs are doing well, have really bonded with their handlers and are producing results. On a recent visit to Galápagos, members of WildAid were happy to see Aggie and Buck at work as they eagerly sniffed incoming luggage and outgoing cargo. The tourists found them a fascinating distraction and were pleased to see enforcement measures being undertaken.



While we assist the ranger service of the Galapagos grow in effectiveness and capacity, we are **publicizing the dangers of the illegal shark harvest throughout the Galápagos and Ecuador**. Our struggle against the illegal shark finning industry in the Galápagos has received worldwide press - recently from the [New York Times](#) (January 5, 2006, attached) to the [Malaysia Star](#) (January 28, 2006) and the [Daily Journal](#) of Venezuela (January 5, 2006). In March 2005, WildAid published [At Rock Bottom: the Disappearance of Sharks in the Eastern Tropical Pacific](#). Media coverage from the report resulted in weeks of national scrutiny of mismanagement of the Marine Reserve and brought the shark fin crisis to the forefront of the Ecuadorian national agenda. In short, we forced public officials to address the issue.

We have also worked in cooperation with Ecuador's leading soccer star, Alex Aguinaga of the World Cup-bound Ecuadorian national team. Aguinaga and his teammates and coaches signed a petition and appeared in videos calling for the government to curb the wholesale slaughter of Ecuador's shark populations. Aguinaga and his team also began a wildly popular "shark dance" whenever they scored a goal, making the cause of the shark a rallying call for a soccer-crazy nation. Aguinaga said in a public service announcement, **"As soccer has united us, let us unite together for sharks."**