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## **MILITARY SHARK TAGGING EXPEDITION TO COCOS ISLAND, COSTA RICA**

British Army, Navy and Air Force sub-aqua divers will undertake a new shark tagging expedition in Costa Rica. The Joint Services Shark Tagging Team (JSSTT) will go to Cocos Island from 21 June – 06 July 2010 for EXERCISE JURASSIC SHARK 3.

Cocos Island is well known for its scalloped hammerhead shark population and is sometimes dubbed 'Shark Mountain'. The island itself was the notional setting for the film 'Jurassic Park' and is the original 'Treasure Island'. The expedition will be based on the *Argo*, one of the Undersea Hunter fleet of boats. The aim of this expedition will be to produce a documentary film about shark research and conservation in partnership with the PRETOMA (Programa Restauracion de Tortugas Marinas - a Costa Rican NGO specialising in shark and turtle conservation).

"An expedition such as this is all about experiencing controlled exposure to risk with the aim of developing the kind of leadership, teamwork, courage and co-operation that is vital to military operational capability," said expedition leader Major Andy Reid from the Army. "In addition, this is our chance to do something practical to help protect sharks, which are in dramatic decline around the world."

The JSSTT exists to provide manpower and equipment for shark tagging and other marine conservation projects where diving skills are required. Its expeditions are nicknamed JURASSIC SHARK and are open to military and civilian scientific personnel only. It has now tagged 35 sharks and placed 6 acoustic receivers in the Eastern Pacific with the aim of building an overall picture of shark movements in the across the Eastern Pacific Tropical Seascape and beyond. The first expedition, EXERCISE JURASSIC SHARK, tagged 15 hammerhead sharks off Cocos Island, Costa Rica in July 2006. The second expedition, EXERCISE JURASSIC SHARK 2, took place in October 2008 and tagged a further 20

sharks (including 10 great white sharks) off Guadalupe and the Revillagigedo Islands (Mexico).

Any military sub-aqua divers interested in joining this expedition should contact the expedition leader via the expedition website now. The expedition website is at: [www.jurassic-shark.org.uk](http://www.jurassic-shark.org.uk).

**ENDS**

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