
Juara Turtle Project

Volunteer program information

15 January 2019



How to Prepare for JTP

What you should know **BEFORE COMING**:

- The Sea turtle nesting season here starts in **March/April, peaking in June, July & August**, and then finishes by November. The monsoon season typically starts in late December and finishes in February, and it varies slightly every year in recent times partly due to rapid climate change that is occurring all over the world.
- Pulau Tioman is a **semi-remote island** that lies off the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, in the South China Sea. It is a nature reserve, ringed by beaches. The island is covered in tropical rainforests, home to butterflies, lizards, snakes and monkeys. On the east coast is Juara Turtle Project which is located in the Juara village.
- JTP is a **people's project!** It operates an information centre for visitors to come visit and get an educational tour to learn about the work that is being done to help the sea turtle population. Throughout the year, volunteers come in to support and contribute to the sustainability of the project.
- We want you to do some reading or research about sea turtle conservation and Tioman Island before you come here so you can be familiar with the **conservation issues sea turtles are facing on Tioman and other parts of the world**. It will help put your trip here in context. If you are coming from another country with different culture, it is common to experience some "culture shock" when just arrive. It happens because life here is different from where you are living or working and it is normal to take some time to adjust and acclimate.
- **JTP is different from hotels, guesthouses** and some other, as we have activities and work which we expect you want to get involved in. However JTP is different from an all-inclusive program, as we do not plan activities for your entire day. During the day, you will help out at the project for anywhere between 3-4 hours and you will get to do your own thing for the other half day. The project facility and volunteering program is very free and open. There is a list of work to do, but take do your time to get comfortable with the location, materials and methods.
- We have a **minimum stay requirement of 7 nights**. Otherwise the time is too short for volunteers to learn and be train up to speed.
- All new volunteers will **arrive on Saturday** because of the volunteer program structure. This will allow JTP staff to prepare and properly orientate all volunteers.

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- The **Juara Animal Welfare** is one of the two new initiatives that JTP started in 2018. Volunteers will spend anywhere between 1-2 hours or more at the Juara Animal Welfare centre to support the daily operations each day.
 - **Coral Rehabilitation Project** started in 2017 and aims at rehabilitating damaged coral reef areas in Juara. The **Coral Rehabilitation Project activities are not compulsory** for volunteers to sign up.
During your stay at JTP, you can choose to participate in the Coral Rehabilitation Project activities if you meet the minimum requirements and is comfortable working underwater in the sea.

• Coral Rehabilitation Project underwater activity requirements;

- Age 18 & above
- Good physical fitness & health
- Valid SCUBA diving certification (Open water or higher)
- Minimum 40 verified logged dives, with last dive done within last 6 months

*Final decision on volunteer's eligibility for activity will be made by the project manager and coral biologist in charge.

- If you are **under the age of 18**, you are required to come with at least another friend and must print out a copy of the "JTP Memorandum of Understanding" form which will need to be signed by your parent or guardian, then brought to JTP and submit to JTP staff upon arriving at the centre.
Failure to do so, volunteers will not be allowed to stay at JTP and participate in any program.

What to bring:

- Extra cash (Malaysian ringgit RM) to spend on dinner or buy items at the local convenience store.
Please take note and plan ahead! Tioman island has only one ATM (money withdrawal machine) which is in Tekek village.
- Pack your clothes as if you are going camping for an extended period. Please also bring your own towel as we do not provide any. If you bring nice clothes, please remember to bring clothes for working that can get dirty/ wet because you will be involve in some manual/ outdoor work at some point.
- Strap-on sandals, or tennis shoes that you don't mind getting wet are very useful. Sometimes we have to walk over incredibly slippery and wet rocks to reach certain beaches and other areas during boat patrol. Trekking/ sport shoes is important if you want to do some trekking while you are here.

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- Bring torch-lights or head lamps that has red light function for beach patrol at night, but if you cannot we can provide you with one.
 - Insect repellent, sun-protection cream/ spray, a hat or cap, personal medication if any.
 - If you are feeling generous, you are welcome to bring working equipment/ items/ tools for the outdoors, kitchen, garden, rooms etc and donate to the project. Feel free to bring anything that you can share around. For example; food, candy, coffee/ tea and books too. Any type of books within a range of subjects are appreciated: sea turtles, biology, novels, how-to, field guides , education etc.

*If you are unsure about something that you are bringing, please communicate with us prior to coming so that we are able to advise you accordingly.

What to know **UPON ARRIVING:**

- When you arrive to Tioman via ferry, **get off at the Tekek village stop**. To get across the island from Tekek to Juara, we encourage you to take a taxi car. On the street it will cost around RM50-60/ person or RM30/ person if sharing with more people.
- When you arrive, you will be showed to your accommodation and then a JTP staff will give an **orientation that will take roughly about 30 - 45 minutes**. The orientation will explain about the project and your time here, during that time we will also go over our liability papers and operating procedures. During the orientation, volunteers will be brief on the currently on-going activities which can be anything related to research, community work, outreach programs etc. Lastly, you will be brought around and get introduce to the project centre area/ facilities.
- Depending on your arrival time, your **initial volunteer activities may differ**. Do not worry because we do not expect you to know how to do everything and we will do our best to get you up to speed over time.
- The project centre will have **volunteers and staff from many different countries**. Take your time to get to know everyone and have an open mind to the new environment.

Volunteer Activities:

- If you are a short-term volunteer (2 weeks or less), then you can help us out in whatever is needed to get done on a daily basis. In addition to the conservation work, this may include: daily beach patrols, keeping our facilities clean, gardening, maintenance, construction, giving turtle information talks to the visitors and more. Or if you are ambitious and have a project idea, that is okay as well.
- If you are a long-term volunteer (from a few weeks to a couple of months), it is possible for you to conduct your own project while here. If this is something you are interested in, please let us know before you come so we can start to develop your idea(s) together. We want to help facilitate your idea(s) as much as possible. Beginning a dialogue with us about what people have done in the past, as well as looking through photographs and resources online will help a lot. You don't have to come up with your own project if you don't want to, and you can simply become involved with everything else we do on a daily basis.
- The basic idea for activities is to help the staff by taking on tasks and be ready to help whenever needed... But of course enjoy yourself, your time here and participate in recreational activities too!

General volunteer activities:

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| • Night/ morning beach patrol | • Research/ discussion about conservation issues |
| • Morning boat patrol to remote nesting beach | • Beach clean up |
| • *Relocating sea turtle eggs to the hatchery | • Working in the gardens |
| • *Releasing sea turtle hatchlings | • Composting |
| • *Collecting data on nesting turtles/ hatchlings | • Basic maintenance/ repair work of equipment and tools |
| • *Performing nest excavation | • Computer work like organising data, data entry, making graphs etc |
| *Only if there are nesting sea turtle(s) or eggs | • Making new information boards |
| • Giving sea turtle information talk to visitors | • Painting |
| | • Raking |

- Swimming/ snorkelling
- Kayaking
- Guided trekking
- Beach volleyball
- Beach frisbee
- Local agriculture farm visit
- Exploring village/ town
- Traditional food making
- Campfire/ barbecue night
- Local dinner in village
- *Jetty jumping
*Subjected to sea state and tide level

Recreational activities:

What else:

- We “*cannot guarantee sea turtles!*” We do not keep any sea turtles because they belong in the ocean which is their natural habitat and there they are able to fulfil their roles & responsibilities in maintaining a balance ecosystem.
- If you only want to see and photograph sea turtles, we advise you to go on a snorkelling trip or scuba diving and you may have a better chance to see them.
- Volunteering and helping at JTP is contributing towards all the hard work that is being done in order for the natural population of sea turtles to rejuvenate. Then we can all go stand on the beach and be able to see nesting sea turtles all summer long.



Example of weekly schedule:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00AM - 7:00AM	Morning beach patrol						
7:15AM - 9:00AM	Boat patrol/ Animal Welfare centre						
8:00AM - 10:00AM	Breakfast/ Morning chores						
10:00AM - 12:00PM	Trekking/ Info Talk	Info Talk/ Projects around JTP	Coral Project/ Info Talk	Info Talk/ Projects around JTP	Beach clean up/ Info Talk	Info Talk/ Free activity	Video discussion/ Info Talk
12:00PM - 2:30PM	Lunch/ Siesta						
2:30PM - 5:00PM	Info Talk/ Gardening	Round- table discussion/ Info Talk	Coral Project/ Info Talk	Info Talk/ Gardening	Info Talk/ Free activity	Info Talk/ Projects around JTP	Recycling/ Info Talk
5:00PM - 6:00PM	Board meeting/ Evening chores						
6:00PM - 10:00PM	Dinner/ Movie night						
8:00PM - 5:30AM	Night beach patrols (Timing depends on High tide)						

*Program/ activities are subjected to changes due to weather, logistics or ad hoc activities



Costs and Fee:

The costs and fee goes directly to supporting the project. Sea turtles do not pay us to look after them and protect their habitat! Therefore, we need your support and money to keep this place going.

“Staying with JTP costs more than a usual hotel or hostel, but it is less than an average volunteer program.”

March – November (Turtle-Season) Cost:

RM 1000 per week (7 nights)/ per person

RM 140 per night (after first week) / per person

RM 3000 per month/ per person

December – February (Off-Season) Cost:

RM 700 per week (7 nights)/ per person

RM 80 per night (after first week) / per person

RM 2200 per month/ per person

*Off-Season volunteering program is different every year and volunteers intending to come during this period will be primarily participating in activities at the project centre and animal welfare centre. Most activities will be land based.

*Payment can be made upon arrival at the project and during orientation. We prefer to receive cash (RM), unless necessary we can discuss online bank transfers.

*Malaysian Residents: Discount can be discussed if necessary only please.

Your stay here includes/ does not include:

- Volunteer program activities, accommodation, facilities on site, breakfast and lunch, drinks (coffee, tea), laundry machine, kitchen, plenty of work to do, internet WiFi.
- Recreation equipments like kayaks, snorkelling mask, snorkel, fins, bicycle, volleyball, frisbee, board games.
- Dinner is NOT included: you can either use the kitchen to cook your meal or go to village/ town and support local restaurants/ cafe/ business.
The average cost of dinner is RM10-15.

Rooms:

- The dormitory style room has 7 single beds with two western-style bathrooms each. It can accommodate up to 7 people. Unless necessary or for group programs, the dormitory rooms will only have a maximum of 4 volunteers at any given time.
Volunteer will be allocated to a room with the same gender volunteers.
- The private room has 1 queen and 2 single beds. Couples and families will get priority.



How to get here:

Tioman Island is located around 32km off the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia, on the border between the Johor and Pahang states of Malaysia.

You can reach Tioman easily;

- By Bus/Car/Taxi and then a ferry from Mersing (Johor state) or Tanjung Gemok (Pahang state) ferry terminals

or

- By Plane from Kuala Lumpur's Subang Airport (This service is temporarily suspended)

Important Note: If you are travelling to Tioman by ferry, it is important to know that the ferry timetable with BlueWater Ferries from Mersing, changes daily, due to the tides. The ferry timetable for a particular month is only released around the 15th of the previous month, so it is therefore difficult to plan too far in advance. Another option would be travelling from TANJUNG GEMOK Ferry Terminal, which is a 40-minute drive north from Mersing.

You can contact BlueWater Ferries on +60 77 994 811

Or visit their website at www.bluewatertioman.com

Tickets: RM35 per person, per way

