

## The Science Exchange 2022 Mexico Description - Whale Sharks

### Internship duties:

Work up to 6 days a week for a nonprofit shark conservation organization. Duties are weather and nature dependent but could include some of the following:

- Terrestrial & underwater surveys of sharks
- Passive & active acoustic telemetry tracking of sharks
- Assisting with shark tagging trips
- Supporting our team with biopsy & blood sampling techniques
- Morphological & visual estimation techniques
- Diet & nutritional analysis of sharks
- Habitat sampling (Plankton sampling, eDNA sampling)
- Underwater & Aerial drone surveys of sharks
- Photo Identification techniques & Software
- Deployment of Underwater video camera stations (BRUVS)
- Fish Camp Interviews about sharks & Rays
- Office work
- Equipment maintenance
- Data entry work

### Research:

When you are not on internship duty and with permission from your Site Supervisor, you will collect data and complete assignments for the academic portion of the course.

Topics are chosen by the student and the mentor according to your interests and skills.

Examples of questions you could answer are:

- Based on historical data and field data collected during your internship, describe the abundance, distribution, and behavior of the whale sharks in the region.
- What are the current and potential threats to this population?
- What are your recommendations for their conservation?



Identify individuals by their markings



Observe shark/human interactions



Document groups and movements



Zooplankton sampling

Schedule:

To collect sufficient data, we expect interns to work 6 days a week for two months. Whale sharks are found near la Paz in the winter, so your dates will be:

Two months field work from mid October to mid December (flexible)

Package:

**US\$7,490** Includes: 8 weeks stay in an apartment or hostel, weekly food stipends, ground transportation, international health insurance, orientations, field training, research equipment, field and first aid supplies, a donation to the shark research group, the Science Exchange fees, and all academic materials.