

Coral Nurseries on Koh Tao

February 11th, 2011 – Coral Fragments Ready for Transplant

Back in September 2010 Eco Koh Tao and Crystal Dive, joined Marine Conservation Koh Tao and the other dive schools in setting up a number of coral nurseries around the island.

Almost six months after their inception some of the branching *Acropora* corals have grown sufficiently to be moved to a new home. Which is exactly what we did. Taking some of the healthier 'fragments' we carried them over to the tree in the centre of Buoyancy World which was designed to take these coral fragments.



Caption: Ecodiver Julia Stewart with her coral fragment in its new

competition free environment up off the ground to grow and develop.

The coral nurseries are a reef restoration technique designed to help regrow and regenerate damaged or broken coral. Overall it helps increase the abundance of corals in an area that may have been damaged by any number of reasons. Last year on Koh Tao and throughout the world coral reefs suffered from a



Liam with his basket of corals for transplant

IDCS Nathan Cook and Ecodiver Julia Stewart were assisted by Petra Vasony and Liam Pickering in the task.

One of the nurseries we set up at Twins dive site over by Koh Nangyuan. In 10 metres of water we found marginalised coral 'fragments' that, lying on the ground in their current environment they would struggle to survive. Placing them on the tables of the nursery allows them a sediment &



Ecodiver Julia Stewart transplanting her coral baby

severe bleaching event. Many corals suffered and some died during that process.

(See our youtube video of that event

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ecokohtao#p/a/u/1/83dnQAR5H6c>)

Once a healthy size the aim is to transplant these corals back onto natural reefs or onto artificial structures designed to receive coral transplants. Which is exactly what we did today.

Coral reefs are in danger all over the world from amongst other things climate change, global warming and ocean acidification. Reef Restoration techniques like these will be increasingly important if we are to save them from extinction.



IDCS Nathan Cook preparing a coral fragment for transplant to its new home



Coral fragments in their new home.



Coral fragments in their new home.



Coral fragments in their new home.

By Nathan Cook February 2011