

**VOTE FOR THE
WHALE SHARK
AS WESTERN
AUSTRALIA'S
MARINE EMBLEM
AND HELP RAISE
AWARENESS
ABOUT
CONSERVING IT!**



Brad Norman is a researcher at Murdoch University and has 20 years of experience working with whale sharks

Where we got our information from..

- Verbal conversation with Brad Norman – researcher with Murdoch University
- Verbal conversation with Simon Hawkins, CEO Yamtji Marpla Aboriginal Corporation
- www.nationalgeographic.com
- www.fish.gov.au
- www.westernaustralia.com
- www.worldsharkfest.com
- www.whaleshark.org.au

*Compiled and presented by
Year 4 (Room 23) students of
Forest Crescent Primary School*



**VOTE FOR THE
WHALE SHARK!**

INTERESTING FACTS

- The whale shark is the world's largest fish and can weigh up to 54 000 kilograms.
- The scientific name for the whale shark is *Rhincondon typus*.
- The first sighting of a whale shark was in 1828 at the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa by scientist Andrew Smith.
- The whale shark has a distinctive, unique pattern of cream coloured spots and stripes on its back.
- Since whale sharks probably can't reproduce until they are in their late 20's or 30's, the whale sharks stand a good chance of being harpooned before it can give birth, leading to reduced numbers.



WHY IS THE WHALE SHARK IMPORTANT TO WA?



Coral spawning at Coral Bay

- In the local Aboriginal language, Ningaloo means 'deep water' or 'promontory'. In the recent years there has been a great increase in the number of whale shark sightings at the Ningaloo Reef. This attracts many eco tourists to WA and would help the economy of WA.
- Eco tourists have the opportunity to swim with the whale sharks at Ningaloo Reef and see these amazing creatures closely.
- Two of the biggest feeding sites are Ningaloo and Christmas Island. This makes Western Australia a significant area for whale shark activity.

WHY SHOULD THE WHALE SHARK BE THE MARINE EMBLEM OF WA?

- Whale sharks are endangered species and having them as the marine emblem of WA would help raise awareness about conserving these vulnerable species.
- A number of WA universities, researchers and scientists are involved in conducting studies about the behaviour of the whale shark, developing sustainable eco tourism and conservation in WA. Having the whale shark as our marine emblem could encourage governments to realize the importance of funding whale shark conservation programs.

