

Project Update: July 2017

The first week of July 2017 was marked by the field studies conducted within the Neum bay. The entire field trip consisted of two parts: 1) Studies in order to fully map potential spawning areas of batoids that inhabit Neum bay; and 2) Field education of the students which have attended lectures in May and June 2017. Besides me, as the coordinator of the field studies, Neira Dedić, MSc participated in front of the project team member. Also, our partners/colleagues Prof. Adla Kahrić and Hajrudin Beširović, PhD have joined with us in order to help with the education (beach prospecting and snorkelling activities) of our students. A total of 15 students have participated in our field trip and have mastered basic skills necessary for conducting the proper field studies with the aim to better understand populations for developing a conservation strategy. Since we have encountered any live specimens during this study, we haven't brought any samples for pathological studies.

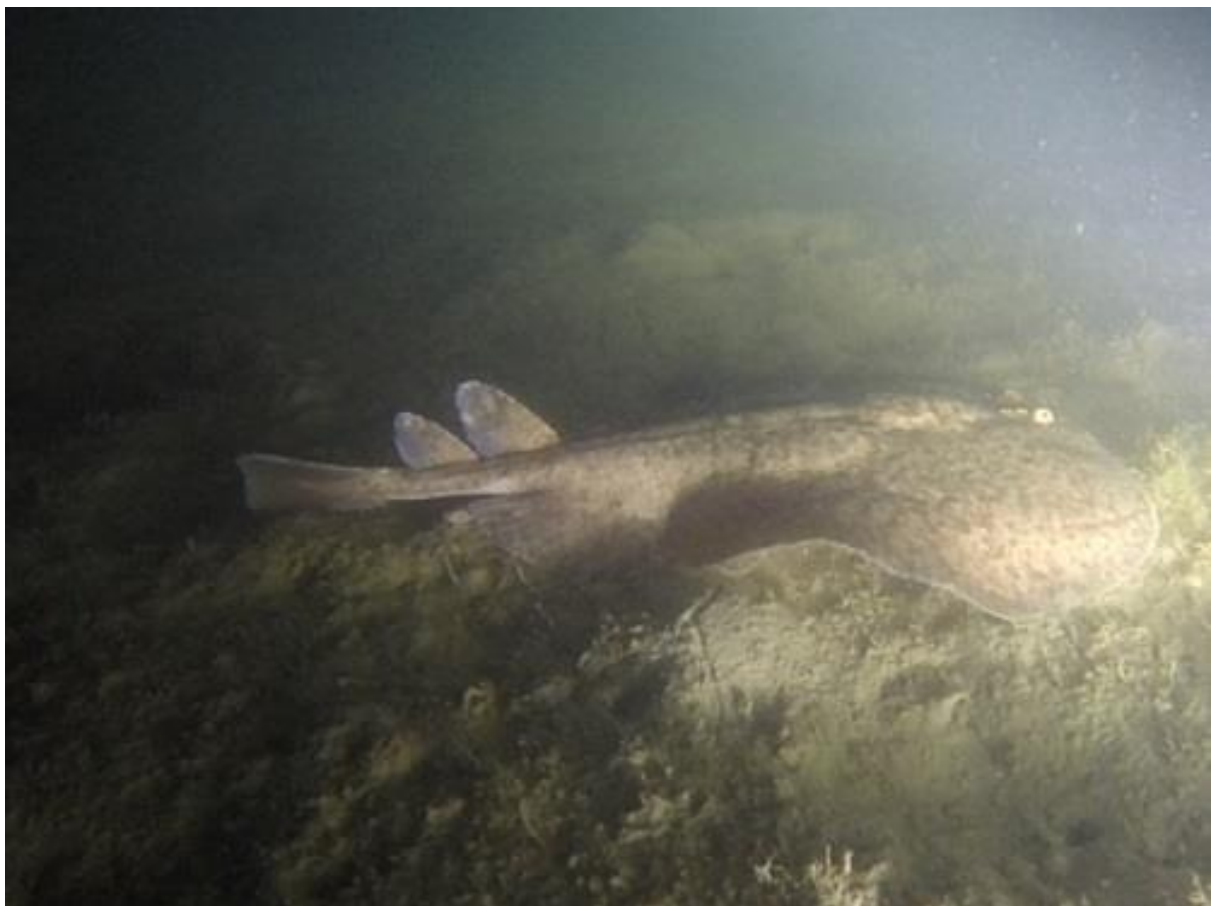
We have received the inquiry from the Deutsche Welle (based in Berlin, Germany) for filming the short documentary about our efforts to save the elasmobranch species in the Neum bay primarily through this project and our own efforts in the past. We have scheduled filming for August 2017 during our next field studies. This documentary will be translated to English, German, Spanish and Arabic and will be broadcasted all around the globe. This definitely presents one of the most important recognition of our work and efforts in research and conservation!



Andrej is preparing for the research dive with all the necessary equipment, purchased through the Rufford Small Grants Foundation.



Snorkelling activities as a part of the Field Education for future conservationists and researchers (primarily biologists) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized throughout this Rufford Small Grant project.



Adult specimen of the marbled electric ray, *Torpedo marmorata* Risso, 1880, at the 21 m depth filmed during the night dive in July using GoPro Hero V, photo: A. Gajić.