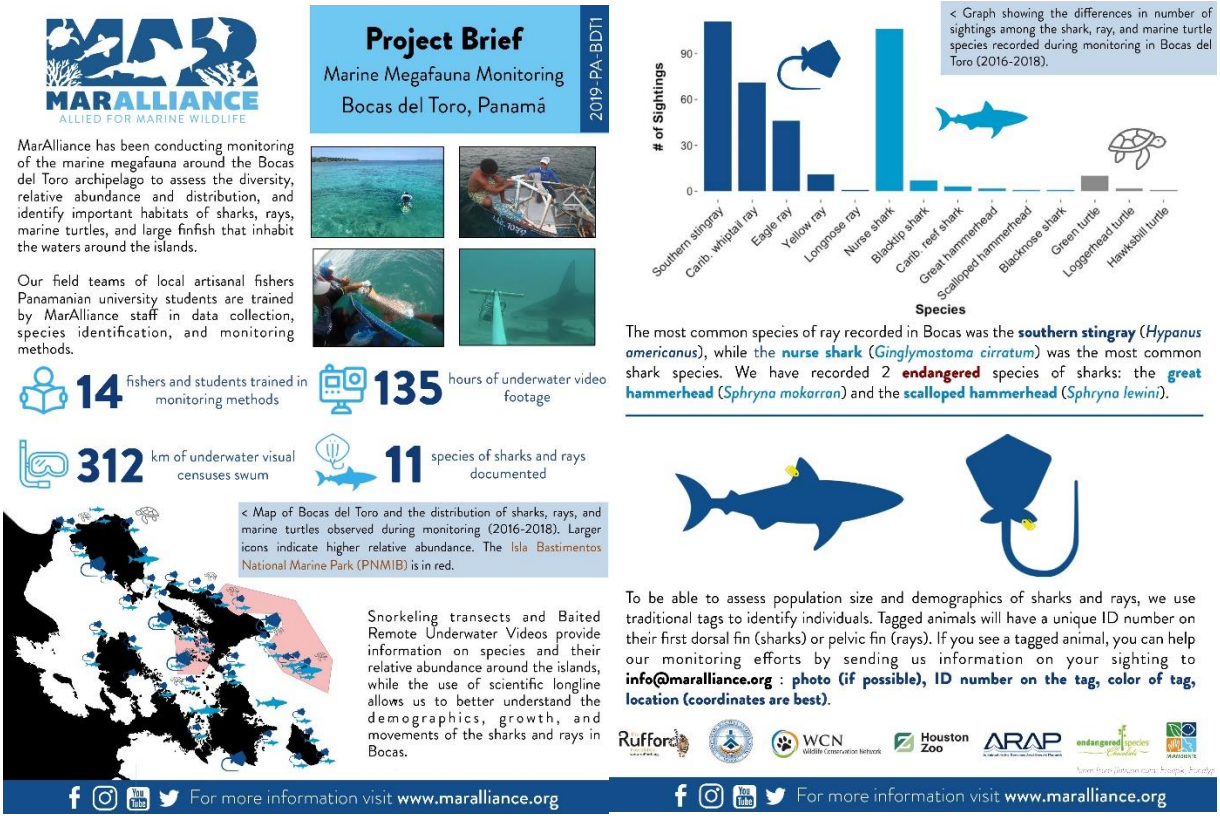
Project Update: July 2019

Citizen science has a great capacity to contribute to ongoing marine research and conservation. With data collected through ongoing monitoring of big fish around Bocas del Toro we have begun creating outreach materials in Spanish and English to inform communities about the project and key results collected so far, as well as provide information for how they can contribute to the project by sending in sighting information. Recreational divers that are visiting the reefs around Bocas on an almost daily basis can provide significant insights into the diversity, abundance, and distribution of key species. This year we have strengthened our ties with local dive shops in Bocas, who have begun sending sightings data on the elasmobranch species they encounter.

These sighting data will supplement the standardised annual monitoring that we conduct around the archipelago and ultimately give us a better idea of the demographics of shark and ray populations around the island in relation to human activities.