

Hong Kong Natural History Society
Report on October 2018 Boat Trip to Crescent Island

Fortunately, the weather was alright for us to set off on this boat trip. It was a cloudy day and 16 members met at Ma Liu Shui public pier and boarded Mr Li Junior's Chinese junk in good time. We had a detour to Sam Mun Tsai typhoon shelter as Mr. Li had to take the coral viewers from a different boat. Although not serious, we saw some of the damage done to the area by the last typhoon. The canopy on our boat was actually blown off from the upper deck during the typhoon.



We sailed through Tolo Channel, a very windy journey, and stopped by the "Devil's Fist" – a special geographical feature formed at the edge of the shore. We had a good look at the 400 million- year- old sedimentary rocks in the area. We then went through Hung Shek Mun, a narrow water path that leads to Crescent Island. We had a close view of the Outward Bound School, standing well as it is despite the devastation done by the last typhoon. We could see there need to be much clearing and mopping up before it can return to its normal activities.

Our boat anchored at Crescent Island Bay at about 12 o'clock. Mr. Li took one group of members to the shore to have a picnic lunch at the beach, while the rest of the group enjoyed their lunch and chats on board. At about 1:30, the first group of 8 members went coral viewing and the second group followed after half an hour. Members reported seeing sea slugs, a sea urchin and a few fish swimming around the corals. We did see many different species of corals around the 2 stretches of coral reef along the shore line of this bay. Someone claimed seeing a mermaid!

(a mermaid shaped coral?) Without much sunlight, we were unable to see the colours of the different corals. The brain coral was however the easiest to spot. It was good to see that there were not many big patches of bleached coral like what we spotted from the last visit.



It was cloudy and the water seemed too cold for swimming and snorkelling . However, two brave members (with warm suits) did get into the water for a quick swim and 3 of those who went to the beach swam to explore the coral. It was not too bad once the body got used to the water temperature and kept moving.

Just before we left Crescent Bay, we saw shoals of tiny fish jumping close to the surface of the water. We returned to the pier in good time. I felt blessed from the day that none of us got blown off the deck and enjoyed a great day riding through the waves.



Brain Corals we believe having spotted at the bay (AFCD resource)

*Text Mak Wei Ming
Photos Mak Wei Ming, Julie Moffat*