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# Ocean Awareness Training slated in Lahaina

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### Photos



The course also includes hands-on field activities offered by the coordinators and program partners.

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LAHAINA — Local environmental organizations on Maui are once again joining forces to offer a free Ocean Awareness Training (OAT) certification course to the community and marine recreation providers.

After completing all five sessions and one field day, participants will receive a CORAL (Care of our Culture, Ocean, Reefs and Animal Life) certification card.

Nominated for the 2007 and '08 Living Reef Award, this free training course will provide a foundational knowledge base for those employed in the marine recreation industry, community volunteers or anyone who wants to learn more about Hawaii's marine environment.

Twice-weekly sessions will be held beginning Nov. 9 in Kihei at the Sanctuary Education Center. The coordinators have not yet been able to secure a Lahaina venue for the training, and they hope to secure a West Maui site to host OAT this fall and in the future. A wait list is being created for West Maui residents in the event a venue is confirmed; otherwise, all OAT training will occur in Kihei.

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The West Side course is slated for 6 to 8:30 p.m. from Nov. 10-24 on Tuesdays and Thursdays (five sessions).

The upcoming program will include the following topics and guest speakers: "Hawaiian Culture and Sense of Place;" "Coral Reefs 101 and Best Practices for Marine Recreation" with Jonathan Hultquist, Donna Brown, John Mitchell and Liz Foote; "Hawaii's Humpback Whales" with David Matilla and Ed Lyman; "Dolphins and Monk Seals" with Nicole Davis; and "Sea Turtles and the Eyes of the Reef monitoring network" with Cheryl King, John Mitchell and Darla White.

Ocean Awareness Training provides an opportunity for participants to get involved and make a difference by putting their knowledge and training to use in the community.

Participants will be required to complete one field day component to receive their Ocean Awareness certification card. Participants can choose from various activities, including water quality monitoring, community-based coral reef monitoring and Honokowai ahupua'a restoration.

The course is jointly coordinated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, Digital Bus, Maui Ocean Center, state Division of Aquatic Resources, Project S.E.A.-Link, Maui Reef Fund, Maui Community College Marine Option Program, Hawaii Eco-Nature Society, Hawaii Wildlife Fund and Coral Reef Alliance.

This program will help participants meet the requirements for volunteer positions with the sanctuary's Naturalist Corps Program, Maui Ocean Center and other island-wide volunteer opportunities with partner organizations. Space is limited and registration is required.

For more information, call Tracy Burke at 879-2818, extension 28; e-mail [oceanawarenessmaui@gmail.com](mailto:oceanawarenessmaui@gmail.com), register online at <http://oceanawarehawaii.org>, or join the online community at [www.fbook.me/OATMaui](http://www.fbook.me/OATMaui) to view photos from past sessions, learn more about the program and interact with participants, partners and coordinators.

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