



# CONSERVATION

Through Research, Education, and by Providing Expert Advice

## FUNDRAISING PACK





# Gentle Giants

Manta and devil rays are some of the most beautiful, fascinating, and enigmatic creatures in our oceans. Close relatives of all sharks and rays, these cartilaginous, filter feeding fish live throughout the tropical and sub-tropical oceans of the world. Born into a life of perpetual motion, they can never stop moving as they must keep water flowing over their gills for respiration. Their daily and seasonal movements are tuned to the flow of the ocean currents that bring the planktonic food they rely on.

Manta rays are giants of their kind; with the largest individuals reaching seven metres in width and weighing up to two tonnes. Despite their colossal presence, mantas are gentle creatures. They have the largest brain relative to their body size of all fish, and their intelligence and curiosity make encounters with manta rays a truly magical experience. Their obvious intellect and complex social interactions set manta rays apart from other fish, but as they have only been scientifically studied for around two decades, much of their life history remains a mystery.

Devil rays are the manta's smaller relatives, but what they lack in size they make up for in

acrobatic enthusiasm. During courting events several of the pygmy devil ray species are known to aggregate in vast shoals that number in the thousands. As a shoal gets bigger, individual rays start to propel themselves out of the water, reaching heights of over two metres before belly-flopping back into the ocean with a crash. More and more join in over time, until the air is filled with leaping rays. The reason for this behaviour is unclear, but scientists believe the most likely purpose is communication. Even less is known about devil rays than mantas; they are generally very shy towards divers, making it hard to observe and study their behaviour in the wild.

Manta and devil rays have a conservative life history strategy: they take a long time to reach sexual maturity, are slow to reproduce, and (reef manta rays) tend to give birth to a single pup every two to five years following a nine to twelve-month pregnancy. This strategy may have served them well for millions of years but unfortunately these traits, paired with their highly migratory nature, now leave manta and devil rays extremely vulnerable to overexploitation by man.



# Sea of Change



In recent decades, a new market for manta and devil ray gill plates has developed for their use in Traditional Asian Medicine.

Retailers claim that just as gill plates are used by manta and devil rays to filter plankton from the water, they can aid in the detoxification and purification of the consumer by filtering disease and toxins from the body. However, there is no scientific evidence to support these claims. In fact, gill plates are not truly a Traditional Medicine - the demand has arisen due to product marketing by retailers, who have falsely 'revived' a remedy that never existed in the traditional literature.

Fisheries targeting mantas for their highly-prized gills have had a devastating impact on populations, resulting in reef manta rays being

listed as 'Vulnerable', and oceanic manta rays being listed as 'Endangered', on the IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species. Following considerable work and pressure from the Manta Trust and other NGOs, mantas and devil rays have been listed on Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) which limits international trade in manta and devil ray gill plates. These were great steps forward for manta and devil ray conservation but, despite this protection, mantas are still being killed in their thousands and devil rays in their tens of thousands as bycatch in high seas fisheries. As a result, manta and devil rays remain some of the most threatened fish in our seas.



## 8 Reasons to Save Manta and Devil Rays

1. Manta and devil rays have been around for over 28 million years. They were swimming the oceans tens of millions of years before our human ancestors first evolved and are only threatened because of human activity. Let's give these incredible animals a chance!
2. Manta and devil rays have big brains! They have the largest brain to body ratio of all fish. Manta rays exhibit complex social interactions with each other and are often inquisitive around divers and snorkellers. These intelligent animals deserve better than a cruel fate in a fishing net.
3. Manta rays are an iconic species that connect people with ocean conservation. As charismatic megafauna, manta rays act as a flagship species, helping to engage and motivate people with the wider message of marine ecosystem conservation.
4. Manta and devil rays are still a mystery. Manta and devil rays have only been scientifically studied in detail for around two decades, and there is still so much we do not know about them! With your support we can continue our research. The more we learn about them, the better we can protect them.
5. Manta and devil ray conservation helps to support coastal communities. With no alternative source of income, some fishing communities will struggle to survive if manta and devil ray populations disappear. The Manta Trust is dedicated to finding alternative, sustainable livelihoods for communities who rely on manta and devil ray fishing.
6. Manta rays are gentle giants. Despite growing to colossal size (the largest individuals weigh up to 2 tonnes and are up to 7 meters wide!), these animals are graceful, friendly, and safe to swim with.
7. Protecting manta and devil rays can help protect other species. The creation of Marine Protected Areas, the design of more selective fishing gear and the enforcement of boat speed limits are just a few examples of management measures that will benefit many other marine species.
8. Losing manta and devil rays could have unexpected and dire consequences. We still know so little about their role in the ecological function of our oceans that we cannot accurately predict the impact of losing them. As consumers of large quantities of zooplankton, they may help to transfer atmospheric carbon to the deep ocean, regulating climate change.



## How your money will support manta and devil rays

Any donation, big or small, makes a difference by supporting our mission to conserve manta and devil rays, their relatives, and their habitats. Our global team of researchers, scientists, conservationists, educators, and media experts do this through a combination of:



### Research

Our scientists and researchers work to gather vital data needed to quantify targeted and bycatch manta and devil ray fisheries so that we can support governments in the development of protective policies to address them. Without conducting thorough research, we could not provide governments with the skills, knowledge, and tools to effectively enforce the protective measures they implement.



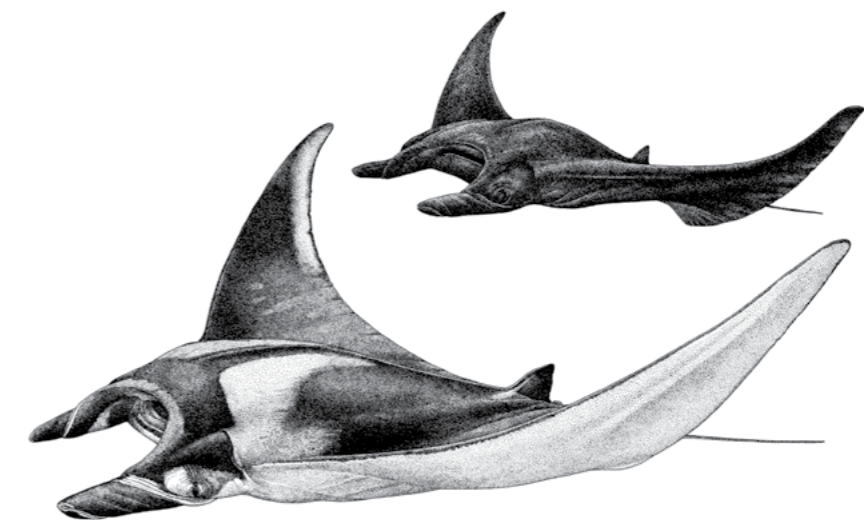
### Education

Our Project Leaders are working with communities around the world that currently rely upon manta and devil ray fishing, helping them to transition towards alternative livelihoods and a more sustainable, non-consumptive use of their manta and devil ray populations. Our educators and media experts seek new ways to engage people of all ages, from all backgrounds and locations, virtually and in-situ, with ocean conservation to inspire positive action and behavioural change.



### Collaboration

Our core team forms the backbone of a network of over 25 manta and devil ray research and conservation projects around the world, and works to coordinating activities, facilitating synergies, and ensure successful practices are shared with our collaborators. The Manta Trust directs global efforts and priorities to conserve manta and devil rays using our [5 Year Plan](#).





**£10** could purchase materials to help to stop manta rays getting entangled in mooring lines.

**£50** could help us run a webinar for up to 500 people, to raise awareness of threats facing manta rays worldwide.

**£100** could help to cover the cost of one of our annual research permits in the Maldives.

**£200** could provide fuel for one of our research boats for a week.

**£500** could help us provide marine-education teaching resources to 100 schools in developing countries around the world.

**£1000** could buy an underwater time-lapse camera to provide new insight into manta behaviour.

**£3000** could purchase a satellite tag to help us investigate spatial habitat use of a manta ray.

**More information on the vital work your donation will support can be found throughout [our website](#).**

# Fundraising Ideas

If you are thinking about fundraising for us there are many fun and creative things you could do. Below you'll find some suggested fundraising activities which may inspire you... but we'd love to hear from you if you have new ideas!



## Get Active!

Let manta rays be your inspiration to get fit by signing up to our next [Cross The Oceans](#) challenge! Run, Swim, Cycle, Triathlon, Kayak, Marathon, Walk.



## Host an Event

Engage your friends, family, work colleagues or local community with a fun event. Pub Quiz, Sports Day, Gig, Bake Sale, Bingo, Film Night.



## Sell Your Unwanted Things

Declutter your house by selling your unwanted belongings for a good cause. Car Boot Sale, eBay, Facebook Marketplace, GumTree.



## Gifts

Ask your friends and family to donate instead of buying you a gift. Birthday, Christmas, Wedding.



## Do something creative

If you are a talented artist, crafter or cook you could donate the profit from a product sold. Paintings, Prints, Cards, Jewellery, Cakes, Toys.



## Do something wild!

Channel your crazy energy into a fun activity to inspire donations. Leg Wax, Fancy Dress Day at Work, Head Shave, Karaoke, Stand Up Comedy.



## Social Media Fundraiser

Set up a Facebook or Instagram fundraiser for the Manta Trust on your birthday.

If you raise over £1000 we will offer you the chance to name and adopt a manta ray!

# Fundraising Superstars



## Abbie and Stuart

### How did you raise donations?

We took part in the ASICS London 10K in 2019 and gained donations through sponsorship from our family and friends, from our workplaces and from Abbie's sixth form too. It's a great way of educating on the topic too if people don't know much about what the Manta Trust do. We made a Virgin Giving page which was really useful as it was an easy and accessible way for people to donate and meant people could add Gift Aid to their donations.

### How much did you raise?

£500

### Did it cost you anything?

We each paid £48 for our event tickets. Plus, we had to buy train tickets and hotel rooms for the night as we don't live in London.

### What was the best bit?

The best part about it was definitely being able to complete it together, there's always a great feeling about passing the finish line together – especially as father and daughter! There's always a brilliant atmosphere at events like this and a sense of real achievement when everyone's coming through at the end. This is the second time we've done a 10km for the Manta Trust and being in London was such a great atmosphere, and a great route too by being able to go through the central city.

### What was the worst bit?

The worst bit for us was travelling to and from our hotel. Especially after finishing the race and having to walk back to our hotel and then catch the train home, it is safe to say we were both shattered!

### What advice would you give to someone doing the same thing?

Advice from both of us would firstly be – go for it! It might be difficult to train if you're not particularly into running initially but it will all be worth it when you're there on the day. Completing the race with someone was a great idea too so if you have any family or friends that would fancy joining you, it's really fun. In terms of fundraising, start raising money from early on and make the most of the opportunity to educate people on some manta conservation.

# Harrison

## How did you raise donations?

On my 12th birthday I asked my friends and family to donate to the Manta Trust instead of buying me gifts.

## How much did you raise?

£170

## Did it cost you anything?

No. I was having a big birthday party anyway.

## What was the best bit?

Getting to tell people about Manta Trust and ocean conservation and knowing that the money was going to help mantas.

## What was the worst bit?

Saying goodbye to everyone after the party.

## What advice would you give to someone doing the same thing?

Plan ahead. Make sure you include information about Manta Trust in your information so they can learn more.



# Top Tips



## Target

Set yourself a fundraising target! It will motivate you and give your friends and family more incentive to donate and help you meet it.



## Match Funding

Ask your work if they do match funding? You could double your donation!



## Promotion

If you need images or graphics for use on social media you can send a request to [info@mantatrust.org](mailto:info@mantatrust.org) and we'll send you some. You can also use the facts from this document.



## Wording

Please make it clear that you are fundraising 'in aid of' rather than on behalf of or any alternative wording.



## News

Contact your local newspaper or company newsletter to see if they will feature a piece about you with a link to your online fundraising page.



## Be Safe

It is really important that you look out for your own wellbeing if you are taking on a fitness challenge and it is up to you to ensure that any event you organise is run safely and legally. The Manta Trust does not accept any responsibility for your event, or for anyone who participates in it.



## Team Effort

Don't do it alone! Why not see if your friends, family, or colleagues want to take on a fundraising challenge with you? That way you can motivate each other and raise even more.



## Get in Touch!

We'd love to hear how you are getting on and to receive photos of you completing your challenge. If you are happy for us to share these on our social media you might inspire others to fundraise too!\*

*\*We cannot share images of children without a signed-consent form from their parent or legal guardian. Contact us to ask for a form.*

# How to Donate



## PayPal

You can easily send us funds via our [PayPal Giving Fund Account](#).



## Bank Transfer

If you'd prefer to send us money via bank transfer, please get in touch using the details below and we will send you our bank details (for donations recieved from outside of the UK, a minimum of £20 is required).



## Other Platforms

There are lots of fundraising platforms that make it easy to collect donations from your friends online, such as [Virgin Money Giving](#) and [Just Giving](#).

Contact us at [info@mantatrust.org](mailto:info@mantatrust.org)







# Fundraising Pack

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## The Manta Trust

The Manta Trust is a registered charity in England & Wales (Charity Number 1145387).

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