



Conservation through Research, Education & Collaboration

Catemoor House, Corscombe, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 0NT, United Kingdom

MANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN: THIS YEAR'S PERFECT PLASTIC-FREE GIFT FOR YOUR FAVOURITE GRINCH

The Manta Trust have 2019's best eco-Christmas gift for that 'impossible to buy for' person in your life!

We all have that one relative or friend who is a nightmare to buy for. Perhaps they appear to have it all already, they might live in a remote location that's hard to post to, or maybe they simply refuse to give any useful hint of what they want? This Christmas, whether you're buying for a difficult dad, a far-flung aunty or a baffling boyfriend, the Manta Trust has the answer! Their Manta Ray Adoption Gift Packs are suitable for all ages and include a personalised certificate, as well as stunning e-poster and fascinating manta fact-file and activity booklet. Plus, the full £20 cost of purchase goes towards vital manta ray research and conservation work around the world so you can feel extra good about your purchase.

Those who watched David Attenborough's Blue Planet II series will already know about the huge impact that plastic pollution is having on the world's oceans. Every year 8 million metric tons of plastics enter the marine environment, on top of the estimated 150 million metric tons that currently circulate the world's oceans; and every year millions of animals, including manta rays, sea turtles and dolphins, are killed when they become entangled in or ingest plastic. Christmas is a time of excess, and a time during which many of us value convenience. So, it is no surprise that plastic features heavily in the average festive household.

'Research has shown waste can double over Christmas, so the Manta Trust want to help you reduce your impact this festive season. Our Manta Adoption Packs are digital and are sent via email, so they can be printed at home to create plastic-free stocking fillers. Plus, our great mix of flappy friends, means there's a manta ray to suit everyone!' says Media & Communications Manager Simon Hilbourne.

Limited edition Adoption Packs for Manta Claus and The Grinch will be available only from the 1st November to the 22nd December. Other manta rays available to adopt all year round include Babaganoush who made a miraculous recovery from near-fatal injuries after being struck by a speed boat in 2018, and Mr Spotty who is famous for being the spottiest of nearly 5,000 manta rays identified in the Maldives to date.

Manta rays are giants of their kind, with the largest individuals reaching up to seven meters in width and weighing up to two tonnes! Despite their colossal presence they are gentle creatures that use specialised gills to filter tiny planktonic prey from the water as they swim. They have the largest brain of any fish and their curious nature and complex social interactions make encounters with them a truly magical, interactive experience for divers and snorkellers. Unfortunately, manta rays and their smaller cousins, the devil rays, are extremely vulnerable to overfishing. Some fisheries actively target manta rays for their gills which are used in Traditional Asian Medicines, whilst many others catch and kill these beautiful creatures incidentally as bycatch. Habitat destruction, pollution, irresponsible



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tourism and the effects of climate change also threaten their survival. As a result, manta and devil rays are now some of the most threatened fish in our seas.

The Manta Trust is a UK registered charity that coordinates global manta and devil ray research and conservation efforts around the world. Their goal is a sustainable future for the oceans where manta rays and their relatives thrive in diverse, healthy marine ecosystems. To find out more about their work, and to adopt a manta, visit www.mantatrust.org

NOTES TO EDITOR:

- A digital adoption pack costs £20 and includes: a bio of the adopted manta, a manta ray fact file, an activity pack, a poster of the adopted manta and a personalised certificate. <https://www.mantatrust.org/adopt-a-manta>
- For press enquiries please contact Simon Hilbourne, Media & Communications Manager for the Manta Trust: simon@mantatrust.org