

## Turtle Conservation Project, Bali

Sophie Hunt, *Geography*

During the summer of 2019 I travelled to Ubud in Bali, where I carried out 2 weeks volunteer work at the Green Lion Turtle Sanctuary. This unique and unforgettable experience was made accessible to me through the Faculty International Mobility Bursary Scheme offered at the University of Liverpool. The scheme partly funded my trip through contributing money towards expenses such as the sign-up fee and flights.

I organised my trip through International Volunteer HQ (IVHQ) which is an affordable volunteer travel company. IVHQ provides a variety of different volunteer projects such as teaching, construction and conservation and works in over 50 destinations across the world. Find out more information on IVHQ on their website: <https://www.volunteerhq.org/gb/>

As a BSC geography student, I am aware of how human activity is impacting vulnerable marine ecosystems through climate change and the increased volume of plastics and other forms of human waste being released into the ocean. Sea turtle populations are rapidly decreasing and are becoming more endangered. For the duration of my project I worked alongside a local team to protect endangered sea turtles. I worked in the conservation centre where I fed and cleaned the turtles. I also took part in beach clean-ups, crab catching and educated the locals on the importance of conservation. The trip allowed me to see first hand the huge impacts that human activity is having on the environment. This not only assisted to develop understanding of aspects of my degree but also to do my part in protecting the marine wildlife and raising awareness.

Travelling across the world by myself was daunting but allowed for personal growth. I was required to be independent, self-reliant and organised. I met people from across the world and made friends that I'm still in contact with now. The trip also allowed me to experience a completely new culture. It was fascinating learning about their religion and how different the Balinese way of life is.

