

For immediate release

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## **Double celebration for Horniman's coral researchers**

Project Coral researchers at the Horniman Museum and Gardens in south London are celebrating the fourth successful annual spawning of their lab-based corals and new funding from the Shuttleworth Foundation to further their work.

Project Coral researchers are able to sexually reproduce land-based corals by replicating wild reef conditions, and their work is supporting international efforts to conserve and repair reefs damaged by climate change. This year's spawning, over the last two weeks of November, saw eight coral species at the Horniman release an estimated two million eggs which have been cross-fertilised to produce new coral embryos. These coral 'babies' will be used to for a variety of studies ranging from understanding the health role of beneficial bacteria associated with corals, to investigating what drives improved survival in the face of climate change.

The Shuttleworth Foundation Flash Grant of \$5,000 will help support this next stage of Project Coral's work. The Horniman was nominated for the grant by Shuttleworth Fellow Alasdair Davies as part of the Foundation's scheme that allows fellows to nominate individuals they would like to support in their work for social good.

The Horniman is also marking the close of 2018, designated the International Year of the Reef, with the completion of a new film detailing the work of Project Coral, produced by filmmaker and artist Sonia Levy. The film – to be shown in the Horniman's Aquarium and online – had its first showing at this month's Reef Futures conference in Florida, where it was presented by Project Coral's international partner Florida Aquarium.

Jamie Craggs, Horniman Aquarium Curator and lead Project Coral researcher, says: 'We're very grateful to Alasdair Davies and the Shuttleworth Foundation for this grant to support our research, and to Sonia Levy for the film that will help us show to our Aquarium and online visitors the vital work that's going on behind the scenes. Now that we've successfully created a way to reliably induce land-based coral spawning, we can use that knowledge both to research things like coral resilience to climate change and to work with our partners at Florida Aquarium to help restore the Florida reef.'

**Ends**

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## Notes to Editors:

- **Project Coral** is an innovative coral reproductive research project led by the Horniman Aquarium with international partners. The Horniman Aquarium has been pioneering research into developing techniques to stimulate coral sexual reproduction, and became the first institution globally to successfully induce predictable broadcast coral spawning as well as the first successful in-vitro fertilisation of captive corals in the UK. Project Coral's breakthrough of controlled captive coral spawning will support coral research facilities all over the world, by opening up opportunities to examine the effects of climate change, aid restoration of the reefs and support sustainable livelihoods.
- **The Shuttleworth Foundation** is, at its core, an experiment in open philanthropy. We use alternative funding methodologies and collaborative ways of working to support our Fellows – social innovators who are open at heart, have a fresh perspective on addressing challenges and have a very clear idea of their role in bringing about positive change. Our ideal future is one where the building blocks of solutions to social challenges are easy to find in a global open knowledge society, with unhindered access to essential information and limitless opportunities for innovation and replication. [shuttleworthfoundation.org](http://shuttleworthfoundation.org)
- The **International Year of the Reef (IYOR) 2018** is a year-long campaign of events and initiatives to promote coral reef conservation, led by the International Coral Reef Initiative. [icriforum.org/about-icri/iyor](http://icriforum.org/about-icri/iyor) @IYOR2018 #IYOR2018
- **Sonia Levy** is a French artist living between London and Iceland. Her research-led practice considers new forms of engagements with nonhuman life forms. Her installation, sculpture, drawing and video works operate at the intersection of art and science, interested in redefining our relationship with the Earth. Her current project *For the Love of Corals* is a cinematic inquiry based on Project Coral's work, and has also given rise to the factual film she has made for screening in the Horniman Aquarium. [sonialevy.net](http://sonialevy.net)
- **The Horniman Museum and Gardens** opened in 1901 as a gift to the people in perpetuity from tea trader and philanthropist Frederick John Horniman, to 'bring the world to Forest Hill'. Today the Horniman has a collection of 350,000 objects, specimens and artefacts from around the world. Its galleries include natural history, music and an acclaimed aquarium. A new World Gallery of anthropology opened in June 2018 and a new arts space, The Studio, opened in October 2018. Indoor exhibits link to the award-winning display gardens – from medicinal and dye gardens to an interactive sound garden, Butterfly House and an animal walk – set among 16 acres of beautiful, green space offering spectacular views across London. [horniman.ac.uk](http://horniman.ac.uk)
- The Horniman Museum and Gardens is core-funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and since 1990 has been governed by an independent charitable trust, registered charity no. 802725. The Horniman Museum and Gardens also receives funding from Arts Council England as one of its National Portfolio Organisations.
- **Opening times and admission.** The Horniman Museum is open daily 10am-5.30pm, except 24 - 26 December, when it is closed. The Gardens open at 7.15am Monday to Saturday and 8am on Sunday and Bank Holidays, and close at sunset. Entry to the Museum and Gardens is free but charges apply for the Aquarium, Butterfly House and some special exhibitions and events. Horniman Members and Benefactors go free – [horniman.ac.uk/members](http://horniman.ac.uk/members).
- **Access.** The Museum and the Gardens are both wheelchair and pushchair friendly with accessible toilets. Limited on-site parking is available for Blue Badge holders. [horniman.ac.uk/visit/disability-and-access](http://horniman.ac.uk/visit/disability-and-access).
- **Travel.** The Horniman is situated at 100 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3PQ on the South Circular Road (A205). It can be reached easily by train to Forest Hill station (London Overground/Southern, travel time approx.15-20 minutes from east/central London or East Croydon) and by local buses (176, 185, 197, 356, P4).