Galapagos Islands need tourism to survive



The Galapagos Islands lie on one of those great lines of weakness below the oceans of the world, the edges of tectonic plates. These are where molten rocks come to the surface and form volcanoes. You can find volcanoes of different ages there, and many of them are still active.

Different circumstances produce different animals and they adapt to their environments in different ways. As a result, you can't find marine iguanas everywhere – they only live in certain areas of the Galapagos. 0 E This shows that the Galapagos are an example of the theory of natural selection. What we can see in the Galapagos is also clear in the Seychelles and in Hawaii. In fact you can see it wherever there is a group of small islands.

Human beings didn't get to the Galapagos Islands until the sixteenth century. 1 [ ] Because of this, the islands remained isolated ecologically until quite recently. When men arrived they deliberately put goats on the islands to provide meat. This, as well as the arrival of rats which came on the ships, has had an important effect on the whole environment. The authorities on the Galapagos have recently taken steps to get rid of the goats from some of the islands. This is not a popular move with some of the settlers but it's a brave and necessary thing to do.

Nowadays the Galapagos attract a lot of tourists but the authorities are doing their best to protect the environment from the effects of tourism. The Galapagos consist of a dozen big islands and many smaller ones so when tounsts arrive, they can be separated into small groups and sent to different places. 2 [ ] This is clever for two reasons. Firstly it benefits the tourists – they have the impression that they are the only ones in a particular place – and it also limits the effect of tourism on the environment. However, there are people who say, 'Why don't we have twice as many tourists and that way we could get more money?' That attitude will always be the problem. Tourism is a mixed blessing for the Galapagos. Yes, it brings problems but if local people did not benefit from tourism, there would be nothing left there now. 3 [ ] This is the lesson of conservation around the world. For conservationists tourism is a necessary evil, but it can be controlled.

Of course, journalists and scientists have already examined every possible part of the Galapagos, to see how the things that are going on there now relate to the way we exploit the world in general. 4 [ ] These islands stand as a reminder of our responsibilities to the world around us.

A It would all be gone.

B Western European seamen didn't know about them earlier because they are in the middle of nowhere.

C They mainly sleep on boats, so the organisers can track where they are and plan to keep them separated.

D There are now two international airports.

E They had to feed on something and the only vegetation they could find was seaweed.

F We can mess up the Galapagos in the way that we can very easily mess up the whole planet.

5 Read the article again and choose from the sentences A–F the one which fits each gap. There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

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