Nzaee Seaweek
NZ ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

27 Feb to 6 March 2016

Toiora te Moana – Toiora te Tangata

Healthy Seas, Healthy People

Art: S.Frimmel

Seaweek is an annual, national marine education and engagement event hosted by the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE). It provides special opportunities to experience the beauty and mysteries of, and learn more about, the diversity and significance of our marine environment.

Seaweek is the only nationwide event dedicated to learning from the sea and developing a better understanding of what sustainability might mean in the marine world. Its overarching goal is:

'Seaweek inspires New Zealanders to experience, learn about and celebrate the sea. It is an annual opportunity to foster personal and social responsibility and collective action for a healthy marine environment.'

Seaweek 2016

Toiora te Moana – Toiora te Tangata
Healthy Seas – Healthy People

Seaweek 2016 connected Kiwis of all ages and backgrounds with the marine environment and invited them to explore their many connections with it. The results speak for themselves!

213 registered events, 14 competitions and many more unregistered events throughout the country enabled some 65,000 people to experience, learn about, take action for and celebrate their seas, coastlines and catchments.

Resources and activity ideas distributed to 50 Auckland pre-schools were eagerly received, revealing a demand for engaging activities for young children, their teachers & parents.

At the other end of the spectrum, renowned marine scientist, educator and marine reserves advocate the late Dr Bill Ballentine was honoured posthumously at a special event in Auckland.

Also in Auckland, the New Zealand Coastal Society presented the 2016 Seaweek Ocean Champion award to Taranaki-based Friends of Waitara River – one of seven great nominees entered in this year's award and profiled on the Seaweek website seaweek.org.nz.

In Northland, six Community Guided Snorkel Days and two Community Guided Kayak Days organised by the Experiencing Marine Reserves team were well attended. There were 16 similar events organised throughout the rest of the country for Seaweek.

Piha - Love our lagoons.
Photo: Jacqui Geux

Getting the Message out

Widespread promotion in national, regional and local media took place during Seaweek 2016.

- **On TV:** In Hawke's Bay, National Aquarium staff were interviewed on the environmental challenges facing Hardinge Road's rocky shore.
- **On air:** A special edition of Radio NZ's 'Our Changing World' marking Seaweek; interviews on Newstalk ZB and Planet FM with Seaweek National Coordinator Dr Mels Barton; Northland Regional Coordinator Samara Nicholas interviewed on Ngāti Hine FM; Sustainable Coastlines' Fletcher Sunde interviewed on Base FM; Seaweek advertising run for a week on MORE FM in Northland and Auckland.
- **In print:** Items in local papers, newsletters and magazines; a full page spread in the NZ Herald promoting Auckland's Seaweek events; multi-page teaching features in 'Starters and Strategies' teachers' magazine and the 'Education Gazette'.
- **Online:** regular e-newsletters kept Seaweek's database of over 3132 members updated, while postings on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter greatly expanded Seaweek's reach, with regular updates to over 2250 Facebook friends, and Seaweek's Twitter reach expanding to over 800,000.
- **Plus...** Postings in libraries, iSites, Council websites and service centres, Eventfinder, links from over 40 organisation websites and e-mail networks across the country.

Goodbye Godwits.
Photo: Jacqui Geux

How effective was Seaweek?

Seaweek's regional coordinators and event coordinators did an amazing job showcasing their special places and issues in their area and were very pleased with participation levels. Many events were organised specifically to meet the Seaweek objectives:

- Foster informed discussion of issues and impacts and encourage personal responsibility and action taking.

"*The talk revitalized my desire to produce art that speaks of the destruction plastic has on our ocean and life within. Need to put some thought into how to reveal the effects of overfishing* " Event attendee

"*I will inform other mothers and friends about what I learnt, like not to drive on the beach as it destroys the dotterels' nests*" Event attendee

- Encourage and cultivate lifelong pursuit of knowledge and understanding about New Zealand's marine environment.

"*We learnt that just like on land, New Zealand has introduced species or species from other areas that upset the balance*" Event attendee

"*I will observe foreign species of seaweeds & animals & if necessary photograph them, identify the place & date and report them if dangerous*" Event attendee

- Raise awareness of connections between land, sea and wellbeing:

"*I learned about plantings, nest protection, staging areas & human encroachment. I will undertake local education at home*" Event attendee

"Sedimentation causes nitrate spikes, creating anaerobic zones, leading to areas where only pathogens can live - no marine life" Event attendee

- Know where to access more information about our marine environment:

"*...Coming across your information on Google has really helped me put together a solid program for my kids. Thank you again for the resources on the website. I can't even describe how much time you have saved me!*" Librarian, Pennsylvania, USA

"*I really appreciate the promotion of the Taiko and Seabird education resource, and we have had really good pick up from the website. I'm sure that is due to it being hosted prominently on the Seaweek website*" Department of Conservation staff member

- Promote opportunities to experience the marine environment.

"I was really inspired by your Seaweek prep workshop yesterday. My kids loved the Young Ocean Explorers clip and could make connections with the water care and looking after our sea life. Our syndicate is heading to Wenderholm next Friday and we are planning a beach clean-up and trying your investigation with the square metre" Teacher

- Provide a platform for collaboration and long-term engagement to support marine stewardship and environmental action.

"I have been trained and then gone on to present the Love Your Coast presentation to the public in an engaging manner about plastic. I will be running campaigns in my school around litter" Event attendee

Resources

A number of new resources were developed and launched specially for Seaweek 2016.

- The new Seaweek website www.seaweek.org.nz provided links to a wide range of resources and information, and downloadable posters, flyers and documents. We also launched a range of Seaweek t-shirts and merchandise via an online store.
- An Auckland sponsor printed hard copies of the beautiful posters and certificates, but demand quickly outstripped supply again !
- The NZ Marine Studies Centre's Marine Metre Squared resources - bilingual North Island and South Island Rocky Shore Guides, Sandy and Muddy Shore Guide and Rocky Shore Colouring Book - again proved extremely popular along with the Mudflat Mysteries Educational Activity Book, as well as posters showing the lifecycle of a crab and how to identify seashells.
- Online resources featuring the The Young Ocean Explorers were compiled for Seaweek on the Waikato University Science Learning Hub and the YOE book and DVD were given as prizes for the national competitions.
- Special Seaweek resources for teachers were compiled by the Waikato University Science Learning Hub, along with a Pinterest board and professional development tutorial for teachers. The Science Learning Hub also worked with Revive Our Gulf to compile online resources for Seaweek on mussel restoration and the power of mussels to clean water.
- The Department of Conservation launched a new Taiko / Black Petrel education resource and Forest & Bird launched a new Seabird Identification Guide during Seaweek.
- Creative Junk created a special Pinterest board with inspiration for art projects based on the sea.
- Watersafe Auckland launched a new Water Safety resource for early childhood

What People Said

"I loved the accessibility and inclusiveness - multi-generational lo-fi entertainment" **Event attendee**

"I learned about the inability of small [marine] reserves to protect the biodiversity of the [Hauraki] Gulf" Event attendee

"I would like to see the implementation of a network of marine reserves in our EEZ" - **Event attendee**

"I learned how our marine habitats can recover through our actions & participation. Discussion between community groups, scientists and fishing industry can improve biomass" **Event attendee**

"I wanted to thank you for making the few people that attended today aware of what is happening in the world. I feel deeply about the environment & would love to help out at some of your events" **Event attendee (child)**

Photo: Churchill Park School

Churchill Park School - working on their entries for the Seaweek colouring competitions

Photos (left and right): Experiencing Marine Reserves

With thanks to our major sponsors and all our regional sponsors for their support.

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