



CARIBBEAN CETACEAN SOCIETY



SEA CAMP Report

Ti Whale An Nou program 2023



Date : August 2023

Location : Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (Fancy, Barrouallie, Union)

Introduction

The Caribbean Cetacean Society (CCS) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the conservation of whales and dolphins in the Caribbean region. Meaning “our own little whales” in a creole mix, Ti Whale An Nou (<https://www.ccs-ngo.com/ti-whale-an-nou>) is a program started in 2021 focusing on cooperation, research, education and conservation of whales and dolphins. It is a locally driven initiative led by Caribbean people, ensuring its longevity in our regions.

Since 2022 thanks to the dedication and passion of the CCS Regional Coordinator for the OECS islands, Raven Hoflund and the Director of CCS, Bernus Jeffrey, we started our flagship initiatives for education : The Sea Camps.

Sea Camps are an educational event initially launched in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. We protect what we love and we love what we know. Thus, in order to protect the marine ecosystem from which our survival depends, we want to participate to the education of the younger generation to the importance of marine life. By connecting them to the ocean, we create a new generation of leaders that will champion the protection of the Caribbean of tomorrow.

This report explores the profound impact of the Sea Camp on the protection of marine ecosystems, sustainable development, and on the blue economy. It also highlights the vital role of education and cooperation in achieving these goals.



The Spirit and Goals of Sea Camp

Our mission is to inspire the next generation of our islands to understand, appreciate, and protect the ocean that surrounds us. To empower youths with the knowledge, skills, and passion necessary to seek responsible ocean careers and to encourage an emotional and physical connection.

Emphasis on Education and Conservation

Sea Camp is a platform to educate young minds about the importance of marine conservation through playful and experiential learning, recognizing that play is a natural way to explore, encourage and actively engage the youths. Each program is tailored to the location providing hands-on activities, interactive workshops, and encounters with marine species. Empowering the youths to become ocean advocates while learning from individuals who have careers on or a great passion for the ocean. These trainers play a crucial role in empowering individuals to become advocates for the ocean and its ecosystems.

Protection of Marine Ecosystems

Sea Camp educates participants of all ages about the delicate balance of marine ecosystems and the threats they face, such as pollution and overfishing. Participants leave with not only a deeper understanding of marine ecosystems but also a strong commitment to protecting them. Our Sea Camps can be a starting point for a lifelong journey of environmental stewardship and advocacy, ultimately contributing to the preservation of our ocean.

Importance of the Blue Economy and Sustainable Development

Recognizing the economic significance of the marine environment, Sea Camp aims to instill a sense of responsibility for sustainable practices. It highlights the potential of blue economy and the importance of preserving marine resources for future generations.

Cross-Border Conservation of Whales and Dolphins

Whales and dolphins, as highly migratory species, do not adhere to political boundaries. The Sea Camp emphasizes the need for regional and international cooperation to protect these animals collectively between the islands. Let's be OneCaribbean.



Actions and Achievements

Sea Camp Overview

Sea Camp immerses youths in marine education and conservation activities. Inspiring interest in diverse and exciting fields while making a positive impact on the marine environment . It includes snorkeling expeditions, interactive workshops, and presentations by marine experts.

Key Numbers

- ✓ Three Sea Camps in 2023
- ✓ Over 100 youths
- ✓ Over 30 interventions by specialists
- ✓ 4 days at sea
- ✓ 5 cetacean species

Presentation by ocean conservationist

Thanks to the amazing team of the Sea Camps, many presentations have been organized for the kids to better understand the marine ecosystem. The specialists were able to explain the importance, threats, and conservation of whales, dolphins, sea turtles, sharks, birds and fish. We also had the opportunity to teach them about security at sea, marine protected areas, blue economy, sustainable fishing, free-diving, surfing, Garifuna culture and ocean arts.



Connecting the Kids by Field Experience

Fieldwork at sea is a transformative experience for Sea Camp participants. Encounters with the five species of cetaceans seen during the camp fostered a deeper connection to the ocean and a greater desire to protect it. Thanks to the perfect behavior of the captain on the water respecting and not harassing the species, a family of Sperm Whale approached the boat when the engine was off and started to socialize around the boat. Some of the kids have been able to see the whales from very close and they were all amazed. On the second day when a boat approached a group of dolphins that we were watching, they would all yell that we need to protect them now. For many kids it was the first time they would see a whale or a dolphin alive and it was a transformative experience.

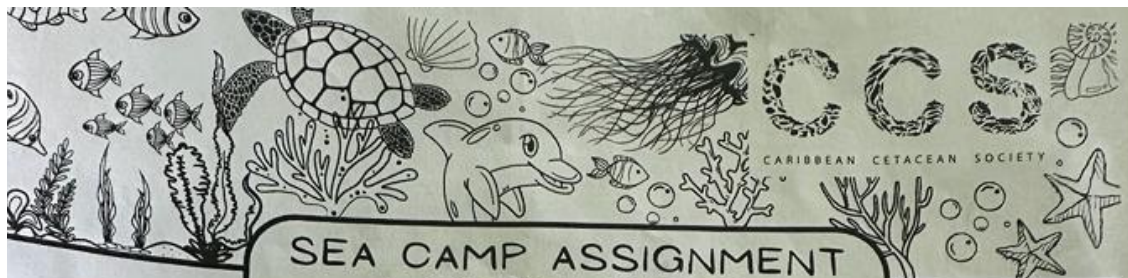
It was a perfect opportunity for them to learn the different islands of the Grenadines, the coastlines, and the different species of birds surrounding them.

On the last day, we visited a local reef to allow the youths to snorkel. For some of them it was the first time using a mask and snorkel to see fish and the coral reefs. We retrieved a ghost net from the reef at this location. The kids learnt about the importance of the reef,



Assignment

As part of the camp, each participant was asked to select their favorite marine animal, as well as favorite cetaceans and sea turtles creating a drawing of each. As part of this exercise, participants were asked to share an interesting fact about their chosen marine animal. This activity encouraged them to engage with the material presented and express their appreciation for marine life.

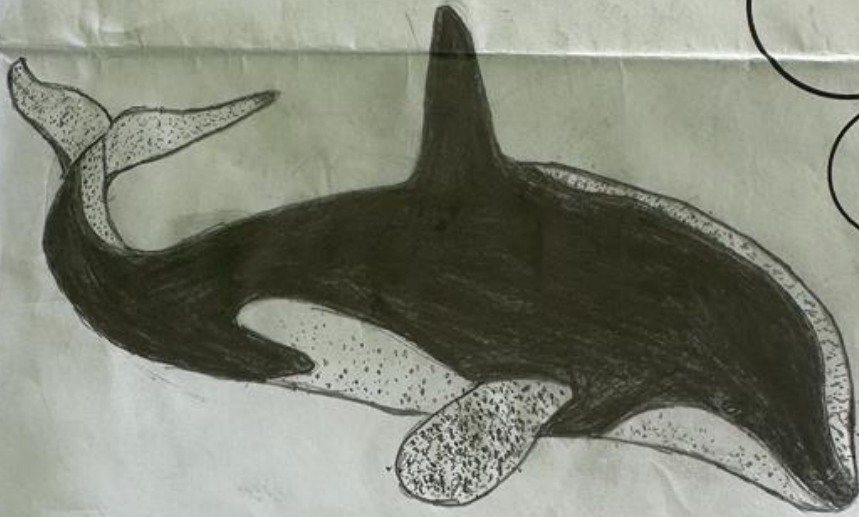


SEA CAMP ASSIGNMENT & OCEAN PLEDGE

DRAW AN ANIMAL THAT LIVES IN THE OCEAN

SEA CAMP DATES

AGES



WRITE ONE COOL FACT ABOUT THIS ANIMAL

.....

YOUR OCEAN PLEDGE

1. WHY DO YOU LOVE THE OCEAN? *Be I love the ocean because it is the main place on the island to have*

2. WHY SHOULD WE PROTECT THE OCEAN? *If we do not protect the wildlife the ocean we enjoy so much will have no life*

3. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT THE OCEAN? *Stop littering less pollution in areas like schools or with people in my environment*

Building Tomorrow's Leaders

The Sea Camps are instrumental in nurturing young leaders committed to environmental stewardship. Participants are empowered to take an active role in preserving marine ecosystems.

Transitioning to a Sustainable Approach

The Sea Camps shed light on the importance of transitioning to sustainable practices, regulate and reduce the threats to marine megafauna and develop blue economy.



Plastic-Free example

The Sea Camps set an example of environmental responsibility by being single-use plastic-free. During the camp most drinking water was collected from natural springs, reusable plastic cups were readily available and a bring your own bottle (BYOB) initiative encouraged individuals to use reusable water bottles instead of disposable ones. Sea Camp lunches were either catered with reusable dishes and cutlery or in paper containers and aluminum. This initiative received strong positive feedback from participants and the community.



Impact on Blue Economy Development

By instilling values of responsible marine resource management, the Sea Camps contribute to the sustainable development of the blue economy in the region. Educating the next generation ensures a brighter and more sustainable future for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Presenting about future job possibilities was made to inspire them. Emphasizing responsible whale watching was also one of our goals, most of the captains had already attended one of the CCS trainings.



The Future of Sea Camps

Our goal is to continue to have annual Sea Camps. In particular we think the partnership between the Caribbean Cetacean Society and Ripples to Waves is important to maintain over time as it increases our impact. We are determined to develop a program that enhances its educational value while sticking to the ethos of playful learning that can eventually be used throughout the islands. We will continue working with local experts and volunteers and foster connections with the local communities to expand the reach of our educational materials.



Partners

The success of the Sea Camp relies on collaboration with various partners and the dedication of volunteers.

Ripples to Waves

"Ripples to Waves" is a grassroots initiative in the Caribbean dedicated to marine conservation, uniting the realms of science, art, and experiential education. It is a newly established nonprofit project designed to enhance conservation efforts by fostering a profound connection with the ocean and inspiring positive actions to safeguard it. At the heart of "Ripples to Waves," lies a belief that collective small actions can generate the waves required to protect our cherished marine ecosystem.

Based in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, they focus on Education, Science, Ethical experiences, Local knowledge, Sustainable Practices and Arts. The main partner of CCS, without them they would be no Sea Camps.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Environment Fund (SVGEF)

Our main funders for Sea Camp 2023. It is a non-profit company registered in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to support sustainable initiatives that promote the preservation of the beauty and nature value of the islands.

We are grateful for their donations and continuous support throughout the Sea Camps and look forward to future collaborations.

Ocean Spirits

Ocean Spirits is a non-profit NGO based in Grenada focused on marine research, Conservation, education and community outreach. Their logistic support and on the ground was exceptional and bring this sea camp to the next level.

Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP)

Our partner in Sea Camps Union Island. TCMP assisted with all the groundwork and sent representatives of the Park to volunteer and present at the camp. Their involvement was much appreciated and we look forward to working with them again in the future. Having the support of an MPA was essential in this process and the kids learned from them.

Collaboration for Success

CCS collaborates with local businesses, government agencies, and other NGOs to ensure the Sea Camp's success. These partnerships enhance the program's reach and impact and are essential for the success and continuity of our projects.

Collaboration and participation from the Department of Fisheries, Alex Tours, Island Fever, Wind and Sea, Blue tours SVG, the schools was essential for the success of this project.



Dedicated Volunteers

Volunteers play a crucial role in organizing and facilitating the Sea Camp. Their passion and commitment contribute to its effectiveness in educating and inspiring the participants.

- **Raven Hoflund** - CCS/ Ripples to Waves / WIDECAST
- **Kate Charles** - Ocean Spirits / WIDECAST
- **Jeffrey Bernus** - Caribbean Cetacean Society (CCS)
- **Nadia Huggins** - photographer / trainer
- **Delight Ollivierre** - Fisheries Division trainer
- **Tequila Ross** - Adventure Island trainer
- **Alexandra Paolino** - volunteer
- **Clyornique Durrant** - teacher and volunteer
- **Nick Spencer** - volunteer / photographer
- **Karen Palmer** - Ocean art / volunteer
- **Stephan Hornsey and Lisa Gaymes** SVGEF
- **Carolina Cassani** - Cethus Foundation
- **Ralycia Andrews** - Garifuna culture / volunteer
- **Hayden Billingly** - presenter/musician
- **Sebastian Saily** - Grenadines Fishing / volunteer
- **TCMP (Tobago Cays Marine Park) representatives** - Ranger Isaac La Borde presenter / volunteer Marine park manager **Lesroy Noel** and **Janeann**,
- **Roseman Adams** from Environmental Alliance
- **Island Fever Tours** - Khari Dougan, Rodney Dabreo, Tracy Denhams, Nolecia John
- **Alex Tours** - Kirk Grant, Douglas Lampkin, Unique Howe,
- **Blues Tours SVG** – Bradley Minors, Junior Browne & mate
- **Wind and Sea** - Jean Marc Saily, Timothy Adams, Dillion Franklin, Kelly Hutchinson, Tima Jones
- **Martin Jenet** - Flight transport
- **Sue Cheng** Logistic
- **The Mustique Company**
- **Principal Wendy Child** - Fancy Government School
- **Mr & Mrs Williams** - caterer and teacher Fancy
- **Principal Joy Davis-Haynes** -Barrouallie Government School
- **Gilda Edwards** - caterer Barrouallie
- **Rene Defreitas** - donation

Everyone maybe not mentioned that played some part in making this happen.

Zoom presenters -

- **Jillian Morris-Brake** Biminisharkgirl Shark4Kids
- **Padjen and Sofia Gomez** - freediver / Deep Dominica





Conclusion

In conclusion, the Sea Camps in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines have far-reaching effects on education, conservation, and cooperation. This project success gives hope for the marine environment, its ecosystems, and the endangered whales and dolphins that inhabit the Caribbean. The Sea Camps demonstrate the power of education and collaboration in protecting the marine environment that we depend on for our survival.

It is important to pursue this project further and organize more sea camps in the next coming year. Many parents, organizations and youths are asking to repeat this project and acknowledge how important it is.



Acknowledgements

This work has been achieved thanks to the financial support of the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Environmental Funds, the Animal Welfare Institute and Lightkeepers Foundation, we are grateful for their partnership.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the partners and volunteers who dedicated their time and energy for the kids.

A special thanks to Raven, Kate and Jeffrey who invested all their energy to make this sea camp a strong success.

The Caribbean Cetacean Society team

Science & conservation together !

www.ccs-ngo.com/link



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