

NEWSLETTER

Background and updates to the
Ocean Adventures of Ed the Bear
and Bella Bear's World of Water



Hi

This is the first of a new-style newsletter. This first newsletter provides background information and future newsletters will continue to provide updates on the development of the project, not only to the various schools where we have worked together, but also the various organisations that have contributed in so many ways to make Ed the Bear's and Bella Bear's global travels possible.

I hope you enjoy this edition

Steve Savage
Creator of Ed the Bear and Bella Bear



One World One Ocean the Adventures of Ed the Bear

It all started in September 2009, when the 'Adventures of Ed the Bear' was created as an offshoot from my World Oceans Day Display. The original plan was that Ed the Bear would travel for a year, collecting information and experiences from a few global locations, to add a global dimension and understanding to the 'Adur World Oceans Day Event' which I have been taking part in for many years.

During early 2010, Ed the Bear was invited to visit the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA), a programme was planned that would see Ed the Bear visiting most of the 14 National Marine Sanctuaries administered by NOAA. They saw great potential for Ed the Bear (even before I did) and they organised the construction of a special diving bell for Ed the Bear so he would be able to visit and interact with marine wildlife and habitats. During his 7 month tour Ed the Bear was accompanied by Sanctuary Sam (a soft toy Sea lion) the NOAA Sanctuaries mascot.



That was the start of a big adventure for Ed the Bear

Ed the Bear has now travelled to many locations. He has visited coral reefs and shipwrecks, come face-to-face with great white sharks in South Africa and sat on the polar ice with penguins. He has even taken part in a marine heritage course and learnt why ship wrecks are important and why we need to conserve our marine heritage.



Ed the Bear's travels have only been possible due to the many scientists, educators, conservationists and organisations that have hosted Ed the Bear and shared their knowledge with him.

With their help, Ed the Bear has personally witnessed some of the damage that has been caused to the ocean ecosystem and to marine wildlife. He has witnessed first hand the dangers of plastic debris and many more dangers that are threatening the ocean.



With the help of scientists, he has learned how we all rely on the ocean and experienced the science behind conservation issues such as ocean acidification and climate change. Ed the Bear has also meet many people who are helping to protect and restore marine habitats and he was shown how we can all help then oceans. In 2010, Ed the Bear also took part in a live NOAA programme based at the Aquarius Undersea Lab called 'If Reefs Could talk'

Since 2010, Ed the Bear has been working with the Tennessee Aquatic Project a youth based organisation that provides inner city and vulnerable youth with support and life skills. This involves teaching scuba diving.



Ed the Bear shares his message with schools and through Citizen Science

Ed the Bear visits schools in the UK and shares his adventures and the things he has learnt and experienced about the oceans. So far we have worked mainly with primary schools. The topics covered range from oceans, local and global marine life, why oceans are important, conservation issues including climate change, marine debris and ocean acidification, ships and ship wrecks, to the importance of protecting marine heritage and much more. Ed the bear also shares his knowledge with children at the locations he travels to and via his own weblog.



One World One Ocean is a project that links UK schools with ocean scientists around the world by creating real time events that are shared with schools. The project also provides opportunities for scientists, climatologists, marine archaeologists and conservationists to share their knowledge and experiences with a new audience.

We have also worked with a few secondary schools focusing on ocean science and conservation issues and have also participated in the local Stem Science events

Citizen Science

Ed the Bear shares his experiences through citizen science at the Brighton Science Festival and Adur World Oceans Day. The narratives not only relate the complex issues of climate change but explain other important issues in a meaningful way.



Ed the Bear in the UK - 2013

Ed the spent 2013 in the UK taking part in events such as Brighton Science Festival, World Oceans Day and the Big Bang Stem Science Event. He also visited some UK schools sharing his knowledge about the oceans and his message about ocean conservation.



Ed the Bear wears a necklace made from a scientists leg ring band, from an albatross chick that sadly died from swallowing plastic. While Ed was in the Hawaiian Islands, he was gifted the necklace (a lei) by Ron Hirshi and Fred the Monkey (project Soar - <http://soaronhirschi.blogspot.co.uk/>) to help him share the story of the sad plight of these magnificent birds

Beach Clean Events

Ed the Bear helped out at beach clean events in Sussex including the Worthing Beach clean in September. Ed the Bear also shared his first-hand experiences with marine debris on beaches around the world, from his travels.



Ed the Bear also reported on the TruCost Super M-Art exhibition in Brighton at the Onca Gallery. The exhibition was laid out as a super market, but not one you will have been to before – the ‘products’ were all re-branded beach litter items. This included litter from Ed the Bears local beach at Shoreham. <http://dirty-beach.co.uk/>
<http://adventuresofedthebear.blogspot.co.uk/2013/12/ed-bear-visits-dirty-beach-exhibition.html>

Conferences



I presented Ed the Bear and Bella Bears water projects at three South East Grid for Learning Teachers Conferences. The sessions focused on the use of the two travelling Bears, technology and literacy to promote our understanding about our oceans and freshwater environments. I wanted to challenge you to reconsider the ways you introduce pupils to the wonders of the natural world around them.

ABOUT BELLA BEAR – NEWS UPDATE

Our new character, Bella Bear, focuses on freshwater as the most valuable resource for nature and humans. This year Bella has settled into the Lewes Railway Land Nature Reserve, the site was once part of the nearby railway yard hence its name. This included railway sidings and the railway workers allotments all of which have influenced the land it is today).



In the same way that Ed the Bear is based at an important marine site, Bella's presence at the Lewes Nature Reserve reflects the importance of the freshwater habitats. These include the adjacent River Ouse that flows past the eastern boundary and a winterbourne stream that enters the River Ouse on the nature reserve.



Lewes Railway Land



River Ouse



Chilly Brooks & water meadows



Leighside pond



Winterbourne Stream



Hearty of Reeds

There is also a series of brooks and water meadow habitats connected to the river. There are 2 bio diverse ponds and a man-made reed bed habitat. Non-aquatic habitats include a small woodland and grassland. Bella has been exploring the importance of water to the aquatic and terrestrial wildlife on the nature reserve.

The Linklater Pavilion

A relatively new addition to the site is a visitors' centre, with a sedum roof. The centre uses rainwater capture, photovoltaic to power the electricity and there is also a ground-sourced heating system. This is where Bella is currently based as a linked project in partnership with the Lewes Railway Land Trust



Bella's project has developed slightly differently from the Adventures of Ed the Bear, as the initial intention is different. The original aim of the Adventures of Ed the Bear was to show how Ed the Bears local beach (a site of rare vegetated shingle habitat) is connected to the global ocean and to consider how global issues might affect his beach at Shoreham. However this project has evolved to encompass a much bigger picture as the project continues to evolve.



Ed the Bear on Shoreham Beach Local Nature Reserve

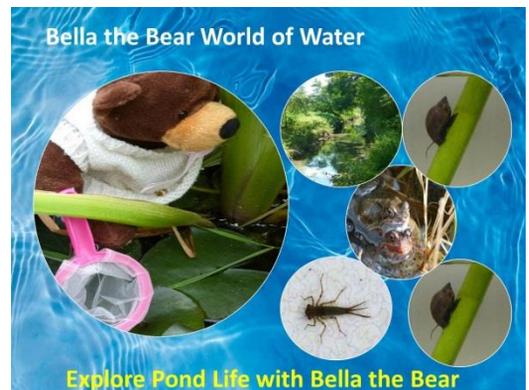
His continued presence on his site beach at Shoreham provides a local example and focus to show the local dimension within the global.



Ed the Bear have dived on coral reefs, sat on the Antarctic ice with penguins, come face to face with great white sharks in South Africa and much more He has visited many scientists and experts and shares his new experiences and knowledge when he returns to the UK

We are now in the process of building on more local examples to link to the global. With Bella we have so far concentrated on building up the freshwater resource at her home site on Lewes Railway Land Reserve.

This is partly because Bella Bear's World of Water has evolved from the ocean project and partly because the Lewes Railway Land Trust was keen for her to establish an identity at the reserve and provide a framework for a freshwater project.



Bella Bear Global Adventure

We are in the process of exploring global locations to add to the global perspective on freshwater. We have already touched on global water issues by looking at how women in Africa have to walk many miles to collect water each day and are limited to the amount they can carry. What would you use your water for if you only had 20 litres? We have also encouraged children to consider their water footprint and the wider water footprint to which they are connected, such as agriculture, manufacturing, its use as a coolant and much more.



African women carrying water



Cloud farming



Living 'root' bridges

We have also looked at some of the ingenious ways that water is being managed in harsh places in the world. For example, how clouds are being farmed to produce water for drinking and to grow crops in dry desert regions, such as the Atacama Desert. In north-east India the Khasi tribe encourage living roots to form incredible living bridges between their dwellings to prevent them from being cut off in the rainy season, when the streams become torrential rivers

Flooding on the Lewes Railway Land Nature Reserve



Leighside pond summer 2013



Leighside pond winter 2014



Leighside pond winter 2014

This year we had extensive flooding on the nature reserve. This was part of the annual water management programme that allows water to be diverted into the nature reserve from the winterbourne stream when levels are abnormally high, thus protecting several nearby basements. In future years flooding may be increased. Children are encouraged to consider the implications of too little or too much water, to both humans and wildlife



Bella Bear Amazon Adventure



A new exciting development has meant that this July Bella will be visiting the Amazon Rainforest with help from 'Amazon Rainforest Workshops' who provide first hand experiences for teachers and educators so they can bring the Rainforest alive back in the classroom. <http://amazonworkshops.com/>

A session about Ed the Bear and Bella Bear at two Primary Science Teachers conferences last October and November were well received. When teachers were asked to suggest global locations for our characters to visit that would enhance their teaching, several teachers suggested the Amazon.

We are hoping that Bella will have a diverse experience, not just of the rainforest and the Amazon River, but also the wildlife, watershed, the indigenous peoples, medicines from the forest and much more. Like the rainforest, the ocean regulates our climate and temperature, produces oxygen and freshwater, provides food, new medicines and much more. Between the oceans and the rainforest and the 'services' they provide, we can see how complex and amazing our planet really is.

Bella's rainforest adventure will also make an interesting comparison to Ed the Bear's visit to temperate rainforest in the Olympic National Park, USA. Ed the Bear has also visited several native American cultures on his travels. He has even learnt to speak some Hawaiian words, including 'Kuleana' – which means 'responsibility'.

Wherever we live, a sense of place is very important. It will be interesting to compare the lives of children (and communities) in the Amazon with life in the UK



Bella Bear News 2014



Bella Bear is preparing for her exciting visit to the Amazon. She has been researching the Amazon before her trip, and is learning some valuable field craft skills. When Bella returns, we hope to share her adventures with schools through citizen science programmes and via the weblog.



Ed the Bear News 2014

Ed the Bear is currently planning a return to the Tennessee Aquatic Project in the USA to find out more about coral reef restoration. This is one of my favourite connections we have made thorough this project and I am pleased that Ed the Bear will be visiting and working with the young people there again.

Ed the Bear, Ocean literacy Ambassador

Following Ed the Bear's involvement in the Trans-Atlantic Ocean Literacy Conference last year, he will continue to be an Ambassador for Ocean Literacy.



More information about both Ed and Bella can be found at
<http://seawatch17.wix.com/one-world-one-ocean>
<http://adventuresofedthebear.blogspot.co.uk/>
<http://seawatch17.wix.com/bella-world-of-water>