



Prizes awarded to children and students for exceptional efforts to protect dolphins

Children from around the world, who have shown their commitment for dolphins as part of the Year of the Dolphin 2007, supported by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), have been awarded special prizes for their efforts. The children were just a few of the many individuals who have helped raise awareness of these threatened mammals as part of Year of the Dolphin. Set up by the UN's Convention on Migratory Species, the Year of the Dolphin has recently been extended into 2008.

Rewarded for their extra effort to help dolphins, the prizewinners all completed the 'Dolphin Diploma', an education initiative created for the Year of the Dolphin by WDCS, the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society. As part of the diploma, children learn about dolphins, complete a quiz, as well as demonstrate their passion by doing something active to help dolphins.

Special prize winners included Harry in Australia, who gave up his Tooth-Fairy money to help raise enough to Adopt a Dolphin with WDCS, Hannah in the UK, who did a local beach clean-up and collected almost 2000 pieces of litter and Yvonne in Germany who did a beautiful drawing. Prizes included fluffy dolphins and even a few dolphin-watching excursions for extra-special participants.



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From hand-made dolphin buttons, to cake sales, and science fairs to animated movies, children around the world have come up with a huge number of ways to make a difference to these beautiful animals. To recognize their efforts, partners of the Year of the Dolphin wanted to reward those children who showed particular commitment and passion, and to encourage tomorrow's conservationists.

Kath Warhurst of WDCS said, 'The determination of these children is a compelling reason for us all to work even harder to protect dolphins and their environment. They are telling us they want to share their future with these animals, and we should listen harder.'

New Conservation Initiative Launched for Florida's Wild Dolphins

Davie, Florida-March 7, 2008 The journalism class of Plantation High School is joining the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), as well as state, federal and international partners, in a campaign to raise awareness among youth of threats to dolphins, manatees and the marine environment throughout the State.

The initiative of teacher Jamie Aquino and her journalism students is being launched in conjunction with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in support of the Year of the Dolphin 2008, and is aimed at outreach and fundraising to support marine mammal conservation initiatives in Florida and elsewhere.

The Year of the Dolphin is a joint initiative between CMS, and its dedicated regional

agreements on dolphin conservation, as well as UNEP, WDCC and the international tourist group TUI.

“With increasing human populations and growing demands on the world’s marine resources, it has never been more important that Governments, conservation groups, industries and individuals all play their part to ensure the continued survival of all our whale, dolphin and porpoise species”, said CMS Executive Secretary Robert Hepworth.

Across the globe, dolphins, whales and manatees face a myriad of threats; including death in fishing nets, prey depletion due to overfishing, pollution, harmful noise disturbance, collision with vessels, habitat loss and deliberate hunting. One of the major issues facing dolphins in the wild, and especially in Florida, is harassment by commercial and recreational vessels and interactions with fisheries.

The new initiative is being called Pier2Pier and hopes to spur local action to educate students and promote protection by addressing major threats to these marine mammals and their environment. Ms. Aquino and her students will be working with state, federal and international agencies, including the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Bryan Adams Foundation. Dolphins and manatees are protected by both state and federal law.

Pier2Pier (see www.pier2pier.net for information) will initially raise funds to assist stranding networks in Florida, purchase recycling bins where old fishing lines can be collected to reduce marine debris and entanglement of dolphins in discarded gear, and assist in the construction of a school in Haiti and the development of a marine sciences program there.

Courtney Vail, US Campaigns Officer for WDCC, stated: “The message that the protection of dolphins and manatees is important to today’s youth underscores the enthusiasm shown by this committed group. We are hopeful that the initiatives undertaken by Pier2Pier will have a real impact on spreading a conservation ethic to an important demographic in Florida, and serve as an inspiration elsewhere.”

“My students and I want to reach as many young people as possible with the message of conservation and protection for marine mammals”, Plantation High journalism teacher Jamie Aquino said. “We plan on getting our message across through a variety of ways, including a newsletter, website, public service announcements and fundraisers.”

We would also like to make you aware of the educational kit for the new IMAX movie 'Dolphins and Whales 3D - Tribes of the ocean', which producers 3D-Entertainment had the courtesy of providing to us. It contains lots of information and fun facts about whales and dolphins and will be of great value for schoolchildren and other interested kids.

[Here's the link to the edukit!](#)

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