

The Conch Horn

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The Conch Horn is a newsletter for circulation to the Conchservation partners and our sponsors to share events and milestones of the The Bahamas National Conchservation Campaign. You can also keep pace with the campaign at www.facebook.com/conchservation.

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A Citizen Science Project Scheduled for Grand Bahama

Conchservation partner organizations The Bahamas National Trust, The Bahamas Reef Environmental Education Foundation (BREEF), and Community Conch are finalizing plans to take the My Science, My Conch (MSMC) Project to Grand Bahama during the first week of October of this year.



The MSMC Project is the brainchild of BREEF and Community Conch. It is a hands-on experience for people who don't often engage in scientific investigation as part of their normal routine. Participants will undergo training and then conduct supervised surveys of queen conch middens (conch shell piles) in the field. Shell length and lip thickness data will be collected for analysis and discussion afterward. MSMC is intended to have the following outcomes:

- Community members will better understand the scientific method of gathering information and be able to make more informed recommendations, based on evidence.
- Everyday people will collect scientific data of sufficient quality to help guide decision-making, thus becoming a part of that process.
- Raised awareness of the need and ways to use our natural resources, like the queen conch, in a sustainable way.



Left: Students use calipers to measure lip thickness and record the measurements. Participants in MSMC will be trained to take these measurements as well as learn about the scientific method. Photo courtesy of Community Conch.

Conchservation and the Public

The public plays a major part in preserving the queen conch fishery in The Bahamas. It is the behavior of the public—fisherman, conch lover, visitor, or otherwise—that will ultimately decide if this fishery will persist. The campaign will move into more directed discussions with the public sector regarding the fishery in the coming months. Part of raising awareness of the issues facing the fishery involves going where the people are.



At left: Conchservation Campaign Coordinator Jared Dillet speaks to The Rotary Club of Southeast Nassau on July 17, 2013.

Right: August 10 was the date of the Bahamas Conchfest at RM Bailey Field on New Providence. The event was about all things conch. Falon Cartwright of BREEF and Jared Dillet of BNT were on hand to tell people about issues facing conch and the Conchservation Campaign. Visitors to the Conchservation booth were treated to free information, videos via laptop, and a chance to win a Conchservation green bag playing the Wheel of Conchservation.



In the photos below, Jared Dillet gives some basic conch biology to campers at BREEF's Con'ZOO'vation Camp on August 13th at left. In the photo at right, some of the more adventurous campers tried conch straight from the shell—courtesy of BREEF intern Alannah Vellacott.



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Conchservatn & The Public

Photos below: Math teachers from New Providence and the Family Islands participated in BNT's S.M.I.L.E. Program. SMILE, which stands for Science & Mathematics Integrated Learning Experience, shows teachers how to integrate the natural environment of The Bahamas into science and mathematics lessons with the goal of getting students enthusiastic about learning in an outdoor environment. Just before going snorkeling for an introduction to determining fish abundance, the teachers were treated to a conch biology lesson and a presentation on the Conchservatn Campaign.



Art Meets Awareness at The Tree of Trees

July 29, 2013. Artist Antonius Roberts, artists from Popop Studios, and Believe, The Bahamar Foundation teamed up with Conchservatn to create an installation at The Tree of Trees at Bahamar to raise awareness of conch issues in The Bahamas.

The Tree of Trees is a wood sculpture created by Antonius Roberts from Casuarina and driftwood collected following Hurricane Sandy in October, 2012. The 40 foot sculpture melds art with stating the need to preserve the environment and reuse materials like wood from invasive Casuarina trees.

Popop Studios Resident Junior Artists, and COB students Kachelle Knowles and Giovanna Swaby brought the vision of how the Tree of Trees would evolve to become a standing reminder of the long history between the queen conch and the people of The Bahamas, and the need to preserve it for future generations. On July 29, the artists, BNT, staff from Native Sun Landscaping, and interns from Bahamar's Junior Jet-Setters program converged on the Tree of Trees to bring the vision to reality. Photos of the event begin next column.

Below at left: Discarded conch shells were collected from conch stalls for the installation. Below at right: Ms. Knowles and Ms. Swaby use a caliper to measure the thickness of the lips of the shells. The measurements in millimeters were then painted on the shells using stencils.



Below left: Staff from Native Sun use a crane to mount wood sculptures done by Mr. Roberts in the upper reaches of the Tree of Trees. Below at right: Bahamar's Junior Jet-Setters hang the measured and labeled conch shells.



Below left: Antonius Roberts (hat) shares a light moment with members of Native Sun Landscaping and Lynn Gape, BNT Deputy Executive Director (far right). Below right: Popop Studios founder John Cox (in sunglasses) introduces young art students to Kachelle Knowles and talks about how art can communicate social issues like the need to preserve natural resources.



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The Tree of Trees

Photos below: The Tree of Trees is now a standing reminder of the relationship between the queen conch and life in The Bahamas. At right, Kachelle Knowles (dark top) and Giovanna Swaby (purple top) take a moment for a picture with interns from Bahamar's Junior Jet-Setters program who came out to help with the installation. The group is photographed in front of a tent provided for shade and refreshment by BNT.



The Future of The Conchservation Campaign

What can we expect to see from The Bahamas National Conchservation Campaign in the future? The campaign will strive to continue to have a presence at public events throughout The Bahamas. The public will also be called upon to assist the Campaign in determining where energies should be focused to achieve the best exposure possible for the campaign and to spark discussions about what can be done to ensure a sustainable queen conch fishery.

In addition to public events, the campaign will also begin more targeted discussion with groups according to their involvement in the Bahamian queen conch fishery. From people who simply enjoy a conch dish to the fishers who brave the ocean to bring conch to our tables - Each group is will be engaged to discuss what can be done to protect the conch fishery.

The media is a powerful tool for disseminating ideas. It is planned to develop pubic service announcements that can be repeated on radio and television to ensure that as wide an audience as possible can be reached and made aware of the issues facing the Bahamian queen

conch industry, the Conchservation Campaign, and what we can do for the conservation of the fishery.

What is a campaign without something that people can take home? Be on the lookout for newly designed Conchservation green bags. Other promotional items are being planned and will become available to help spread the message as the resources to produce them become available.

Proud Partners in Conchservation

Conchservation could not be possible without the energies, donations and other forms of assistance of the following partner and donor organizations:

