



School Sightings Programme

As part of our science programme, the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust have successfully implemented a Community Sightings Programme throughout the Argyll and Islands region to encourage members of the public to report their sightings and strandings of marine animals. This information helps us to better understand the habits of these marine creatures and ultimately to improve the conservation of species and habitats. The Education Department has expanded this project to include local schools by offering a new and exciting venture: the School Sightings Programme.

The aims of the School Sightings Programme are to:

- increase HWDT's records of marine animal sightings and strandings in the Argyll & Islands region
- encourage schools to contribute to this important project
- train pupils in marine animal species identification, recording and reporting methods
- make direct links to the Curriculum for Excellence and Eco-Schools programme
- inspire an interest in marine wildlife and encourage respect for and ownership of marine resources

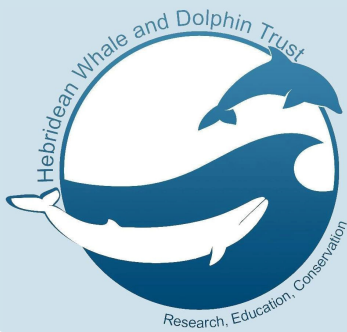
Where possible, HWDT's Education Team will visit your school to introduce your class to The School Sightings Programme. This will involve a presentation, a cetacean identification workshop and an introduction on how to record sightings using the recording sheet and online sightings form. Alternatively this can be presented by the class teacher. HWDT will provide a resource pack, available to download from our website, for use during the programme, which includes species factsheets, resources and teacher notes. The School Sightings Programme has been designed as an award that can be achieved by completing each award level. The award structure is outlined on Page 2 of this document. Each level includes challenges that have been carefully developed to address the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence:

Successful Learners: The exciting challenges at each award level will motivate students to learn about marine biodiversity, habitats and conservation issues and, by completing the award, students will gain a strong sense of achievement.

Confident Individuals: The programme structure encourages ambition to complete the award. Learning about watching wildlife encourages a healthy and active lifestyle. Team work challenges teach students to make informed, independent decisions.

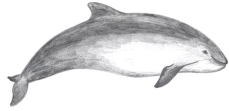
Responsible Citizens: Students will develop an understanding of their local natural resources and their importance within a wider context. Furthermore, students will gain respect for and ownership of their local natural heritage, which will improve attitudes and responsible behaviour towards the environment. Award challenges will require students to evaluate environmental and scientific issues and make informed choices in role play scenarios.

Effective Contributors: Award challenges present opportunities to develop skills in communication, team working and problem solving.



School Sightings Programme

Award Structure

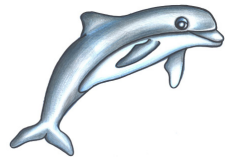


The Harbour Porpoise Award

Challenge One: Students will develop their species identification knowledge by designing and producing a series of posters for the classroom. This can be completed individually or in small groups.

Suggested Challenge Time: 30 minutes or set as homework.

Challenge Two: Pupils will gain an appreciation of the sizes of marine animals by completing the animal lengths activity. Suggested Challenge Time: 30 minutes or playtime/lunchtime activity.



The Bottlenose Dolphin Award

Challenge One: Students are provided with sightings data for recent years and are asked to plot these on a map. A worksheet accompanying this activity challenges students to draw conclusions about the behaviour of Hebridean bottlenose dolphins. Suggested Challenge Time: 30 minutes.

Challenge Two: Write an article for our junior members' newsletter Wavelet on a topic of your choice. This task should be completed independently. These may be published in future editions or displayed in our shop. Suggested Challenge Time: 1 hour or set as homework.



The Killer Whale Award

Challenge One: Design an ID guide that can be used by young people to correctly identify marine species in the Hebrides. This can be displayed in the classroom/school. Students should consult the HWDT website and ID card for ideas. This task should be completed in groups of around 5 students.

Suggested Challenge Time: 1 hour or set as homework.

Challenge Two: With the teacher acting as chairperson, the class will participate in a role play discussion regarding the conservation of cetaceans. Suggested Challenge Time: 30 minutes - 1 hour.

Upon completion of the three award levels, students must complete the class quiz to test their knowledge! Suggested Time: 15 - 30 minutes.



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The Harbour Porpoise Award

Challenge One: Species posters.

Suggested Time: 30 minutes or set as homework.

Resources: HWDT species factsheets, poster guidelines, paper for posters, art materials.

Aim: Students will reinforce their species identification knowledge. This activity also encourages teamwork, creativity, information gathering and presentation.

Suggested Method: Working individually or in small groups, students are allocated a marine species and provided with the corresponding species factsheet. Students could collect images from newspapers, magazines and leaflets. More species facts and information can be found on our website. Students should aim to produce 12 posters to be displayed in the classroom. This activity can be completed individually or set as a homework task.

Challenge Two: Animal length activity.

Suggested Time: 30 minutes or playtime/lunchtime activity.

Resources: Wide open space (hall, playground, field or beach), HWDT animal length cards, tape measure/metre wheel to measure 30 metres.

Aim: Students will reinforce their species knowledge. The animal length activity is designed to give real perspective of animal sizes, particularly useful for marine animals that are not frequently encountered.

Suggested Method: Mark out a 30 metre line with chalk or in the sand, or stretch out a 30 metre piece of rope across the playground/hall. Allocate one end as the starting point. Using the animal length cards, students are asked to estimate the length of each species in turn by walking away from the starting point along the line. Once all are estimated, the activity supervisor can measure out the actual animal length. There are additional cards representing non-animal objects to provide a size comparison.



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The Bottlenose Dolphin Award

Challenge One: Sightings data.

Suggested Time: 30 minutes.

Resources: HWDT sightings data, map, worksheet.

Aim: Working with real data, students gain an appreciation of the lives of bottlenose dolphins. This task addresses mathematical skills, including data handling, inquiry and presentation.

Suggested Method: Students are provided with recent sightings data for bottlenose dolphins and asked to plot these onto a map. The worksheet poses questions about the data and challenges students to make conclusions about habitat use and behaviour. The worksheet should be completed as part of a guided class discussion.

Challenge Two: Wavelet article.

Suggested Time: One hour or set as homework.

Resources: Wavelet template, worksheet, HWDT factsheets, class posters, sightings data and map, additional resources including books, magazines and website content.

Aim: To encourage students to develop their own interests by writing expressively about their chosen topic. This will reinforce species knowledge and encourage independent thought. To develop literacy skills.

Suggested Method: Explain to students that the overall aim of the challenge is to produce an article for HWDT's junior member's magazine, Wavelet. Previous award activities should have provided material for their article. The Wavelet background worksheet will provide students with information about what they are trying to achieve. Once they have read through this worksheet and discussed it, students will complete the preparation sheet individually before beginning to write their article. Using the newsletter template, students can produce and write their article on a computer and produce a professional looking outcome if appropriate. Please send us your student's articles; we would love to read them and maybe display them in our shop.



School Sightings Programme

The Killer Whale Award

Challenge One: Design an ID guide for visitors.

Suggested Time: One hour or set as homework.

Resources: HWDT factsheets, class posters, sightings data and map, additional resources including books, magazines and website content.

Aim: To disseminate information into an identification guide. To develop literacy skills.

Suggested Method:

Design an ID guide that can be used by young people to correctly identify marine species in the Hebrides. This can be displayed in the classroom/school. Students should consult the HWDT website and ID card for ideas. This task should be completed in groups of around five students.

Challenge Two: 'Future conservation for Hebridean cetaceans' - debate.

Suggested Time: 30 minutes - one hour.

Resources: Debate sheet

Aim: Encourage independent thought and decision-making through role-play.

Suggested Method:

With the teacher acting as chairperson, the class will participate in a role play discussion regarding the conservation of cetaceans.

Final Challenge: Class Quiz.

Suggested Time: 15 - 30 minutes.

Resources: Quiz sheet and answers.

Aim: To reinforce knowledge of Hebridean marine species. To encourage team work,

Suggested Method:

With the teacher acting as the Quizmaster, work through the quiz with the class. Once all of the questions are completed, the final award certificate can be presented.