

The Seahorse Trust

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATURE

The
Seahorse
Trust

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2011

www.theseahorsetrust.org

www.britishseahorsesurvey.org

www.seahorses.tv

Facebook page: The Seahorse Trust



Registered charity no.1086027

Welcome

Welcome to the 2011 winter newsletter and thank you to you all for your amazing support for the trust this year. What a year it's been, busy, busy, busy, with all sorts of people doing wonderful things such as Amy doing her Lands End to John O'Groats cycle ride to raise funds for us, Trustee Charlotte completing her coast to coast cycle ride, the East Dorset Open water Swimming Club's Annual Seahorse Challenge Swim Race and we have even featured in London's fashion Week with fashion designer Ada Zanditon.

There have been fewer seahorse sightings this year but we had 2 amazing sightings in the Thames; higher in one year than they have been seen before and much further up the Thames than before.

Studland Tagging Project



What a strange year 2011 has been at Studland and around our coastline for seahorses and a wide variety of others species. The early onset of a very cold winter in 2010 and a very cloudy 2011 meant that the food cycle was disrupted not only at Studland, and so we saw fewer seahorses.

The site has now been put forward as a proposed Marine Conservation Zone and we should know over the next few months if it has been accepted. If it does then it is all to do with the amazing input from our volunteers who have given up hundreds of hours diving to gather much needed data.

You can check out some of our work at Studland on Dan Burton's short film on VIMEO site <http://vimeo.com/29499020> where he has put together a 5 minute film about the work there. On the 3rd of November 2011 we are attending the second meeting with the Marine Management Organisation working group to discuss the future of the site. The Trust has put forward the idea of putting in Environmentally friendly Moorings which will solve the problem of seagrass erosion and it looks like this idea is gathering support (see below) .

MMO meeting

In November we had our 3rd meeting of the Studland Bay Conservation & Recreational Activity Working Group (SBCRAWG) which brings together a number of interested parties to look for solutions to the problems at Studland Bay, which is heavily used by boats and yachts. This level of activity is harming this incredible site to a point where it may not be capable of recovering.

The working group have been looking at installing environmentally friendly moorings at Studland to take the pressure off the seagrass meadow and the seahorses.

We made great progress and hope to do something positive to preserve this site even if it does not become a Marine Conservation Zone. The exciting thing is the joint approach from the boating community, the authorities and the conservationists which shows that a number of user groups can come together to achieve a positive result.

Seahorses sightings

There were two sightings of seahorses in the Thames this year, one at Greenwich and one just a mile or so below this. Both sightings were quite unusual as the 2 female Short Snouted Seahorses were found in brackish water and it is thought that they had been washed upriver rather than living there permanently.

We have also had a couple of sightings of Seahorse fry roughly 5 cm long which is a great sign that the seahorses, when they have Bred, are being seen.

Trust volunteer Shane Benzie has been working with us all year and he finally experienced his first seahorse sightings in October (which can be seen on Dan's video). This was a fantastic experience for Shane especially as he found both of the female Spiny Seahorses on the study site at Studland.



Picture courtesy of Emma Burton Environment Agency

Projects

The Seahorse Trust has always made a point of working with others to further the aims of conservation, education and research and partnerships are the way forward and we aim to build on our existing partnerships with the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth and the SEALIFE Centres, the Universities of Malta, Plymouth and Southampton and many others around the world.

Seahorse Conservation Project Malta



An exciting new project to discover more about the ecology and distribution of the Spiny and Short-Snouted seahorses is to start around the Maltese Archipelago. Trust volunteers, Beccy and Jonny, are setting up the project in 2012 on the beautiful island of Malta. Their vision is to conserve these wonderful creatures through research, conservation and education. The project will provide volunteers with an opportunity to learn more about marine biodiversity and conservation, with a primary focus on seahorse species, through active participation in the day-to-day research of sites around Malta.

To continue with their support of The Seahorse Trust, a proportion of the funds

raised through the project will be donated annually. We will be working in partnership with the University of Malta, Paul Camilieri, Malta Nature, the people of Malta and many others on these beautiful Islands.

This is the first release of information regarding this project. Therefore newsletter readers have the opportunity to register their interest in taking part in the project from spring 2012 before anyone else.

To contact Jonny or Beccy and register your interest, or to find out more, please email them at seahorseproject@aol.co.uk

[Lauren Timson at the National Marine Aquarium](#)

Lauren Timson is a graduate at Plymouth University and she is a good example of our partnership ethos. Lauren is studying the behaviour of Short Snouted Seahorses for her dissertation at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth as a joint partnership between the trust, the aquarium and Lauren.

[Kenya and Mozambique](#)

Our advice is often provided to projects throughout the world and two we are working with are in Kenya and Mozambique. We are looking at surveying in the wild and in Kenya we are also breeding seahorses for release back into local lagoons to support the populations. Both of these projects are being done in partnership with local people and businesses.

Media

The Seahorse Trust is often consulted on issues with seahorses in the UK and abroad and this year has been no different with contributions to local and national newspapers and BBC Wildlife magazine; we have also been interviewed by Bret Westward for Saving Species on Radio 4.

What a strange place to find seahorses but they were found at London Fashion Week (LFW) this autumn. Fashion designer Ada Zanditon is inspired by nature for her designs and we worked with her in setting up a display on her stand at LFW which showed the beauty of moving seahorses on a display scene which was kindly funded by our colleagues at the SEALIFE centres. www.adazanditon.com/



Conference at Shedd

An international conference was held at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, America in early November and although the Trust could not afford to attend our work was represented by Robin James from Weymouth SEALIFE centre. Robin kindly did a talk on the work we are doing at Studland which went down very well with researchers from all around the world. It was a good opportunity to swap and share ideas and to forge international links

Websites

As part of the ongoing developments of the website, Gavin has been really busy updating the site so that it is more useful and more informative. The site is often used as a research source, for general information and as a site to just watch seahorses on the live camera which is beamed directly from the Trusts seahorse tank at its headquarters in Escot, Devon.

If you have any IT requirements contact Gavin at gavin@gslsolutions.co.uk we highly recommend him.

Facebook

Fantastic news we now have 223 members on the Facebook page, Beccy our educational/diver volunteer who set up the Facebook page for the trust keeps it updated for us, so a big thank you to her for all her help with this.

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=107757299258869&ref=ss#!/group.php?gid=106564446031865&ref=ts>

If you are ever bored and want a change from watching the TV why not tune into one of our tanks here at the Trust on www.seahorses.tv. The site was kindly donated by Danny Bamping Director of Crazeethingz Toy Company www.Crazeethingz.com , and the web camera was kindly put in by Mark Welch, Director of FINETRA www.finetra.co.uk , many thanks to both of them.

Torbay Seatorbay Project

Seatorbay has been very busy during 2011 and the Trust has contributed a great deal to this project, we are about to have an annual general meeting to look at what has been done this year and what is to be done. To learn more about Seatorbay check out the Torbay Coast and Countryside trusts website <http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk/>

Patrons

The Seahorse Trust has had fantastic support from it trustees and patrons this year and we would like to thank one and all for their amazing help.

Nick Baker	http://www.nickbaker.tv
Kate Humble	http://www.katehumble.com
Chris Packham	http://www.chrispackham.co.uk
Kirsty Jones	http://www.kirstyjones.com
Mark Carwardine	http://www.markcarwardine.com

Adoption and membership schemes

Don't forget adopting a seahorse or becoming a member of the Trust is great Christmas present. Check out the website for details. When a seahorse is adopted the adoptee receives a certificate of adoption, regular newsletters via e-mail, a fluffy toy seahorse, a Trust pin badge and a Trust sticker; all this for a minimum of £4 per month (more would be welcome).

The regular adoption of Seahorses adds funds to the ongoing work of the Trust and in the long term this will allow us to plan our finances to create a secure future for Seahorses.

As a Trust member you get regular newsletters via e-mail, a membership card, a Trust pin badge and a Trust sticker; all this for £25 per annum.

Fund raising

We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of people giving up their time to raise funds for the trust and its work, below are just some of the things that have been going on.



Amy and friend at the end of their amazing trip

- Amy Propsting did a fantastic Lands End to John O’Groats cycle ride for us and she and her friends raised £225 (including gift aid). Thank so much to them all for what they did.
- It just shows that even small ideas can bear fruit (sorry for the pun) Trustee Charlotte’s mum sold windfall apples and plants to raise funds and this generated £50. Thank you so much to June and Trevor for doing this for us.



The East Dorset Open Water Swimming Club organised their Annual Seahorse Challenge Swim Race at Studland Bay in Dorset; the site of The Seahorse Trust’s research project and raised £150. As can be seen in the picture to the left it was a cold misty day and everyone did amazing to keep their spirits up and do the swim

- SWIM FOR SEAHORSES? Ada Zanditon, London fashion designer (see above) is setting up a sponsored swim in December to raise funds for the Trust. She is organising a sponsored swim in London and New York and you can sponsor her swimmers through her website on <http://www.adazanditon.com/> for more details as they become available check out Ada’s and our website nearer the time.

There are other ways of donating to the Trust either through donation tins like at OSA Aquatics in Wool, Dorset, Kaleidoscope Koi in Paignton in Torbay Devon or at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth or why not buy some jewellery from Kerstain Laibach where she will make a donation to the Trust from some of her jewellery sold.

Kerstain Laibach	www.kerstinlaibach.com/
National Marine Aquarium	www.national-aquarium.co.uk/
OSA Aquatics, Tim and Barb	www.osaquatics.co.uk/
Kaleidoscope Koi, Adrian Aplin	www.aquaticsmadeeasy.com/

If you want to support the Trust by raising funds there are so many ways of getting people to donate their sponsorship monies securely and safely such as this listed below.

VIRGIN GIVING	www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com/giving/
E-BAY	www.ebay.co.uk
BIG GIVE	www.thebiggive.org.uk
EVERYCLICK	www.everyclick.com/theseahorsetrust/search
DONATIONS	www.theseahorsetrust.org
THROUGH OUR WEBSITE	www.theseahorsetrust.org
GIFT AID	

We are a registered charitable trust with the Charity Commissioners of England and Wales, our charity number is 1086027.
 Like everyone this year The Seahorse Trust has been hit badly by the credit crunch and we are very grateful for our existing and new supporters who kindly donate by standing order; this allows us to plan ahead for the important work that we do. Check out our site for ways of

supporting us and don't forget to Gift Aid your donation this allows us to claim 25p for every pound you donate from the government if you are a UK taxpayer. We have had some great support from companies as well as individuals and we would like to offer a huge thanks to them all. We have had a number of donations from private individuals and companies that wish to remain anonymous. We would like to publicly thank them for their support, without them we could not do as much work as we do.

Thank you and have a great Winter.

British Seahorse Survey

www.britishseahorsesurvey.org

Live Seahorse tank

www.seahorses.tv

The Seahorse Trust

www.theseahorsetrust.org

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