

JEWELS OF THE SEA project launched for SEAWEEK 2002 and the MESA and SASTA Conferences

Two marine education guides will have arrived in schools during February 2002 ready for SEAWEEK (10 – 17 March) and teaching programs from Reception to Year 8.

“An Octopus’s Garden” (Early Years – Primary Years, 60 pages) is a reprint of the successful Victorian project and “Jewels of the Sea” (Primary Years- Middle School, 100 pages) adopted the Victorian format for South Australia. “Jewels of the Sea” evolved with the South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSAF) and it includes very useful Internet and ICT sections. Both teacher’s guides are stand alone resources with references to kits based at the Marine Discovery Centre, Queenscliff, Victoria and the Nature Education Centre at Norwood phone: (08) 8363 0238 Fax: (08) 8362 0102.

The seven South Australian kits are intended to develop understanding and stewardship of our marine and coastal biodiversity. Fiction and non fiction books, CD ROM’s, videos, posters, models, puppets, beach washed items, shells, display folios and photography of the Marine Life Society of SA (MLSSA) are packaged in 80 litre sized roller crates. They are available for loan to all schools for the cost of transport and replacement of lost or damaged items.

The project was a joint initiative of the Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE), Marine Life Society of SA (MLSSA) and Coastcare. As a founding member of MLSSA and teacher of Marine Studies, Tony Isaacson coordinated the purchase of commercially available resources and production of the kits to raise the profile of The Unique South as distinct from The Great Barrier Reef.

Display books in six of the kits contain laminated A4 sized photographs of local marine life including their name and location. A seventh kit contains life like hand puppets of marine life that have been a hit for assemblies and cross age learning with a play for puppets written by Sue Barton of Hallett Cove School. An adaptation of Sue’s play is in the teacher’s guide. With an emphasis on make and create, the ideas in the play can be brought to life with characters made from junk items and found objects.

Printed and electronic resources produced by schools like Hackham South Primary, Pt Vincent School and the Marine Discovery Centre at Henley Beach compliment resource materials from other organisations. These include the Australian Dolphin Research Foundation, SA Whale Centre at Victor Harbor, The Marine and Coastal Community Network (MCCN) and Rodney Fox’s Shark Experience at Glenelg. The State’s marine fish emblem, the Leafy Seadragon is featured in the display books and the “Jewels of the Sea” publication.

The rear of the teacher’s guide contains a graphing exercise that shows the trend for seagrass loss since 1950 and room for students to predict a preferred future. Users can tap into a network of people, institutions and services that are listed in the teacher’s guides and in the pamphlets and information sheets of the display books (kits).

“Jewels of the Sea” activities include the Essential Learnings and Key Competencies suitable for a wide range of Learning Areas and Year Levels. In their preparation for cross age learning activities during SEAWEEK 2002, Year 11 Marine Studies students at Hallett Cove School used the Internet and other sections in the teacher’s guide. If your school has no tradition of programs that include the amazing variety of southern temperate water marine life, the guide has a number of ideas to get you started.

The marine life facilities at Hallett Cove School and the name and inspiration for the Jewels of the Sea project came from the SEAWEEK tradition that has been celebrated at the school since 1993. The themes for SEAWEEK are great ways to celebrate our aquatic heritage and to find out more about the mysteries of the sea. Visit the website at www.mesa.edu.au or browse the Jewels of the Sea for a range of practical and thinking activities like the templates and starters for Edward DeBono’s thinking hats.

The Marine Education Society of Australasia and the South Australian Science Teacher’s Association featured the Jewels of the Sea publications and the materials resources kits at their back to back conferences this year. Inquiries about Jewels of the Sea, the conferences and other workshop opportunities should be directed to Tony Isaacson via email: tiik@adam.com.au