



Cheetah Outreach EDUCATION NEWS

Bringing Environmental Education into the Classrooms of Disadvantaged Communities

July 2007

LITERACY PROJECT

We are pleased to report that our Literacy Resource Project is well on its way and is looking VERY promising. We would like to extend a big thank you to all of those who have contributed to this project so far. Dare we say that we will, at the end of the day, have worked together with relevant stakeholders to produce something that we can all be extremely proud of?

This three-year programme will seek to improve learner literacy and, most importantly, to empower teachers in the selection, development and use of Learning Support Materials, while raising awareness about our natural heritage and the conservation thereof. Teachers will receive training in two curriculum-linked, teacher-developed resources and they will be supported in the use of these resources in the classroom. We aim to enrich the teacher-learner environment and to provide valuable assistance to the teacher in interpreting the curriculum into classroom practice while at the same time promoting a conservation ethic.

The definition of literacy has moved away from reading, writing and numeracy. The emphasis lies far more now on the need for literacy to promote an individual's awareness of his/her environment and to make sense of it. In this day and age we need to recognise that literacy is verbal, visual and cultural.

Environmental education needs to play an intrinsic role in the path to transformation and building a democracy through better education. Through our education and curriculum building projects, we hope to make a valid contribution to this ideal.

"Environmental education, involving an interdisciplinary, integrated and active approach to learning must be a vital element of all levels and programmes of the education and training system in order to create environmentally literate and active citizens and ensure that all South African, present and future, enjoy a decent quality of life through the sustainable use of resources.

The curriculum calls for a specific focus on the environment.

The curriculum requires that the environment should shape teaching and learning across all learning areas and for all grades in South Africa."

Address by the Deputy Minister of Education, Mr ME Surty, at the World Environmental Education Congress, Durban

"The emphasis in the RNCS on the relationship between human rights, social justice, inclusivity and a healthy environment is key to social transformation in South Africa. Strengthening environmental learning in schools has the potential to make sure that a better future is created for all."

*Heila Lotz-Sisitka
Murray & Roberts chair of environmental
education at Rhodes University*



Newsflash!

Carol Birch (also one of our fellows) is in the process of setting up a reading exchange programme between North Hi Mount Elementary School in Fort Worth, Texas, and Primrose Park Primary in Cape Town. We recently had the great excitement of opening a parcel of correspondence and goodies from Ms Oliver's class at North Hi Mount Elementary.

LEFT: Carol Birch opening her box of goodies from North Hi Mount Elementary School



BOTSWANA AAWARE WORKSHOP

During May of this year, Cheetah Conservation Botswana hosted their third AAWARE Natural Science Workshop. The first two workshops were facilitated in partnership with the education officer from Cheetah Outreach to guide the CCB education officers in the training of teachers in the use of the AAWARE Natural Science Teachers' Guide. This year's workshop saw over 20 teachers enjoying an overnight workshop at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary in Serowe, Botswana

Each teacher received two copies of the Teachers' Guide (one in Tswana and one in English). They spent a session familiarising themselves with the material and examining the integration of the AAWARE Teachers' Guide into the Botswana syllabus objectives. Finally, they presented their ideas to the group.

The goals of the teachers attending the workshop appeared to concentrate on receiving more information about environmental education as relating to their schools, and to gain more information about the environment in general.

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST FOUR-LEGGED MEMBER OF OUR EDUCATION TEAM!



Baggins, our new serval kitten, has taken up his post at Cheetah Outreach Education Department. We wish him well. He is quite an assertive character!!!! No life-skills training necessary for him in this department!

FELLOWSHIP 2007

Gordon Olivier, from Raithby Primary school has been selected as this year's fellow, to be sent by Cheetah Outreach on a two-month environmental education fellowship at the Smithsonian's Conservation Research Centre in Washington, USA, later this year.

In a gathering of previous fellows the following competencies were outlined as being necessary in future fellows:

- Be a primary school teacher
- Preferably a science or literacy teacher
- Works in the Western Cape
- Assertive
- Extrovert
- Tolerant
- Able to field tough political questions and to defend South Africa.
- A well-informed ambassador for South Africa, the Western Cape Education Department, Cheetah Outreach and the RNCS.
- Comfortable with OBE
- Has a Driver's License
- Demonstrates problem-solving abilities.



“Education for sustainable development must focus on the underlying principles and values conveyed through education and is more concerned with the content and purpose of education and, more broadly, of learning of all kinds. Conceiving and designing education for sustainable development challenges all forms of educational provision to adopt practices and approaches which foster the values of sustainable development.”
UNESCO

Southern African Sustainable Seafood Initiative (SASSI). FishMS

SMS the name of the fish you want to eat to
079 499 8795

Code Red: These species are illegal to buy or sell in South Africa.

Code Orange: These species may be legally sold by registered commercial fishers and retailers. However, an increased demand for these could compromise a sustainable supply.

Code Green: These are species that are from relatively healthy and well-managed populations that can sustain current fishing pressure.

SASSI FishMS is charged at standard text-message rates.

**When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves.
David Orr**

BUS TO US

During 2007 Cheetah Outreach is phasing out the outreach programmes to schools and instead encouraging the schools to visit the facility. This is due to the erection of a classroom on site as well as the 3-year literacy intervention being initiated in the second half of 2007. Taking these factors into consideration, it was seen as an appropriate time for the semi-retirement of the main school ambassador, Shadow, who is now 11 years old and has been pursuing these duties from the age of 6 months. The visit to the facility will take place over 2 hours and the learners will be involved in an interactive slide presentation, tour of the facility, witnessing a live cheetah run and other activities linked to the curriculum and decided on in conjunction with the teacher. Schools who cannot afford the transport to Cheetah Outreach will have the opportunity to apply for sponsorship of the bus through Cheetah Outreach. We will be hosting at least 50 in house school visits this year.

SPONSORED SCHOOLS:

To date we have sponsored four bus trips to three disadvantaged schools and hosted a total of 265 learners from these schools at the facility. We have a further 9 confirmed bookings and are waiting on dates from 8 other schools involved in the literacy project which will bring our sponsored schools to around 35 in number.

The schools which have visited the facility have all expressed their delight in the programme and enjoyment of spending more time learning about the cheetah, as well as having the opportunity to see the greater conservation effort taking place and meeting one of our ambassador Anatolians.

OTHER SCHOOL VISITS:

Apart from 6 offsite school trips, we have had 9 other schools and community programmes visit the classroom and facility, with a total of 423 learners.

