



Cheetah Outreach EDUCATION NEWS

Bringing Environmental Education into the Classrooms of Disadvantaged Communities

July 2008

JULY WORKSHOPS

We will be holding three teacher workshops during the July school holidays. This year we have decided to work on extrapolating an Environmental theme and bringing it into our curriculum by developing curriculum based activities around a particular environmental theme. As the global conservation community has named 2008 "The Year of the Frog", we chose this theme. One-third to half of all amphibian species are threatened with extinction. Frogs are particularly vulnerable to environmental change because they live in both aquatic and terrestrial habitats. Their skins readily absorb moisture making them particularly susceptible to chemical changes in their environment. Because of their sensitivity they are seen by many as a barometer of environmental change. When frogs are threatened, intrinsic biodiversity is threatened.

The frog lends itself exceptionally well to environmental education. It is also deeply entrenched in folklore and literature. Lesson plans based on the frog can be developed for all learning areas. A wealth of information is available to teachers wanting to use the frog as a platform for teaching environmental education. According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement, Environmental Education was designed into each Learning Area in Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards. Consequently, educators can use a generative approach, creating environmental learning opportunities with learners around environmental concerns so that we might understand our world and be able to act responsibly within our communities. No matter what Learning Area is being worked on, environment is a key concern in learning programmes and lesson plans.

Our aim is that teachers, having seen the ease with which they can adapt the frog to our curriculum, will be able to apply this learning to other endangered species, especially the cheetah. We hope that these workshops will serve as a role model for bringing biodiversity into the classroom.



'Education for sustainable development enables people to develop the knowledge, values and skills to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future.'

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AT CHEETAH OUTREACH DURING THE DECEMBER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Apart from our school education activities, we also arrange activities for children at Cheetah Outreach during the December school holidays. This year we were ably assisted by Puleng Possa. She is a Grade 12 pupil at Rhodes High School. Thanks, Puleng, for your enthusiasm and help.

How are we going to stop defining ourselves by how much stuff we consume?
Ben Tuxworth, Forum for the Future (2004)





BUS TO US



Our Bus 2 Us Programme is progressing in leaps and bounds. A visit to the facility takes about two hours. Apart from a tour of the facility, learners will participate in curriculum based activities in our Earth Foundation Environmental Education Classroom. These will be decided on in conjunction with teachers who organize the visit.

Schools who are unable to afford a visit to Cheetah Outreach are encouraged to contact **Dawn Glover** on 082 872 4007 or cheetah@intekom.co.za to apply for sponsorship of a visit to Cheetah Outreach.

On Tuesday, May 20th, we sponsored a visit to Cheetah Outreach for 54 learners from W. D. Hendricks Primary School in Facticeon. Bearwood Lakes Golf Club in England sponsored the cost of the bus for the learners. The Spier Deli-Christensen provided lunch for them. Eagle Encounters sponsored a presentation on raptors, and Cheetah



Outreach sponsored a tour, a presentation and learning activities for the children. Learners also watched educational films on conservation. Spier management provided a talk on the significance of the historical and tourism aspects of the estate. All children went home with a handmade cheetah mask.

W.D. Hendricks Primary School is situated in Facticeon, about 14 km east of Cape Town. This school services one of the poorest sections of the Western Cape Community. Poverty, due to unemployment is the order of the day. Pupils are neglected, physically, emotionally and, in some instances, sexually abused. Teachers must cope under extraordinarily difficult circumstances in trying to give direction, guidance and love to these children. They come from home environments not conducive to learning. There

are few positive stimuli in this community and a shortage of good role models. Gangsterism and vandalism are rife. Many of them come from homes which don't possess a single book.

Not all is doom and gloom, however, as we received heart warming feedback from the school after their visit to us:

"Words cannot express our immense gratitude towards you and everyone concerned for the absolutely outstanding sponsored visit you afforded our learners and educators.

The feedback we received from learner and educator alike was one of complete wonderment!

We salute your willingness to go the extra mile for our learners and sincerely thank you, for aiding our school in its plight. Be rest assured that yesterday's experience will remain in their hearts forever."

"The ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children."

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, German theologian

UNESCO



SHADOW'S BIRTHDAY



In March this year our founding education ambassador cat, Shadow, celebrated his 12th birthday. He would like everyone to know that he is thoroughly enjoying his retirement although he does miss his outings. On his birthday he hosted a celebration in his enclosure. His social skills are well honed and he is an excellent host! He also loved the blanket that Dawn gave to him as a birthday present.

MAY 22ND INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY

“As scientists, we care about extinction because it means the end of a species, the potential loss of biomedicines, possible increases in disease-bearing insect populations, or a reduction in biological diversity that imposes another incremental increase in the instability of our super-ecosystem, Earth. As conservationists we admire the complexity, beauty, and fragility of life and we care about extinction because, as William Beebe said, “When the last individual of a race of living beings breathes no more, another heaven and another earth must pass before such a one can be again.”

IT'S NOT ALL WORK AND NO PLAY!

In April this year we decided to host a social evening for our fellows as a thank you for their valuable contribution to our Education Programme. A great evening was had by all and we look forward to productive teacher workshops in July.

