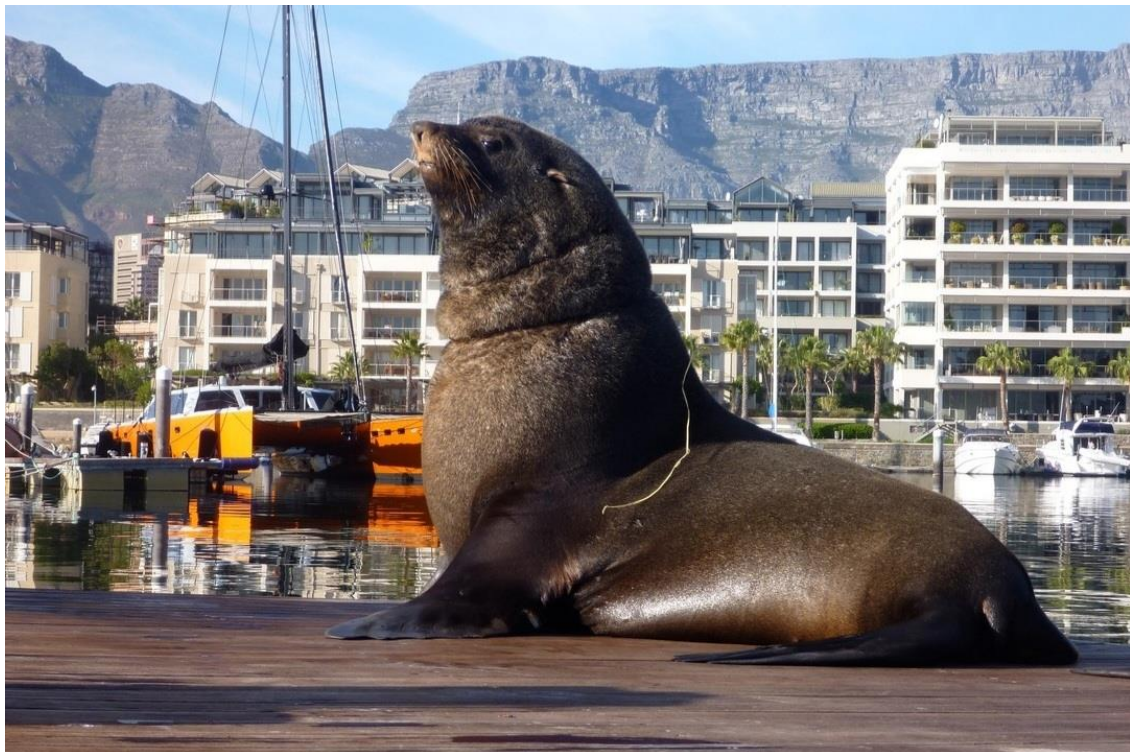




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Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation

Annual Report 2021/2022

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INTRODUCTION

The southern tip of Africa is the meeting place of two bountiful oceans, the Indian and the Atlantic. The Two Oceans Aquarium at the V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, showcases the incredible diversity of marine life found in these waters.

In addition to being an award-winning attraction which sees more than 500 000 visitors a year, the Aquarium is deeply invested in environmental education and campaigning, conservation, and research. In 2018, it established a not for profit, Public Benefit Organisation, the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation (the Aquarium Foundation) to promote and expand on its work.

The Aquarium Foundation's vision is *to connect all people to the ocean*. It offers quality, curriculum-aligned marine education programmes and adult ocean sustainability programmes. Its conservation work includes contributing to the conservation of five of the seven marine sea turtle species, collaborating on animal welfare programmes and conducting collaborative research projects with major tertiary institutions.

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

Ann Lamont was appointed as Executive Chairperson of the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation with effect from 01 May 2021.

Since Ann's appointment, the Foundation team have co-created a clear five-year vision and strategy for the Foundation which was approved by the Board. Many of our existing partners participated in the strategy creation process and many will be critical in supporting strategy implementation. The Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation has also continued to develop its relationship with the Waterfront through SOLVE.

EDUCATION

School groups

The school year was a challenging one in 2021, with Covid waves and schools still not operating at full capacity. We are seeing a definite improvement in school engagement and willingness to go on outings again, especially from government schools, which have always been our main source of income. Below is a summary of the number of children we have seen through our various school programmes. Even with the challenges, we have managed to book just over 10 000 children to come and visit the Aquarium this fiscal year. We have also visited more than 20 000 children with our outreach programmes, and by visiting schools and offering a lesson off-site.

Activity	Number of children reached
Smart Living Outreach	9855
Ocean in Motion	6376
Mobile Puppet Shows	4395
Aquarium Classroom Visits	10021
Offsite Lessons	356
Total	31003

Marine Sciences FET

Throughout the year Russell Stevens, Head of Education, and Xavier Zylstra, Deputy Head of Education, continued to teach the Grade 10 Marine Sciences curriculum online, via Zoom. We ended the year off, with 56 Grade 10 children from various provinces and schools, and 22 adults completing the first year of Marine Sciences online curriculum.

We had to increase capacity for this programme by assigning our Executive Foundation Administrator to take over the administrative tasks. We also started the

process of producing a long-term strategy that will allow us to teach several grades at the same time.

47 of the 2021 group have opted to continue with the Grade 11 content in 2022. We also have a new Grade 10 group that started on 25 January 2022. Out of the 96 new students, 20 have received a bursary through the AVI donation, and one through the donation from the Chris Bertish Foundation.

City of Cape Town RFQ

We qualified for the City of Cape Town's RFQ funding of R200 000, however only at the beginning of March 2021. This meant we needed to fulfil the proposal we submitted within five months, by the end of the City's fiscal year (end July 2021). With a focused sales drive, we almost achieved the deliverables of the proposal, however the 3rd wave of Covid-19 in July prevented us from earning the full amount. The total income from the City came to R115 000. In December 2021 we applied for and received RFQ funding from the City for R100,000 and will begin invoicing in March. This needs to be completed by July 2022.

DHL sponsorship

In August 2021, we received DHL sponsorship to the value of R 200 000, and we needed to reach 5,000 school children by the end of December 2021 with our Smart Living Outreach programme. There has been an incredible push by the sales team and a huge effort by the education staff to reach this target. As of 15th December 2021, we had delivered the smart living outreach lesson to 39 schools reaching 4,274 children.

Productions

Our online subscription programme was not as successful as we would have liked and was implemented at a time when we were not doing in-person lessons with school groups. Creating content for this programme, monthly and on time, became challenging for the teaching team. We prioritised our activities and decided to put this project on hold until we have added capacity, and proper objectives and outcomes in place, to create a worthwhile online community space for ocean learning. We discontinued the online subscription model from 1 July onwards. While

lack of capacity and proper planning prevented us from continuing with this programme, our in-house production team created some great content that highlights the work that we and the Two Oceans Aquarium do daily with the animals that we care for.

Cape Town TV started airing episodes of Spunky Sea Stories in September and want to continue airing them until at least September 2022. The Department of Basic Education is interested in airing some of our educational material and we are signing an agreement with them.

CONSERVATION

Turtle Conservation Centre

2021/2022 has been a highly successful year for the Turtle Conservation Centre. Below is a summary of our rescues and releases for this year. Only two hatchlings from 2021 have been kept back, as they were not ready yet to be released.

Species	Life Stage	In rehab/ Released / Deceased
Loggerhead sea turtle	Hatchling	40 released 2 in rehab 14 deceased
Leatherback sea turtle	Hatchling	1 released 2 deceased
Green sea turtle	Sub-adult	Harry - released January 2022 – Arrived October 2020
Green sea turtle	Sub-adult	Litchi – released January 2022 – Arrived February 2021
Green sea turtle	Adult	Gerri – released January 2022 – Arrived August 2021
Green sea turtle	Adult	Bob – in rehab – Arrived November 2014

Loggerhead sea turtle	Yearling	Donny, Caddy, and Kai - in rehab – Arrived in 2020
Loggerhead sea turtle	2-year-old	Pan – in rehab – Arrived in 2019
Loggerhead sea turtle	Adult	Nobomvu – in rehab – Arrived August 2021
Green sea turtle	Sub-adult and Adult	3 deceased
Hawksbill sea turtle	Sub-adult and Adult	1 released 4 deceased
Olive Ridley sea turtle	Sub-adult and Adult	2 deceased

Both Litchi and Gerri were fitted with satellite tags, so we have been able to follow their journey post release. We are looking forward to releasing three long-term patients by the end of May: Donny (2020 hatchling), Caddy (2020 hatchling) and Pan (2019 hatchling), who have finally overcome their various health problems and are ready to return to the ocean. The most exciting part of this is that we will be tagging all three of them, resulting in some incredibly unique data as there are no post-hatchling loggerheads that have been tagged before. This will give us great insight into the so-called 'lost years.'

In addition, we have just launched our first turtle signage in Struisbaai with Cape Nature and Consol Glass.

Marine Wildlife Management Programme

The Marine Wildlife Management Programme has been running smoothly, the team has been kept busy with a few challenges throughout the year. Throughout the course of April, May, and June 2021 the team saw a decrease in the number of seals present in the V&A Waterfront precinct due to the low water quality in the marina, this was caused by the mass fish die-out in the harbour, resulting in anoxic conditions.

During the most recent seal season, high numbers of seals were present in the marina, causing the seal platform in front of the Two Oceans Aquarium to need maintenance and reinforcement.

The MWMP team continued their daily monitoring walks, assisting wildlife where needed, both within the V&A Waterfront precinct and further afield. The usual birds started returning to the V&A Waterfront to roost and nest and seal numbers have steadily increased since early December.

Brett Glasby, Marine Wildlife Management Coordinator, assisted a porcupine in Sea Point in July, which had become stuck in a storm water drain. We also assisted, in collaboration with our colleagues at the Two Oceans Aquarium, and the Department of Environmental Affairs, two leopard seals that had arrived on our shores as visitors. We assisted with the tagging of both animals, and basic wound care. Unfortunately, the second leopard seal died a few days later, possibly due to stress.

Three resident otters have kept the MWMP team busy, with many human-animal interactions, sometimes resulting in conflict. We are actively trying to find a solution that will allow the otters to stay in the V&A precinct, without compromising the safety of human residents.

RESEARCH

The main focus of the research division of the Foundation has been to produce a clear strategy for the next five years, and beyond. Through various meetings and collaborative discussions with experts within the marine research sphere, a comprehensive and solid research strategy has been established. We are also extremely excited to welcome Judy Mann into the fold, who will bring with her invaluable experience and insight that will allow us to grow within the research and informal education sectors.

We also continue to host students from WWF, WESSA and CPUT. All students have daily tasks that they are required to complete at the Two Oceans Aquarium and the Foundation, but they also have research projects to complete, and commitments to the individual programmes that they are enrolled in.

AWARENESS AND COLLABORATION

Together with various organizations, we participated in awareness drives, which mainly focused on our sea turtle rehab programme, this included:

- A large mural of Bob at the Pavilion Rotary Park (this was a collaboration with the Waterfront Rotary group, who supplied the paint and space; design was created by Jessica Sloan, the Aquarium's graphic designer; artwork applied by our turtle team and some the other Foundation staff)
- Waterfront centre court activation called 'Ocean Superheroes' in collaboration with the Two Oceans Aquarium, SOLVE from the V&A Waterfront, and Consol Glass.
- MPA Day collaboration with Two Oceans Aquarium and MPAs South Africa (our teaching team formed part of an online seminar series highlighting the importance of Marine Protected Areas.
- Beach Clean-up on World Turtle Day, in collaboration with the Beach Co-Op at Muizenberg Beach
- Beach Clean-up at Sunset Beach, in collaboration with Animal Survival International (ASI); ASI raised R25 000 towards our sea turtle programme and have committed to raise more in the future