



Friends of the Environment

Abaco, Bahamas

SUMMER 2016

PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & ACTIVITIES SINCE 1988

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Summer Programs Reach All Ages



About Summer Camps

Summer camps have been at the heart of our youth outreach since FRIENDS' education programs began in 2006. Camps were first held as a partner project with the Bahamas Marine Mammal Research Organisation in Sandy Point and expanded to Marsh Harbour and Cooper's Town to reach more communities. At the time, camps targeted ages 6-12 and the need was obvious based on the attendance and interest expressed by students and their parents. To facilitate expanding the camps and offering a diversity of activities for repeat campers, Disney's Animals Science and Environment department came on board as a partner to help further develop the program. Each year we have been evaluating program success and needs by tracking our numbers and investigating student learning by implementing testing before and after camp. In 2014, we started handing out evaluation sheets to parents to get their feedback.

What have we learned?

Students are leaving our camps more knowledgeable about the Bahamian environment and they are taking that information home to their parents as well! Behavior change is also happening; we have had numerous stories from parents who share that their kids have adapted their routines after learning about sustainability and they have even reprimanded their parents for bad behaviors like littering.

Campers continue to return to our programs as they age, some have even become interns or volunteers, and have sought environmental degrees at university. We have also recruited many siblings and other relatives of past campers.

2016 Programs

- Sea Beans Camp (ages 3-5)
- Abaco's Ecosystems Camp 1 (ages 6-8)
- Abaco's Ecosystems Camp 2 (ages 6-8)
- Sustainable Fishing Camp with IGFA (ages 9-11)
- Nature Detectives Camp (ages 12-16)
- Plastic Awareness Camp with Bahamas Plastic Movement (ages 12-16)
- Grand Cay Camp (ages 5-17)
- Sea Turtle Field Course (ages 14 - adult)



Above: DaShane Knowles, summer camper (2008). Right: DaShane as a summer intern (2016).



DaShane is currently pursuing a degree in Environmental Engineering at Penn State University with a full scholarship.

8 Camps 4 Communities 139 Students (ages 3-17)

President's Letter



We at FRIENDS are so pleased with our 2016 accomplishments, including attracting a cross section of scientists and groups to the Kenyon Centre. When we envisioned the role the Kenyon Centre would serve, this is exactly what we

had in mind by promoting a sustainable development program for Abaco, through scientific research and outreach. We were able to attract groups such as Lyford Cay International School and National Geographic, something we did with very little advertisement. Our goal is to build on this, ensuring that the Centre is self-sufficient and able to help support the day to day operations of FRIENDS. As we continue our education programs throughout the island, we have noticed significant strides, of our people becoming more environmental friendly, however, there is still much more work to done.

We wish to highlight the efforts of the staff at FRIENDS, who continue to produce at the highest level and for this we are most grateful. A special thank you to our donors and key stakeholders for their continued support in our efforts at FRIENDS; without you we would not be where we are today. Thank you for believing in us and as we look forward to the year 2017, together we will achieve our goals through research, education and conservation.

Wynsime Ferguson

You are all invited! Please bring a friend!



Fall Events

Kayak Challenge - November 5th, Pete's Pub, Little Harbour

This event is a partnership between FRIENDS, the Abaco Cancer Society, and event participants to raise funds for the work of both organizations while supporting healthy living and promoting one of Abaco's newest national parks - The East Abaco Creeks. The kayak challenge will begin and end at Little Harbour. There will be a fun party at Pete's Pub including music, food, and cold beverages!

Abaco Science Fair - November 17th, New Vision Ministries, Marsh Harbour

This year's theme is "Challenges and Solutions for Waste Management in The Bahamas". All Abaco schools are invited to participate and the general public are welcome to attend (10am - 2pm).

Turtle Trot - November 24th (Thanksgiving Day), Hope Town Harbour Lodge

The best way to work up an appetite for your Thanksgiving meal! Join us for a 5k fun run/walk through Hope Town and North End all in support of marine environment education and awareness!

Third Annual Hope Town Music Festival - December 2nd - 4th

The Combustion Music Hope Town Music Festival is a memorable three-day-long celebration of music and giving back to Abaco. Venues include: Hope Town Harbour Lodge, Harbour's Edge, Abaco Inn and Hope Town Inn and Marina.

National Geographic Blue Hole Mapping Expedition - December 8 - 16th

An international team of explorers, scientists, and educators will be studying the underground passages in the newly protected South Abaco Blue Holes! You have the opportunity to be involved and learn more during a site visit. Contact us for more details!

Please use the enclosed envelope or visit our website and make sure you are a member for 2017! Your support helps make all of our exciting programs possible!

Save the Date

November 5th - Kayak Challenge
November 17th - FRIENDS Science Fair. (Theme: Waste Mgmt.)
November 24th - Hope Town Turtle Trot, 5K
December 2nd - 4th - Hope Town Music Festival
February 4th - HT Reef Ball
February 11th - MH Reef Ball



Follow us!

FRIENDS Thanks Friends

Lionfish Derby, Marsh Harbour Exporters and Importers, Bahamas Marine Exporters Association, The Layman Lab (NCSU), Green Turtle Club & Marina, Brendal's Dive Center, Abaco Tourist Office, The Department of Marine Resources, Bobbie Lindsay, Chris Burdett, Ryley Parent, Shane Gross Photography, Lad Akins/REEF, James Boyce, Jim Richard
Advertising and Awareness, Coastal Angler Magazine, The Abaconian, Abaco Cruiser's Net, Conch Salad TV, Steve Dodge and Cruising Guide to Abaco, The Abaco Scientist blog, Abaco Life.
Rockin' with FRIENDS, Doug's Place, Sail The Abaco's, The Bluff House, Pete's Pub, Abaco Hardware, Jimmy's Liquor Store, Jacob Adams Rum, Wine Down Sip Sip, Wally's, Bob Gascoigne, Celia Rogers, AID, Steve Marinak, Shane Cash, Justin & Journey Higgs, The Aberle Family, HT Youths, Donnella Rolle, Chris & Jessica Farren, Patrick Stewart, Rob Sands, Christopher Lightbourn, Firefly Sunset Resort, Elizabeth Covington
Summer Camp & Field Courses, Disney's Animals Science and Environment, International Game Fish Association, Mark DeAngelis, Paul Pinder, Sara Green, Nancy Albury and Adrianna McPhee (AMMC), Stephanie Buhler, Elisabeth Frasch, Beth Whitman, Ryley Parent, Laura Thornton, Liberty Boyd, Tace Sutherland, Aine Collins, Jody Albury, Maximillian Theo, Ebany Hanna, Zoya Thompson, James Boyce, Grand Cay All Age School, Maxine Cephas, Jan Russell, Amy Roberts Primary, Stephanie Sawyer, Rental Wheels

Kenyon Centre News and Updates



To Date: 33+ Groups & Institutions, 20+ Research topics, 404+ tour visitors

Spring & Summer Highlights:

- * You donated for new solar panels at this year's Reef Balls, and they have been installed! We now have 94 panels.
- * Clothes lines and a gas grill have been added for guests.
- * We started the edible garden, and have now begun a landscape plan to phase development of the entire grounds.
- * We are recycling aluminum cans and plastics at our site in partnership with Cans for Kids.
- * We hosted our first group of primary school students from Nassau and the first class of students from College of The Bahamas!
- * Researchers staying at the centre this summer partnered with FRIENDS on outreach and education activities.

We were really impressed by the great accommodations of this field station. The station was sustainably built and had all the modern amenities we could wish for. The field lab was large and equipped with microscopes and plenty of counter space. We were equally impressed by the staff and their outreach efforts.

- Kristin Winchell, UMass Boston



I just wanted to thank you for all that you did, the trip was wonderful and a great learning experience for the kids and adults - I have had lots of positive feedback from parents as their kids came back talking about everything they had done.

*- Denize Markham,
Lyford Cay International
School (at left)*

BESS Partnership

Christian McIntosh,
Spring 2016 Intern



The Bahamas Environment Steward Scholars (BESS) Program is a partnership between BREEF and The Island School. It facilitates the participation of

Bahamian students in education and research at Island School and pairs that with an internship experience in The Bahamas. As a partner of the BESS program FRIENDS has been lucky to host two student interns already. This fall, we are hosting another. Both Christian and Donovan have been participants in our school and summer programs so we are especially happy to include them in our intern family! Christian is now attending his first year of college at Wingate University, NC. Christian's elder brother Chamon was our first BESS intern.



Donovan Hepburn,
Fall 2016 Intern

Frank Kenyon Centre Vision: To support the work of FRIENDS by facilitating scientific research and outreach, and promoting sustainable development in Abaco, Bahamas.

Volunteers Collaborate to Improve Moorings

Long time member and FRIENDS marine conservation committee volunteer Mark Gonsalves recently went above and beyond to ensure that the moorings at Sandy Cay Reef were repaired and replaced. Rough weather and limited resources mean that groups like The Bahamas National Trust and FRIENDS have a hard time keeping up with repairs. In the past, FRIENDS coordinated mooring repair efforts in the national parks until The Bahamas National Trust opened their office in Abaco and took over the coordination (FRIENDS still maintains Mermaid Reef moorings). To help prepare for this summer, Mark engaged a number of local businesses that benefit from the park and asked their assistance with donations and manpower to replace the moorings. Mark's plan ensured that there were enough funds available to purchase supplies to have on hand for repairs throughout the year. He continues to encourage local businesses to show their support and become involved in promoting and protecting our natural resources, as they are important to all of us. Donors included: Cruise Abaco, Sail The Abaco's, Island Marine, Pete's Pub, and Friends of the Environment; volunteers included: Adam Lawrence, Mark Gonsalves, Greg Johnston, Patrick Stewart, Captain Joe Cetner, Captain Ray Lowe and Fraglin Author.



One of the new moorings, with Pelican Cay in the background.

Green Turtle Cay Lionfish Derby Report

Boat Name	# of Lionfish	Smallest (cm)	Largest (cm)
Spear Bender	433	5	34
Lil Big Fish	366	7.3	29.9
White Roach	206	9	31
Bolo Boys	90	4.9	30
All Play	5	10.3	32.8
TOTAL	1,100		

More lionfish were collected during the 2016 Green Turtle Cay derby than during the 2015 Green Turtle Cay derby with less boats participating (763 fish caught in 2015). Four of the boats were crewed by local fishermen, while the fifth (All Play) was crewed by visitors. Lionfish were harvested on natural and man-made structures, with the closest fish being harvested in the vicinity of the Green Turtle Club Marina.



LEFT: FRIENDS volunteer Ryley Parent helped count and measure lionfish. RIGHT: Livingston and Mervin worked hard to clean lionfish as they arrived at the dock. Later, participants tried fried lionfish bites and lionfish dip.

FRIENDS' Mission: To preserve and protect Abaco's terrestrial and marine environments in order to achieve sustainable living for the wildlife and people of Abaco, Bahamas.

FRIENDS' Contact Information

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