

**BLUE WORLD INSTITUTE OF MARINE RESEARCH AND  
CONSERVATION**

**EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**FINAL REPORT 2015**



Blue World Institute of Marine Research and Conservation, Kaštel 24, HR-51551 Veli Lošinj, Croatia  
[info@blue-world.org](mailto:info@blue-world.org)      [www.blue-world.org](http://www.blue-world.org)

## **Conducted by:**

Jelena Basta, Andrea Borić, Marinela Cukrov, Mateja Zekan, Mirta Kučić, Martina Antoninić

## **LOŠINJ MARINE EDUCATION CENTRE**

During 2015, Lošinj Marine Education Centre was visited by a total of 8.549 people. Of the total number of visitors in the past year, 2.653 of them were pupils and students who participated in the lectures and workshops on the marine environment, while 5.896 were individual visitors.

The main part of the educational program is the "Education on the Marine Environment" that ensures quality education on the marine environment highlighting the need for its conservation. The program is implemented through a permanent exhibition of the Lošinj Marine Education Centre and the Turtle Rescue Centre.

As the separate parts of the program, different programs for continuous work with students in the local community were designed - through a group called the Little Blue World. Throughout the year we work with children and students in the specially created workshops in the field of nature, biology and environmental protection.

As a complement to this program, during the summer months the "Little Marine School" is held, where we try to make our educational activities available for children who have not been able to join our work during the school year due to the other commitments and for children who are spending their holidays on the island of Lošinj. All participants had the opportunity to pass an interesting and original program of workshops where they learned how to distinguish the dolphins, what are turtles feeding on, how big sharks can be, which are the differences between shellfish and snails and many other information.

Given our successful collaboration with Bioteka – an organization for the promotion of biology and related sciences, their scientific team moves its scientific laboratory on the island of Lošinj during the summer months, complementing the offer of summer educational programs. Biotekas' "Summer Science Camp" abounds with a variety of topics in the field of biology; from studying the world invisible to the naked eye and how it looks under the microscope, through studies of fossils to various chemical experiments and discovering the connection between all living beings. All participants of the program had the opportunity to become scientists for a week.

This summer we started with organized dolphin-watching tours, where everybody who is interested can go and search for dolphins with an experienced skipper. These trips focus on learning about the dolphins and their environment as well as conserving their habitat and behaving respectful towards them as living beings.

In order to be more efficient in performing the tasks set by the program and to be available to all of our users, during the summer months we seasonally hired two students.

## **MARINE SCIENCE CENTRE – PLANS & PREPARATION**

Aware of the importance of the establishment of the new Center for Marine Science for Mali Lošinj, Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and Croatia in general, in 2015 the City of Mali Lošinj sent to the Central State Office for State Property Management a rush note for the transfer of management of the property on Velopin in Mali Lošinj. In order to apply this project to tenders which are in progress to access the European funds, the Blue World Institute with the support of the City of Mali Lošinj and Ministry of Tourism asked for a meeting in the State Office for State Property Management which never happened. The City of Mali Lošinj stands firmly with the decision that this project is one of its priority projects which combines interdisciplinary science, scientific culture and education in a modern way, with the aim to promote sustainable development and the inclusion of the general community in a dialogue on the conservation of natural heritage and environment. It serves to improve the life quality of citizens, to promote scientific innovation and support economic development, in particular by creating the quality tourism offer and by supporting the development of tourism.

## **SEA TURTLE RESCUE CENTRE**

The Turtle Rehabilitation Centre in Sunčana Bay in Mali Lošinj was opened for visitors from June to October 2015. Due to the large interest of children we introduced two educational programs during the summer months - "Little Marine School" and "Summer Science Camp" in cooperation with the organization Bioteka from Zagreb. Within these programs workshops in Croatian, German, Italian, English and Slovenian were held in the Turtle Rehabilitation Centre. Our program was attended by about 60 children.

On 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 the Blue World Institute celebrated the World Sea Turtle Day. Many of our youngest islanders and children from hotel Vespera came and participated in art workshops, educational games such as "Find the Lost Turtle Hatchlings in the Sand" and learning how to recognize different sea turtles species through a very interesting memory game. A lecture about the biology, diversity and the importance of conservation of these amazing marine reptiles was held too. Around 70 children and adults joined the celebration of the World Sea Turtles Day, which was also media covered by a TV crew who filmed the report about the event.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL GROUPS**

During 2015 a total of 2.753 children and young people of different ages participated in a different Blue World Institutes' education programs. Various lectures on dolphins and other marine organisms were attended by 1.860 students, while in the workshops participated 549 of them. In the collaboration with the Austrian organization Biostation, 244 Austrian high school students watched a documentary about dolphin research in LMEC, 30 students were involved in the "Little School of Natural History", while another 70 participated in the "Summer Science Camp" and "Little Marine School" programs during the summer months.

In the program of training students for research of the marine environment participated a total of 6 students who, during 2015, performed an internship at the Blue World Institute.

This year we have finished the "Little School of Natural History" project and we can conclude that a total of 233 participants were involved in the project, of which 106 children in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of implementation (academic year 2013/2014) and 127 children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the project (academic year 2014/2015). All the participants in the project - children, parents, teachers and educators from kindergarten "Cvrčak" assessed the project as very successful. The program of work encompasses various topics in the field of botany, zoology, ecology and the environment protection within which certain contents are taught through workshops, lectures, interactive games, field work etc. In addition to the education on the environment protection from an early age, one of the main goals is to promote principles of sustainable relationship towards nature in the local community and beyond. Within the project, collaboration and partnership with the "Cvrčak" kindergarten was established and the leaders of the program have visited the preschool group in Mali Lošinj and older kindergarten group in Veli Lošinj on several occasions. The visits to the Lošinj Marine Education Centre and the Turtle Rescue Centre for kindergarten kids were organized throughout the year.

After the completion of the project, the majority of users continued to participate in the educational programs of the Blue World Institute during the summer months and many of them were involved in activities related to the celebration of the World Sea Turtle Day and the traditional Dolphin Day. It is important to emphasize that the "Little School of Natural History" program was carried out with the support of the Fund for Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency and the City of Mali Lošinj.

In 2015 Blue World Institute successfully implemented the project titled "A stroll around the Lošinj Archipelago" in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds. As part of the project a boat trip for students from district schools of Mario Martinolić Elementary School, Mali Lošinj was organized. Additional importance to the project was given by the fact that the whole event was officially registered as a "satellite event" within the European "Green Week" (Green Week 2015). All details about the mentioned event can be found on the web site <http://www2.greenweek2015.eu/content/map-satellite-events>.

The tour was attended by 48 students from the district schools in Veli Lošinj, Nerezine and the small islands of Ilovik, Unije and Susak with their teachers. Educators from the Blue World Institute have developed a variety of educational activities for children to fulfill their time during the trip.

The trip started in the morning hours by boarding students on the boat "Pirat" in the port of Mali Lošinj. For students from Nerezine and Veli Lošinj district schools a bus transportation to the town of Mali Lošinj was organized. The boat sailed from the port of Mali Lošinj to the island of Unije, and then to the islands of Susak and Ilovik to pick up the students from the island district schools, after which the sailing continued towards Veli Lošinj. During the trip a workshop of orientation in space was held during which the students recorded the movement route of the boat. When passing by the certain island students from different district schools told the story of the natural and geographical features of their islands as well as about their schools. During the workshop students got working papers and learned to

distinguish different fish and whale species as well as the other inhabitants of the Adriatic Sea through a variety of educational games. The visit to the Lošinj Marine Education Centre in Veli Lošinj included a quiz for students, after which they returned on the boat to sail back to their homes. During the whole excursion children were in search for the dolphins with the Blue World Institutes educators, and they had the opportunity to see them in the late afternoon hours at the entrance to the port of Mali Lošinj. In addition to the learning in nature, this project gave the possibility to students from remote islands and smaller communities to know each other and socialize. Many of them have visited all of the inhabited islands of Lošinj archipelago for the first time.

During the implementation of the projects successful cooperation with the local radio station "Radio Lošinj - Radio Jadranka" was achieved. All significant events and activities related to the projects were reported on the radio. Thus, in the radio show "ECO-INFO" the project leader brought an analysis and the conclusion on the successful implementation of projects as well as a report on the organized boat trip named "A stroll around Lošinj Archipelago" (<http://www.jadranka.hr/audio/audio-player/IzborIzEmisija.htm>). Furthermore, all important activities during the implementation of the project were regularly reported in the news on the official website of the organization [www.blue-world.org](http://www.blue-world.org) and on its FB profile.

## **23<sup>rd</sup> DOLPHIN DAY**

With the support of the City of Mali Lošinj Tourist Board, on Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2015 the Blue World Institute organized the 23<sup>rd</sup> Dolphin Day. The program of 23<sup>rd</sup> Dolphin Day started in the morning hours in front of the Lošinj Marine Educational Centre in Veli Lošinj. Around 20 children participated in various art and educational workshops. Of all events, the most exciting was the little scientific laboratory including demonstrations and experiments in which children were learning the main differences between baleen and toothed whales in respect of their feeding habits. The afternoon hours continued with sports competitions in Rovenska Bay in Veli Lošinj where more than 100 children participated in a swimming competition. The evening started with the art workshops for the youngest Dolphin Day visitors in front of the Lošinj Marine Education Centre in Veli Lošinj. At the same time, around 50 school-aged children, organized in 7 teams, started "The Treasure Hunt" game. The competing teams had 8 different tasks including a dolphin puzzle, identification of dolphins by photos of their dorsal fin, recognizing marine fish species and an echolocation labyrinth. Here the task for the children was to have a glimpse inside of how do dolphins use sound for their orientation in the sea. Besides solving all the tasks participants also had to look for hidden clues, which were all in riddles. Later in the evening the winners of all competitions were announced, including the most interesting photo among 60 photos arrived on the photo-contest "Sense the Sea". After the announcement of winners and handing out awards for the participants, a lecture about dolphins was held in front of the Lošinj Marine Education Centre.

## **AQUAMARINE**

At the end of the year we were busy with preparation, publication and sending of a new issue of Aquamarine, newsletter for dolphin adopters, members and associates of the Blue World Institute which is available on our website

[http://www.blue-world.org/media/files/Akvamarin\\_2015\\_EN\\_final.pdf](http://www.blue-world.org/media/files/Akvamarin_2015_EN_final.pdf) .