



Biodiversity education part of celebration

5/23/2012

Yesterday was celebrated globally as International Biodiversity Day, and in Barbados the Ministry of Environment and Drainage ensured that biodiversity education occurred.

The theme for this year is 'Marine Biodiversity' and so, in collaboration with the Wesley Hall Infants School Environmental Club, the Ministry of Environment and Drainage and the National Heritage Department hosted a day tour at the island's Folkstone Marine Park.

Environmental Officer, Ministry of Environment and Drainage, Kim Downes-Agard said: "We want to give them an appreciation for marine biodiversity outside the classroom, and the only really appropriate place is the Folkstone Marine Reserve. ...Fortunately for us they had an open day Friday, and they have amazing aquariums up; it was a wonderful opportunity for the children to see marine biodiversity, to see things that teachers would have taught them about, they would have heard about, to see them up close and personal."

Environmental Club Teacher Nicole Brathwaite stated, "I think this is a fantastic opportunity for the children. Many go to the beach and don't understand or know. So, this is good for them to be experiencing, to learn that there is life besides human life and their actions impact on them. They go to the beach all the time but are unaware, so this helps them put names to things. Now they are realising things today, there are 'oohs' and 'aahs' from those who have never seen these creatures and plants before."

The 29 students were thoroughly amazed as they observed the fish and creatures on display. They were very excited to see all that they have read about and learned about in the past, to experience the marine biodiversity in person.

The teachers engaged the students as they toured from display to display enthusiastically, answering the numerous questions and appeasing the inquisitive students. **(KG)**