

Another successful Fieldtrip with FICS Year 7 Students!

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Back in December 2021, SAERI scientists Dr Steffi Carter, Dr Narissa Bax along with PhD Students Amy Guest, Amanda Kuepfer, and myself had the pleasure of assisting with the Falkland Islands Community School (FICS) Year 7 science fieldtrip yet again. And what a day we had!

"I loved the field trip, it was fun."

Year 7 FICS student

The students are working toward their Bronze CREST Awards for science. CREST Awards is a scheme that inspires young people to think and behave like scientists and engineers, and the Bronze Award introduces students to project work. The project process develops enquiry, problem-solving and communication skills. To help them gain this award, the aim of the day was to assess the biodiversity of different marine habitats by comparing rocky shores with sandy shores: placing quadrats along transects and looking at species richness and abundance in each quadrat.

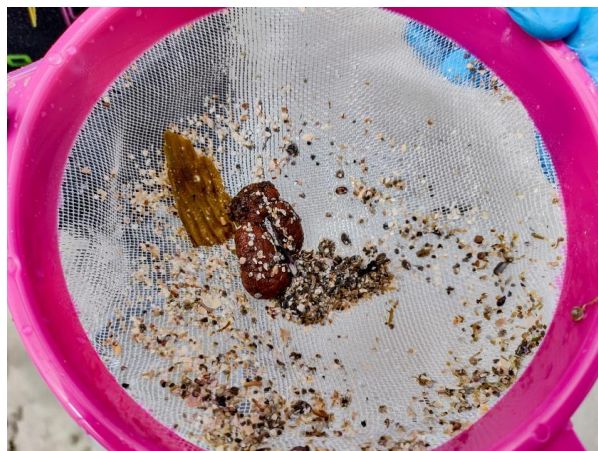
"The team at SAERI bring the expertise to our biodiversity project that really does showcase the wildlife of the Falkland Island. It widens the opportunities for our students and allows them to see the work of a research scientist."

Liam Ledger – Leader of Science at FICS



Amy Guest and Dr. Stefanie Carter giving introduction and demonstration of how to set up a quadrat. Students having a go at their own quadrat.

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Found in the one of the sieves from a quadrat – some pieces of a giant kelp and some broken shell pieces, tiny stones and urchin spines.

While there were lots to be found on the sandy shores, we soon found out that the rocky shores proved to be more interesting. Our first find were a couple of elephant seals snoozing on the rocks.



Students admiring the elephant seals snoozing on the rocky shore. Besides having a look at what was going on and having a yawn, the elephant seals didn't seem bothered with our presence at all.

Continuing on, we reached our rocky shore destination just past the elephant seals, and after another quick demonstration by Dr Steffi Carter and Amy Guest, the kids got stuck right in with setting up their own quadrats. However, it wasn't long before everyone got distracted by the discovery of the first starfish!



*Local Common Sea Star (*Anasterias antarctica*,) & Flat-backed Crab (*Halicarcinus planatus*.)*

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"I Liked working in the rock pools and flipping the rocks looking for the animals, the hiding star fish were my favourite."

FICS Year 7 Student

"It was my first time ever rock pooling and I saw my first crab and star fish."

FICS Year 7 Student

"I thought it was very interesting and fun because we found a star fish."

FICS Year 7 Student

"I liked learning about different species and finding some species that I didn't know existed (I likes the flower lobed anemone)"

FICS Year 7 Student



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Once the excitement wore off and more and more starfish, crabs and other interesting species were found, the students got back on track. Before we knew it, our time was up and we had to start packing up and head back. There were a lot of 'arrrh' 's and 'just a bit longer' comments so I think it's safe to say the afternoon was well enjoyed.

Now time for the students to get to the nitty gritty and analyse their data collected!



*Some of the specimens collected by the students in their quadrats – Pink Spotted Chiton *Tonica lebruni*, Local Common Sea Star *Anasterias antarctica*, Flat-backed Crab *Halicarcinus planatus* & Eel Pout *Austrolycus depressiceps*.*

A huge thanks to the SAERI team for lending their time and expertise; to all the teachers involved on the day, and Leader of Science, Liam Ledger for approaching us again to help out with this exciting initiative. We look forward to heading back to the beach again next year!

"I enjoyed the trip as I discovered lots of new organisms I never knew of. I also like how we used the sieve and spade on the beach and how we went climbing over the rocks"

FICS Year 7 Student

"I enjoyed the trip as I discovered lots of new organisms I never knew of. I also like how we used the sieve and spade on the beach and how we went climbing over the rocks"

FICS Year 7 Student

"I liked it on the rocky beach as I found a fish"

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FICS Year 7 Student

"I really liked it because I got to be outside and go rock pooling also lifting up rocks and allowed me to socialise with others"

FICS Year 7 Student

"I had a nice time as we went rock pooling (thank you to SEARI for your support)"

FICS Year 7 Student



Above right: Dr Stefanie Carter and Amy Guest giving a demonstration on the sandy shore on how to set up the quadrats

Above left: Dr Narissa Bax engaging with students.

Right: Amanda Kuepfer helping a group identify different specimens