

The latest word from theLASTOCEAN

CHARITABLE TRUST

July/August 2011

A warm welcome to all *Friends Of the Last Ocean* (FOLO)

As ever, it has been a busy couple of months in the Last Ocean office. In this newsletter: our short film competition entries are now in, an education resource is on the cards, Peter Young discusses Happy Feet's real home, our blog kicks off and we meet a popular Ross Sea local – the charismatic Weddell seal.

We are trying something new with this newsletter and linking content directly to our [blog](#). The blog is a great way to keep in touch with us between newsletters. There are always more regular updates on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) too.

Entries in for Last Ocean Online Short Film Competition



The cut-off to enter the 2011 Last Ocean Short Film Competition was midnight August 12. We had 24 films all up and it is clear many people put a lot of effort into producing their short films. Check out the films at our [online screening room](#).

If you have a particular favourite make sure you share it with friends and family as there is a prize for the people's choice too.

Winners will be announced at a film awards ceremony in Christchurch on September 15th and released on Facebook and our website later that evening.

Last Ocean set to hit NZ schools in 2012

A major project we have been developing this year is an education resource for 10-14 year old students based on the New Zealand school curriculum. The working title for this resource is *The Last Ocean – Celebrating the Ross Sea, Antarctica*. The resource links to our website and is divided into several chapters covering the geography, climate, wildlife and human aspects of the region.

The resource will be available to download as a .pdf from our website by late September 2011 and we are currently seeking funding to print and distribute 1200 hard copies to schools across New Zealand. If anyone out there has sponsorship ideas, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Petition nearing 1,000 signatures



Our [online petition](#) at Change.org continues to do well. Have you signed? Shared with friends? The petition is an important contribution to the political side of our campaign and the more signatures we get, the better.

We are specifically asking the New Zealand Government to phase out fishing in the Ross Sea and promote the establishment of a comprehensive no-take marine reserve for the entire Ross Sea continental shelf and slope. It only takes a minute to [sign](#) and you do not have to receive further correspondence from Change.org.

Peter Young talks penguins with Campbell Live

In July Peter was interviewed by Jendi Harper from the Campbell Live show, a popular current affairs show in New Zealand. The interview ran on August 8 and has had several thousand additional views via the Campbell Live website since then. [Watch Pete's story](#). Pete's interview came after a juvenile Emperor penguin came ashore north of Wellington and became a media sensation.



With all the attention surrounding this real life "Happy Feet" we saw an opportunity to show people that life is imitating animation in more ways than one – the Happy Feet movie has a strong environmental message about ecosystem impacts from fishing in Antarctic waters. Many people might still be surprised to hear that this is a very real threat for places like the Ross Sea. Read more about the [real Happy Feet's story](#) on our blog.

We're blogging!

On the topic of the blog – have you seen [ours](#) lately? It has been overhauled in the past two months and is looking great. The blog is a wonderful way to keep in touch with us between newsletters and we try to post something new every week.

Recent highlights have been articles from our US partners [Dave Ainley](#) and [Cassandra Brooks](#). We also loved [this short video](#) from some keen young Last Ocean fans in Busan, South Korea.

Dave Dobbyn auctions photo for the Last Ocean

Recently iconic NZ musician Dave Dobbyn (whose interview appeared in our last newsletter) had one of his Antarctic photos auctioned online with all proceeds going towards the Last Ocean Charitable Trust. The photo went for \$561 dollars. Awesome Dave – as with everything we get – you can guarantee it will be spent wisely and well.

Dave visited the Ross Sea region last year as an 'Artist to Antarctica'. During [his interview](#) with Peter Young, he spoke with conviction about the beauty of the Ross Sea and the need to protect this remarkable place.

Meet the team – Cassandra Brooks, Last Ocean USA Coordinator

Cassandra Brooks joined the Last Ocean in early 2010 to assist the team in outreach, science writing, and research. She is a marine scientist and science writer who's worked in marine science and public outreach for fifteen years. Her writing and research focuses on marine resource exploitation worldwide, from local New England Rivers to the remote reaches of Antarctica.



During her graduate work at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, Cassandra studied life history of the Ross Sea Antarctic toothfish, or Chilean sea bass, one of the most lucrative and challenged fisheries on earth. Her research provided information on their age, growth and spatial distribution, all revealing the vulnerability of this species. At that time, she hoped her work could help contribute to a marine protected area in the Ross Sea.

Soon after finishing her toothfish studies, she returned to school for Science Communication at University of California, Santa Cruz and has since dedicated her life to writing and producing media about critical ocean issues, including the protection of the Ross Sea, Antarctica.

Last Ocean locals: the Weddell Seal



The Weddell seal (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) is a truly iconic Ross Sea local. These are the large, round seals you often see in Antarctic wildlife documentaries. They may look cuddly but these guys can reach 3.3m in length and a hefty 600kg!

Weddell seals are circumpolar in their distribution but the colonies near McMurdo Sound in the Ross Sea are in fact the southern-most breeding mammals in the world. They actively feed on squid and fish (including toothfish) and are an integral member of the ecosystem.

Recent research by New Zealand scientists has shown that the Weddell seal-toothfish relationship is vital to the functioning of the wider Ross Sea ecosystem, as explained in this short video:



Give directly to the Last Ocean campaign

The Last Ocean Charitable Trust relies completely on donations. If you feel our campaign for the protection of the Ross Sea is important, you can help keep us on track by making a secure donation online [here](#). This is tax deductible for New Zealand residents.



Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter. Sadly this is farewell from me, my 6-month contract with the Last Ocean Charitable Trust is up and I want to extend a personal thank-you to all our supporters that have come on board since February. I have enjoyed sharing the magic of the Ross Sea with you and I hope to stay involved with the Trust's social media projects in my spare time.

The Last Ocean journey is far from over and I hope you will continue to follow our campaign in the coming months. The big focus for the Trust now is on getting the Last Ocean documentary finished and ready for distribution in 2012. The documentary will be a key tool for bringing the Last Ocean story to as many people as possible. Stay tuned as we move forward with the development of this exciting project!

If you have any comments, feedback or story ideas, please email info@lastocean.co.nz

Happy oceans,



Kate Beer, Coordinator

