

CREATIVITY : HERITAGE : EDUCATION

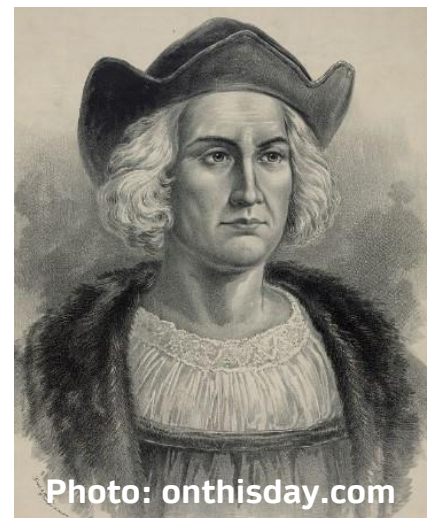
LET'S CELEBRATE DISCOVERY DAY IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

Monday, 17 May 2021 will be celebrated as Discovery Day in the Cayman Islands as a national holiday. Falling on the third Monday in May every year, Discovery Day commemorates the sighting of the Sister islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman by Christopher Columbus in 1503. It is a day on which Caymanians celebrate their heritage.

The History of Discovery Day in the Cayman Islands

Christopher Columbus and his men, on their fourth voyage to the Americas, were the first to sight Cayman Brac and Little Cayman on 10 May 1503. This gave Spain a claim to the islands by right of discovery. Columbus did not stop at these islands, but he named them 'Las Tortugas' which means 'The Turtles', due to the large number of sea turtles the crew spotted as they sailed past.

Ever since that day, the social and economic history of the Cayman Islands have been tied to the marine turtles. Because the turtles could be carried on ships as a live meat source, the Cayman Islands became a regular stop for ships sailing the Caribbean. The impact of the turtles on the development of the Islands is illustrated by the prominent role the turtle plays as a symbol of the Islands – in its currency, national seal and flag. The turtle continues to influence our heritage because of the land-based operation of the Cayman Turtle Farm in Grand Cayman. However, the present turtle population in the waters of all three Cayman Islands is only a shadow of what was once considered the major nesting ground of the Green Sea Turtle, *Chelonia mydas*, in the Caribbean.



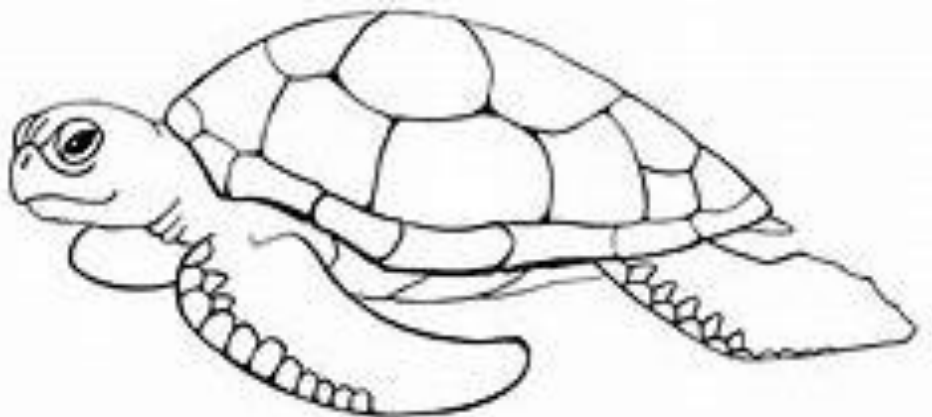
The Green Sea Turtle

The Green Sea Turtle is a truly global species, occurring across the tropics and subtropics. They nest in at least 80 countries. The Green Sea Turtle is one of the largest sea turtles and are in fact named for the greenish color of their cartilage and fat, not their shells. They consume large amounts of algae and live to around 80 years old.

Females show an incredible behaviour, returning to the beaches where they hatched to lay their own eggs! Females can lay more than 100 eggs in each nest, and all hatchlings will emerge from the nest at the same time, scurrying towards the sea in what is commonly known as a “nest explosion”.

Unfortunately, the Green Sea Turtle is suffering a drastic population decline. Classified as endangered, green turtles are threatened by overharvesting of their eggs, hunting of adults, being caught in fishing gear and loss of nesting beach sites. There are a number of conservation programmes here in the Cayman Islands, as well as in other countries, to protect local nesting turtles, but there are also international treaties and agreements to stop hunting and trade, drive public awareness and establish marine protected areas.

Source: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/species/green-turtle>





Created by Horatio Esteban, Cayman Brac artist and sculptor, donated by Linton Tibbetts

The Christopher Columbus Gardens, Cayman Brac

To celebrate 500 years of recorded history, during the Cayman Islands Quincentennial celebrations in 2003, a new park, Christopher Columbus Gardens, was opened on Cayman Brac and now enhances the area adjacent to the Aston Ruddy Centre on top of the Bluff. More than 800 tiles with the names of past and present residents surround a central monument depicting stages of island life. Nearby is a Sister Islands' "Wall of Distinction," bearing 500 names of persons who contributed to the well-being of the Sister Islands. A monument depicting Columbus sits prominently on a small rise. Trails lined by natural trees border two caves.

Source: <http://www.dlp.gov.ky/portal/pls/portal/docs/1/1061574.PDF>



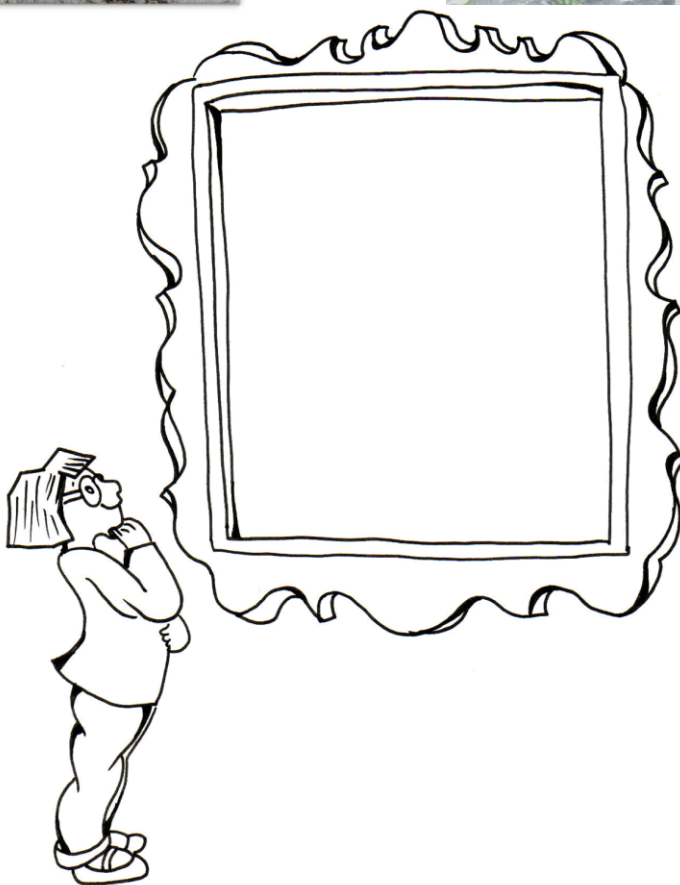
Wall of Distinction



Monument at Columbus Gardens

Art for Young Artists

Simone Scott, a Cayman Brac artist, took a photo of a monument at the Christopher Columbus Gardens, and then, using the photo later at home, she painted the monument. You may want to use her idea to paint something in your favorite park.



Christopher Columbus

Born

1451

in Genoa



Columbus set sail

August 3, 1492

The Ship made landfall on

Oct 12, 1492

on one of the Bahamian Islands

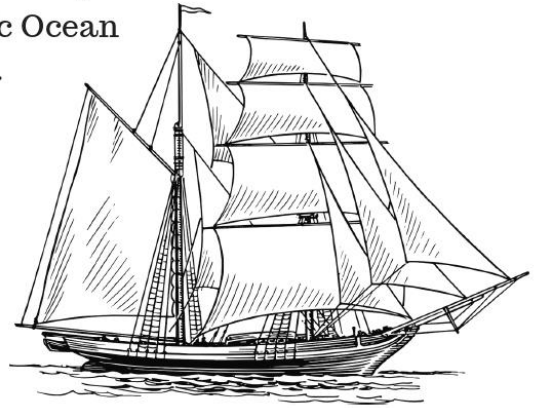
Columbus Day is celebrated on the

2nd Monday

in October

4

Columbus made trips
across the Atlantic Ocean
from Spain.



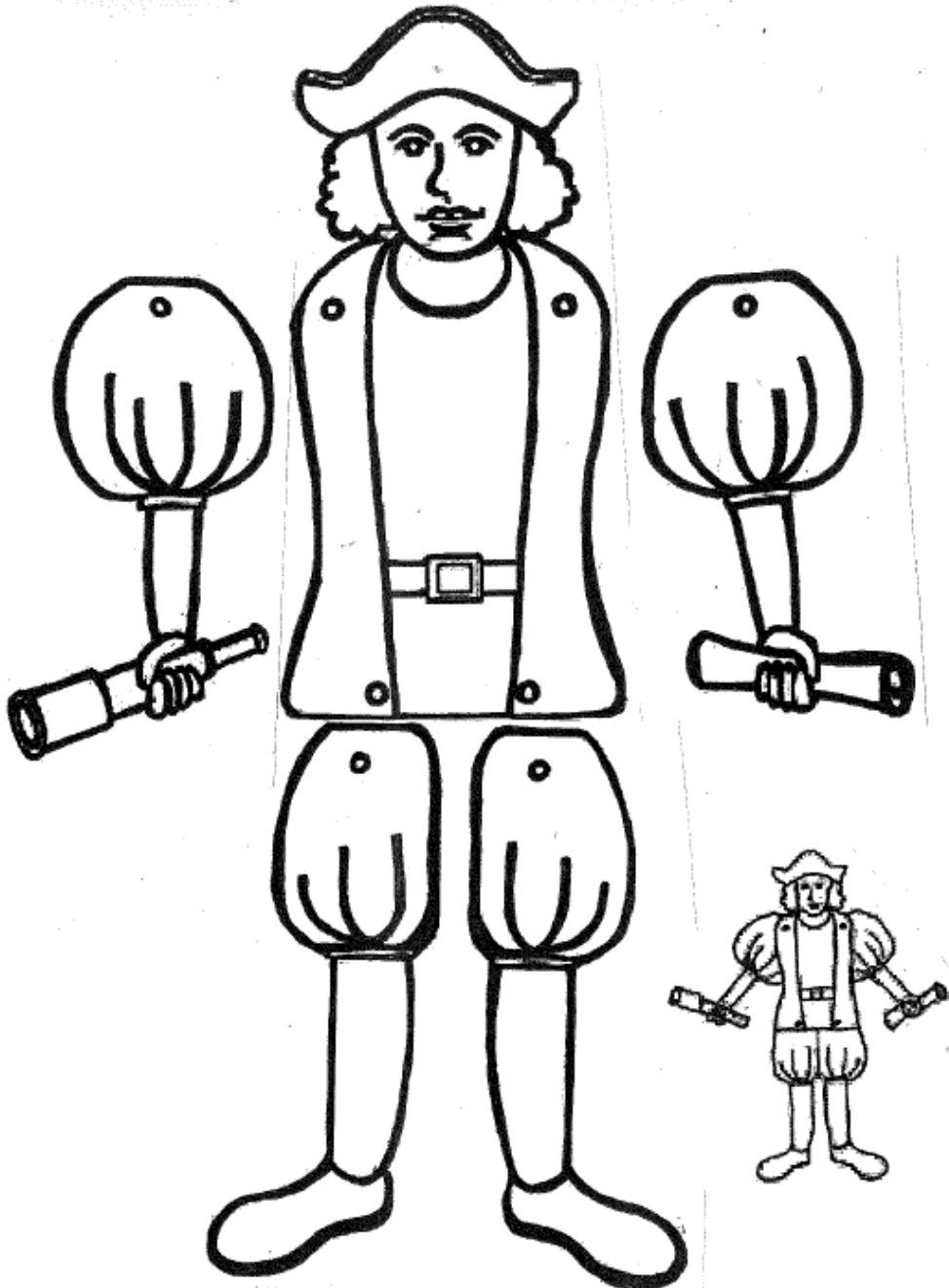
First Trip in 1492 followed by
trips in 1493, 1498 & 1502



In 1502 Columbus went on his last
trip across the Atlantic. He made
it to Panama.

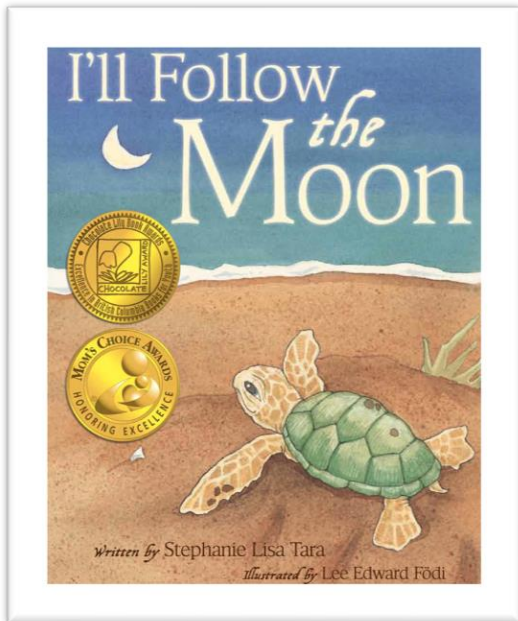
A Christopher Columbus Paper Doll

Directions: Cut out the 4 parts of the paper doll. Glue the parts to heavy card or the side of a cereal box. Cut around the shapes again. Being very careful, open the 8 tiny circles with the tip of a small nail or other pointed object to make holes. Ask someone in your family for 4 prong paper fasteners they may have at their desk or at their office. Attach the arms and legs to the body using the prongs. Now you can move Columbus's arms and legs! Take him with you on an adventure to discover something new around your house and your yard!

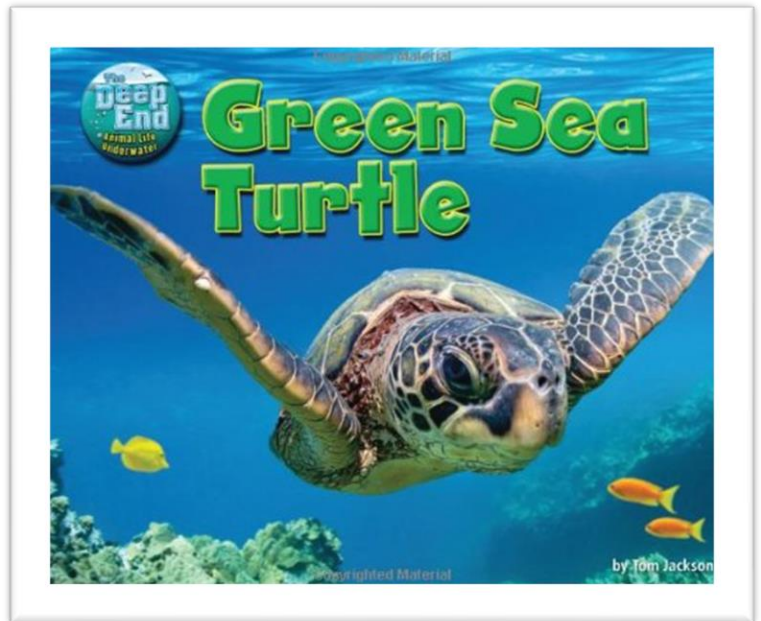


Christopher Columbus

Recommended Reading for You!



I'll Follow the Moon by Stephanie Lisa Tara
A very sweet book about a sea turtle hatchling.



Green Sea Turtle (Deep End: Animal Life Underwater) by Tom Jackson
Learn about the diet, life cycle, behaviour and habitat of sea turtles.



Grace the Green Sea Turtle by Rebecca Johnson
Follow Grace, a charming green sea turtle, on an important journey through the water.



Green Sea Turtles by Michael Molnar
Explore the exotic world of the Green Sea Turtle and each stage of its life cycle.