

## December – Festa de Lemanjá

This festival celebrates the goddess of the sea and around the world she is known in many different forms. The legend of Lemanjá, Yemoja or Yemaya comes originally from Nigeria and through the slave trade spread to Central America, Haiti and Cuba. This goddess was the mother of all waters on the earth, in her river goddess form she flows forcefully into the sea protecting all fishermen, as the goddess of fresh springs she rolls over in her sleep and gentle streams of water gush around her. In the Arctic she is known as Sedna and is honoured by the Inuit people. If too many fish or young marine animals are killed, Sedna calls the sea creatures to her underwater home keeping them safe from being caught. A shaman or medicine man must journey to her huge stone house on the ocean floor and untangle her long 'seaweed' hair. If Sedna is pleased with the result she will allow fishing to begin again! It is said that she controls the ecological balance and food supply in the Arctic Ocean. Sea goddesses are said to also exist in Japan and Scandinavia where they appear as beautiful women similar to mermaids.

The Beavers could create a huge frieze depicting the beautiful sea goddess, perhaps using wool and string to make her long seaweed hair, natural objects such as shells and stones for her features, adding shiny paper, tinfoil and glitter for her 'mermaid' tail. They might also like to include the many sea creatures that share her watery home!

The Beavers could think about mermaids and do some colouring - there are lots of mermaid themed colouring sheets, similar to the ones below, available on the internet. Check out [www.hellokids.com](http://www.hellokids.com)

