

The Creek to Coral Echo

Issue. 3

Season. January

2008



Creek to Coral

This edition of the Creek to Coral Echo reflects back on the achievements that the Creek to Coral program experienced in 2007, including the success of the 'Capturing our Catchment' art competition, development of the Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) and the announcement that the Townsville City Council has become one of the first Reef Guardian Councils supported by GBRMPA.

In 2008 we will build upon these achievements and move forward to deliver many more exciting and innovative events using the tools of community education and involvement to improve total water cycle management in our city.

Upcoming events which Creek to Coral is proud to support include the Smart Home and Lifestyle Sustainability Expo, the Sustainable Cities School art competition, and the 2008 International Youth Coastal Conference. These events are an excellent opportunity to get involved, meet new people, and support your community. For more information about these great events log onto www.creektocoral.org or you can also contact us on creektocoral@townsville.qld.gov.au.

The dedicated team at Creek to Coral would like to wish you a happy and prosperous new year and for all your ongoing support and participation in the Creek to Coral Program. We look forward to working with you all again this year.



Events

2nd February 2008

World Wetlands Day Event

Learn about our local environment by participating in a free catchment tour.

23rd – 24th February 2008

Smart Home and Lifestyle Sustainability Expo.

Visit Townsville's first expo showcasing products and services for use in homes, offices and gardens that save water, reduce waste or provide cleaner energy. Held both days in the Townsville City Council Chambers Forecourt between 10am-4pm. Free admission to everyone, so come check it out.

19th to 22nd October 2008

2008 International Youth Coastal Conference

The conference will be held in Townsville and will seek to raise awareness about protecting and enhancing our coastal environments.

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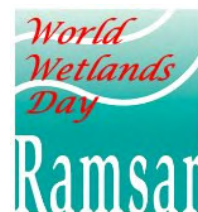
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A combined Townsville/Thuringowa and State Government (infrastructure-based) initiative to maintain and enhance our healthy waterways in the coastal dry tropics.

Townsville City Council is a Reef Guardian Council!

Townsville City Council is proud to reveal that it has become one of the first Reef Guardian Councils announced by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Reef Guardian Councils is an innovative program which aims to protect and conserve the Great Barrier Reef for future generations by encouraging best environmental practice at the local government level. Improvement in land based management practices will lead to increased water quality for the Great Barrier Reef. This will be achieved through:

- Identifying best environmental practices in daily operations and other core business of council.
- Identifying best environmental practice principles in land use and infrastructure planning.
- Providing locally relevant environmental communication and education programs for staff and the community.

For more information about Reef Guardian Councils, jump on the web to

<http://www.soe-townsville.org/reefguardian/index.html> or

http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/key_issues/water_quality/reef_guardian_councils



The 2008 International Youth Coastal Conference

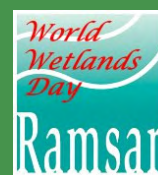
The 2008 International Youth Coastal Conference will be held 19th to 22nd October in Townsville on the Great Barrier Reef. The conference seeks to raise awareness about the importance of protecting and enhancing our coastal environments, communities and industries through education and involvement of the next generation of leaders. The key educational strategy will focus on a 'kids teaching kids' model where student delegates prepare 40 minute workshops to present to their peers at the conference on a marine or coastal topic, relevant to their local area. This process involves students working with expert mentors many months prior to the event, and results in children who are motivated, have high self-esteem and respect for others and the environment.

All primary and secondary schools across the world are invited to attend this conference. Students and teachers from up to 100 schools will attend the 2008 event, with the age range of students approximately 11 to 17 year olds. For more information about supporting or attending this years youth coastal conference please call Cathy Oke +61 3 9329 3736 or email:

cathy@fire-starter.com.au. Alternatively visit the website at <http://www.onelifeoneworldourfuture.com/index.php?pageid=301>



World Wetlands Day 2008



World Wetlands Day is celebrated each year on 2 February. It marks the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971.

Free Catchment Tour!

Tour the catchment from the Dam to the Town Common and improve your knowledge and understanding of our local environment. Activities will include water quality and water buy sampling demonstrations, and discussions by expert speakers. Lunch will be provided.

WHEN: 2nd February 2008

TIME: 10am – 4pm

WHAT TO BRING: Hat, sturdy closed footwear, sunscreen and water bottle.

RSVP (by Tuesday 29th January) or contact CVA's Mick Brady on 4721 4077 or mbrady@cva.org.au

Community- Based Social Marketing Professional Workshops

On January 9th -11th 2008, the Office of Sustainability supported by the Townsville City Council, hosted introductory and advanced professional development workshops to community members wishing to learn more about Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) and how it can be applied to foster sustainable behaviour change. The workshops were conducted by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr, the creator of CBSM who specialises in the design and delivery of community environmental programs. Drawing on his extensive experience in environmental psychology and social psychology, Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr taught how to effectively market sustainable behaviour change at the community level.

The introductory workshop focused on concepts discussed in his book *'Fostering Sustainable Behaviour – An introduction to Community-based Social Marketing'*. Doug began the session by highlighting how CBSM can compliment and build upon the limitations of traditional information-based campaigns, with past research indicating little support for the assumption that increasing public knowledge on sustainability issues will lead to the adoption of the desired behaviour. As an alternative, CBSM utilises past empirical findings with public consultation to identify the barriers and benefits to engaging in the specific activity, in order to effectively capture the underlying motivations responsible for behaviour change. A strategy is then designed using a range of behaviour change 'tools' such as prompts, public commitment and social norms to encourage benefits and minimise barriers in performing the behaviour.

In an interactive session, Doug demonstrated through a step-by-step process how to design, implement and evaluate an effective CBSM program by getting workshop participants to create a program designed to reduce the use of 'weed and feed' garden fertiliser. The advanced two-day workshop built upon the knowledge gained from the introductory session, with participants working with Doug through the design steps for their own CBSM program. In both sessions, Doug provided examples from his own experience of the versatility in which the social marketing techniques could be implemented, offering practical advice in ways to engage and empower the community to make sustainable changes.

CBSM is increasingly being used by governments and corporations to change people's behaviours towards more sustainable alternatives, having been applied to reduced energy use, water use, recycling, air pollution and uptake of public transportation. The Office of Sustainability intends to incorporate the techniques of CBSM in our community education and involvement programs including Creek to Coral, Citisolar and Greening. To read Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr's book online, visit <http://www.cbsm.com/>.



Professor Sam Ham – Thematic Interpretation Workshops

During the 14th – 17th January, Professor Sam Ham of the University of Idaho visited Townsville to conduct a series of Thematic Interpretation (TI) workshops to address members supporting Townsville City Council's Citisolar, Creek to Coral and Greening projects. Professor Ham's visit built upon earlier community-based social marketing (CBSM) workshops, offering courses in both ecotourism and sustainability that aimed to assist in the understanding of how to develop a whole of community awareness and 'capacity to act' to uptake sustainability initiatives.

Thematic Interpretation focuses on enhancing tourist's experiential learning by inspiring people to make meanings and form connections with the places they visit. Professor Ham emphasised to both groups that it is better to communicate messages through themes rather than topics and 'facts' to shift attitudes and instigate behaviour change. By communicating themes and providing experiential learning, you are planting seeds (beliefs) that can ultimately influence (reinforce or change) how people think, feel and behave.

The core message delivered by Sam was that people tend to forget isolated facts, but if people feel capable and motivated to process and elaborate on the information presented, they are more likely to internalise themes and messages. Powerful interpretation that can impact attitudes and behaviour need to follow the EROT or TORE model of communication which is linked to the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasive Communication. The information provided must be enjoyable, highly relevant to the target audience, organised and thematic. This can be achieved by using active phrasing of messages and incorporating the use of metaphors, symbolism, analogies and contrast within themes to capture audience attention and provoke thinking and elaboration.

Both CBSM and TI workshops captured international interest with a number of workshop participants attending from around the world wanting to learn more about sustainable behaviour change including Nopparat Kaipeth, Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), Thailand, Daniel Guo from Guide Map, China, Ovini Bokinin from Tavua Town Council, Fiji, and Primož Pipan, from the University of Primorska, Slovenia.

Sam Ham has worked extensively in Australia, as a leading consultant in planning, research and training for Tourism Tasmania, assisting in the development of products and training materials for the interpretation of Tasmania's nature, heritage, food and wine.



'Capturing our Catchment' Art Competition – Winner Announced!

The Creek to Coral Programme, in partnership with the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, recently organised a school and community environmental art competition. The theme of the competition was 'Capturing our Catchment' – where entrants showcased our regions catchments and expressed how they are affected by human activities such as agriculture, grazing, industry and urbanisation.

Many students participated in Creek to Coral Eco-Catchment Tours of our area, and with the willing support of teachers, local artists Madeleine Challender, Kath Cornwall, Emma Hill and Elly Murrell helped students develop artworks for public display. The competition was a great success with 11 local schools and the community group Kith and Kin Association contributing artwork for concurrent exhibitions at the Perc Tucker Gallery and The Knowledge Centre (Northtown) during August and September 2007, organised by Marg Naylor at the Gallery

The winner of the competition was Wulguru State School's year 3CL class with their collection titled 'Water Through the Trees'. The teacher of Class 3CL, Leann Clausen, encouraged her students to design their own collaged raindrops that represented places where water could be stored and how we as a community could help save water. In an award ceremony held at Wulguru State School, Cr Tony Mooney congratulated students for their efforts in raising awareness about the importance of water conservation and presented them with a fish tank and a \$100 voucher to buy native fish.

The "Capturing our Catchment" Competition was an excellent opportunity for students and community members to showcase their artwork and gain insight into the importance of conserving our local waterways, rivers, creeks and wetlands, and we are pleased that so many took the opportunity to join this contest. We look forward to more participation from students and other community groups in our programmes this year in 2008!

<http://www.creektocoral.org/ven/contest/catchment.html>

Waves of Change: Women Youth and the Sea by Dylan Furnell

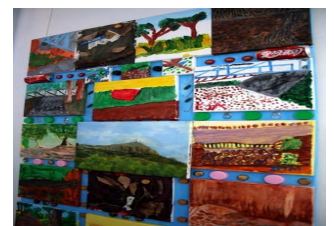
During the month of November 2007, Damien Sweeney and Dylan Furnell attended the Pacem In Maribus conference in Malta. This conference titled Waves of Change: Women Youth and the Sea was held by the International Oceans Institute. This conference discussed the issues of engaging women and youth in the issues of Ocean Governance. Dylan Furnell presented the Australian Youth Declaration to the Youth Ocean Parliament; this document was created out of the second Youth Ocean Forum held in Townsville May, 2007. The declaration was well received by the participants of the youth parliament and some aspects were included in the Youth Ocean Parliament declaration that was presented back to the main conference on the final day. Both Damien and Dylan said the conference was a valuable learning experience, but both acknowledged that much more has to be done to enrol women and youth in the issue of global ocean governance.



Photo: From left to right –
Damien Sweeney, Dylan Furnell,
Robin South and Posa Skelton



'Capturing our Catchment' Art Competition Winners Class 3CL from Wulguru State School proudly show off their raindrops with Cr Tony Mooney at the awards ceremony.



'Capturing our Catchment' Art Submissions from Wulguru State School (left) and the Kith and Kin Association (right) on display at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery.



SCHOOL NOTES



REEF GUARDIAN SCHOOLS UPDATE

Late 2007 saw the presentation of the Reef Guardian Awards, and as always, Townsville was well represented. St Patrick's college by the Sea took out the "Community Connection" award for its environmental radio messages and Townsville Central State School received the "Action and Adventures" award for their catchment to coast wetlands study. Also picking up Ripples of Change awards this year were Kelso State School to study the Ross River, Heatley Secondary for a wetland study and Willows State School for a community education program.

There are plenty of exciting projects planned for this year, and as always we hope to further our partnerships with individuals and organisations who are working at protecting our environment and reef. We are looking forward to a huge 2008 in Reef Guardians as this year is the "International Year of the Reef" (<http://www.iyor.org/>). Stay tuned for exciting events throughout the year – as we all participate and "Do our bit to look after it".



St Patrick's students proudly display their winners cheque and certificate. Also in the photo are teacher Marie Roman and Principal Kathleen Park along with GBRMPA's David Osborne and Megan Sperring.

Thai Visitor

This January Creek to Coral was proud to host Nopparat ('Nop') Kaipeth from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), Bangkok, Thailand. Nop is a project manager and consultant within the Division of Conservation and Restoration where he works to establish Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPAs) for his region. Past projects have included establishing MCPAs on the middle coast of Thailand-Chomporn province in order to manage public conflict surrounding the development of steel industries and the protection of the region's largest sand dune reservation. In 2007 Nop established MCPAs on the south coast of Thailand – Trang province in order to effectively monitor coastal resource use by local fishery villages, industry, tourism, and local government.



Picture: Noppart Kaipeth

During his time at TCC, NOP worked closely with the team from Integrated Sustainability Services (ISS) to learn more about the Creek to Coral program and our Eco-Catchment Education tours. Nop also attended the CBSM and Thematic Interpretation workshops on offer earlier this month with Dr Doug McKenzie- Mohr and Professor Sam Ham. In 2008, Nop plans to apply what he has learnt from the ISS team, CBSM and TI to develop a Thai version of the Creek to Coral program aimed towards the rehabilitation of Trang's coastal ecosystem environment. The team at Creek to Coral look forward to continuing on with our partnership with Nop by exchanging our knowledge and experience in program development and wish him every success in establishing future programs in Thailand.

International Solar Cities Congress Schools competition

The Office of Sustainability and the Townsville City Council supported the Solar Cities Schools Competition to be held in conjunction with the 3rd International Solar Cities Congress, Adelaide 17th – 21st February 2008. The main purpose of the competition was to raise the profile of sustainable city design amongst school students and showcase young people's skills in tackling sustainability issues. Townsville primary and secondary students were encouraged to participate and design a 'Sustainable City of the Future' focusing on water management issues, energy demand, land use and biodiversity. Creek to Coral educators supported local student entries by going to schools and presenting a Sustainable Townsville powerpoint which highlighted the importance of ecologically sustainable building design, water quality management and renewable energy alternatives.

Pimlico State High School's 2007 Year 9 Geography class entry was judged the overall Australian winner with the major prize being a 1Kw solar system donated to the school. The theme of the report and visual presentation was titled 'Renew, Maintain, Sustain' and investigated sustainability issues in the suburb of Pimlico. Students conducted 6 weeks of research and fieldwork to investigate the use and practical application of sustainable technologies such as solar energy, wind energy, water efficiency, space cooling and ventilation in Pimlico residences. Students then compiled a report outlining their recommendations for making Pimlico a more sustainable suburb. Congratulations to the students of Year 9 Geography for their great effort and participation!

In response to the positive feedback by schools participating in the international competition, the Office of Sustainability has decided to run a local sustainable cities art contest giving students the opportunity to express their vision of a sustainable Townsville. The competition is open to primary and secondary students and entrant's artwork will be on public display at the Smart Home and Lifestyle Sustainability Expo held at the Townsville City Council forecourt on the 23rd-24th February.

Committed to sustainable design practices, Replas Queensland has generously offered to award the winning entrant with a recycled plastic park bench for their school grounds. Replas takes an innovative approach to reducing landfill by recycling plastic waste materials into a number of plastic products including outdoor furniture, signage, planking, traffic control and bollards. Recycling plays an important role in achieving sustainable communities by reducing natural resource use and this unique prize will help promote this message to the winning students. Replas will award the prize at the Smart Home and Lifestyle Sustainability Expo where they will have an exhibition on display. For more information about Replas, jump on the web to http://www.replas.com.au/about_profile.shtml.



If you would like to submit an art entry the deadline for registration is Monday 18th February 2008.

If you would like more information on this contest please contact Dylan Furnell on 07) 4727 9520

or email: Dylan.furnell@townsville.qld.gov.au.

Source: Side picture created by Yr 9 Geography, Pimlico State High School. Picture (far left) Pimlico students who completed the final project - Left to Right: Alex Nelson, Nick Thomason, Shaun Pidsley, Mitchell Rawlins, Kiralee Bebernitz and Carly Hall

Reef Check News

Education for Conservation!

Reef Check Australia's Schools program for young people (5 to 15 years old) will be launched through participating schools in the Townsville area at the beginning of this year. The activities are designed to provide an exciting and interactive way of achieving a large number of Science and SOSE curriculum-based outcomes while educating students about the importance of coral reefs and sustainable development.

Learning Objectives of Reef Check educational materials include:

- Increase interest and knowledge of the natural processes of coral reefs.
- Develop understanding of how humans interact with the environment
- Develop understanding about how to achieve sustainable coral reef management and why this is important to humans and economic development.
- Foster connection and raise stewardship of Australia's coral reefs through participation and engagement with Reef Check programs.

The curricula based program consists of two units:

- Unit one informs students about biological and ecological aspects of coral reef organisms and ecosystems whilst raising awareness about sustainable practices in urban areas.
- Unit two allows students to practice monitoring techniques that are used in Reef Check surveys. Classroom surveys using photo cards reflecting real data allow students to monitor different sites to then compare and discuss the differences between each site. This unit is an excellent opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate monitoring skills while gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of monitoring and managing our natural resources.

Supporting partners of the Reef Check Australia's school programme are Creek to Coral and The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The program will tie in with existing Creek to Coral and GBRMPA educational activities to provide school students with a deeper appreciation of the overall protection and conservation efforts to manage our natural environments. For more information jump onto Reef Check Australia's Website <http://www.reefcheckaustralia.org> or email education@reefcheckaustralia.org.

Belgian Gardens State School Silver Tie Gala

On December 6th 2007, students and teachers from Belgian Gardens State School hosted a Silver Tie Gala exhibiting artwork students had made from driftwood constructed to represent various musical instruments. The Gala was opened with a great performance by students singing about the ocean and marine life. Cr Tony Mooney presented art awards to students; praising them for their conservation efforts and donated \$200 to help support Belgian Gardens State School achieve future sustainability programs in 2008. Food and refreshments were served by students down in the revegetated gully, giving community members an opportunity to view the artwork and talk with students about their inspiration behind their piece. Belgian Gardens State School participate in a number of environmentally friendly programs, including Creek to Coral Catchment tours, the Reef guardian Schools program and also encourage students to participate in their Rowes Bay Junior Rangers program where students collect rubbish and monitor sea grass growth at Rowes Bay Beach. Congratulations Belgian Gardens students and teachers for all your great efforts!



You make a difference



Global Eco-Tourism Conference 2007

Madeleine McGann, supported by the Great Tropical Drive, Townsville City Council, Reef HQ and Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM, as well as her family and the Cathedral School, was able to attend the Global Ecotourism Conference held in Oslo, Norway, on May 14-16 2007. She was accompanied by her teacher, Judy Newman, and attended as a delegate for the youth of Townsville. During her time in Oslo, madeleine kept a diary of her experiences in attending the conference.

Day 1: We attended the opening ceremony where we met many people representing many different countries, agencies, government groups and age groups. Her Royal Majesty Sonja, Queen of Norway also graced the group with her presence. Opening speeches included Helen Bjornay (Minister for Environment, Norway), Aili Lamark (President Sami Parliament), Lone Lamark (Project Manager, Ecotourism Manager, Norway), David Sollitt (Executive Director, TIES), Sylvie Lemmet (Director UNEP-DP), Leilei Lelaulu (President, Counterpart International).

After the opening session, I attended my first seminar titled *Ecotourism in Protected Areas*. The 1st speaker was David Mabunda of South Africa National Parks, he spoke about vision, development and future management of their world heritage listed park areas. It was very interesting to hear about something so foreign to me and still be able to relate it to my own country and city. Other keynote speakers included Lisha Mulquenny of GBRMPA and Tony Charters of Ecotourism Australia who spoke about the direction of ecotourism in Australia and the importance of the Great Barrier Reef.

Day 2: One of the seminars I attended was *Addressing poverty and sustainable development through ecotourism*. The 1st speaker was Eugenio Yunis of the UN. He spoke about how sustainable tourism would be a great way of eradicating poverty, providing it was strategised in favour of those in the most need. I thought he was really interesting and wise telling the audience that cooperation and a common understanding were crucial to the proper development of sustainable ecotourism. It made me realise that a combination of ecology, economic business practices and the support of local community are incredibly important to build a sustainable future.

Day 3: This morning was a lot of fun because I was able to conduct a web link up with people in Townsville and France, giving me the opportunity to connect and tell all my friends what I had learnt in Oslo. In the afternoon I presented my speech to the conference delegates. I spoke about what eco-tourism meant to me: learning and understanding through fun and adventurous activities; sharing the wisdom of protecting the planet, its people, flora and fauna. I discussed with the audience the role that youth can play in ecotourism and the development of the youth ecotourism charter – a result of joint student discussions from the Urban Nature-Youth Ecotourism Forum I and II. At the end of my speech people clapped and cheered and I was given a standing ovation. To celebrate the end of a spectacular day, we went sightseeing with friends. I learnt all about Norwegian culture and had a great time. It was sad to say goodbye to all our friends we had met at the conference, and a new country I had learnt to love. Attending the conference was a brilliant experience and I thank all the people who have supported and sponsored me, I learnt so much and I will never forget the experiences, it has truly changed my life. Thankyou.



Madeleine McGann (far left), along with other keynote speakers and conference organisers



Eco- Facts

- Water Hyacinth was originally introduced to Australia as an ornamental aquatic plant.
- Considered a problematic weed, water hyacinth destroys native habitats, depletes water bodies of oxygen, reduces light infiltration and increases biological respiration rates within the river.
- Water Hyacinth evaporates water up to four times faster than an exposed water body.

Science Scene

Coastal Catchment Initiative update

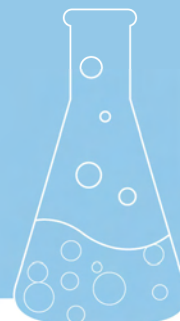
Tasks are nearing completion and others have just commenced to provide input to the draft Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) scheduled for completion in June 2008.

Determining draft environmental values for the waterways in the Black River and Ross River Basins has progressed with a technical panel workshop to identify draft High Ecological Value areas. Community consultation will follow including a survey and workshops.

Water quality monitoring will be carried out again during the wet season to add to the information collected last year. The data will help inform the WQIP and especially the target setting process for sediment and nutrients entering our waterways.

Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines are being prepared for the Townsville region as one of the key implementation actions of the WQIP to address erosion and sediment.

CCI is funded by the Australian Government and managed by Creek to Coral.



Water Hyacinth Watch

Water Hyacinth, Eichhornia Crassipes, is a floating waterweed with a fibrous root system and dark green rounded leaves up to 5 cm in diameter. Flowers are light purple with a darker blue/purple and yellow centre. Water Hyacinth can spread rapidly through waterways and catchments to form dense mats that eventually choke the entire water body. Management of Water Hyacinth growth has been identified as one of the main issues that can negatively impact upon the ecological health of Ross River Weirs. An integrated control program that includes prevention and control (by physical, biological and chemical means) is the most effective management strategy to reduce rampant infestation of this weed. For more information see www.nqwater.com.au

CREEKWATCH NEWS

Volunteer Community Program helping improve water quality from Creek to Coral



CURRENT CREEKWATCH PROJECTS

Your local neighbourhood **Creekwatch** is aimed at involving the local community with their local environment. It is also a great chance to meet new people and see different parts of the Townsville region. **Louisa Creekwatch** is the longest standing project with over six years of water quality data in its database. The team of volunteers has been devoted to improving Louisa Creek's water quality for a long time.

Sach's Creekwatch has also been collecting and analyzing data for over two years. Sach's Creek runs through Oak Valley south west of Townsville. Water quality in Sach's Creek is important to all of us because the creek feeds directly into Ross Dam. The team is made up of committed locals that appreciate the relatively pristine condition of their local creek and wish to preserve this naturally beautiful environment.

Mundy Creekwatch is a more recent initiative. Mundy Creek (sometimes called Captain's Creek) is in the Belgian Gardens/Rowes Bay area. Like all of our Creekwatch projects this one is public driven. Even before the team was formed, locals were requesting the sort of attention to Mundy Creek the program is centred around. Monthly water quality monitoring, creek bank revegetation, and surveying of fauna and flora are what we get up to.

Bluewater Creekwatch is another Creekwatch project. The landowner of the upper reaches of Bluewater Creek, Ron Gordon and the Grade Seven class of Bluewater State Primary School help run this project. We are looking for other volunteers. that live in the Bluewater area, especially those residents backing onto Bluewater Creek.



Quick Tips

- Don't use the creekbank for rubbish disposal
- Don't release your aquarium fish into our local creeks
- Organise a Clean-Up Australia event for you local creek

CreekWatch/ Coastcare Field Trip a Success

On Sunday the 9th of December a CreekWatch/Coastcare field trip was held as part of Coastcare week events. About 40 community members joined us for an enjoyable and educational day of Creekwatching and Coastcaring activities. About 60 people attended the Reef HQ event which included presenting Coastcare awards and Creekwatch T-shirts to dedicated volunteers. Many different groups joined forces to organise the day including the Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM, Creek to Coral, Townsville City Council, the Council of Thuringowa and The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The large number of happy participants on the day demonstrates the benefits of different organisations working together.



Community members (left) participate in water quality testing at Stuart Creek and the Bartel family (right) receive awards and T-Shirts from Dr Russel Reichelt for their participation in the Creekwatch program

Bluewater Scouts Landcaring/CreekWatching

On Sunday the 2nd of December 6 Bluewater scouts and their parents spent an enjoyable and educational morning participating in Landcare and Creekwatch activities. The day started at 9 am at the Bluewater Creek (Bluewater rest area).



Bluewater Scout members spent the first part of the morning learning about the importance of native trees and the negative impacts from weeds. The scouts then enthusiastically planted about 60 trees, to help restore the creek's riparian zone. After morning tea the scouts began Creekwatching activities. This involved catching and identifying the macroinvertebrates (i.e. water bugs) and fish found in the creek. Bluewater Creek is a relatively environmentally healthy creek, with good water quality supporting a variety of aquatic fauna.

The day was organised and run by Leigh O'Neil, CDTLI Reveg Coordinator and Mick Brady, CreekWatch Project Officer with Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA). Bluewater Landcare and CreekWatch are always looking to gain new volunteers to help protect their local environment.

Ross River Network is one of the newest Creekwatch groups and has been operating since late 2006. The Ross River, although heavily impacted by humans, contains a variety of fish species that are important to the fishing community. The local community also benefits from having a healthy river available for recreation.

Bohle Riverwatch is a newly formed group aimed at monitoring the condition of the river, as development in the area progresses. The Bohle River is ecologically and economically significant as it contains large fish habitat areas, important for the fishing industry and the local community.

Creekwatch is constantly looking for volunteers. If you are interested in participating, please give Mick Brady from Conservation Volunteers Australia a call on 4721 4077 or email mbrady@cva.org.au



Green Corps Member Sandy,
Shows Stuart State School Kids a Water Bug.



NQ Water Helps Teach Kids about the Importance of Water

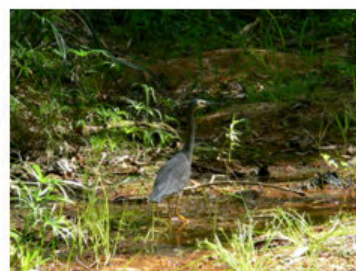
NQ Water assists Sach's Creekwatch by funding the expansion of Sach's Creekwatch. NQ Water has made a major contribution to community involvement.

Sach's Creekwatch is part of a larger program formed through a partnership between Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA) and Townsville City Council. The program focuses on community awareness, education and involvement in the management of our wetlands and waterways from source to sea.

The program supports and partners Creek to Coral by taking a holistic view of water management by looking at the total water cycle including urban components of potable water, sewage treatment, stormwater etc.

Local schools such as Stuart, Rasmussen and Kelso State Primary Schools have been involved in Creek-Watching events such as water quality, water bug and fish monitoring. Other school and community groups can also be involved in these fun and educational events.

<http://www.soe-townsville.org/creekwatch/index.html>



Coast Care Week

Coastcare Week in December 2007 saw many organisations working together with a 'Creek to Coral' perspective in mind. The Coastcare & Creekwatch Tour & Lunch received very good promotional exposure and was very well attended. Conference room 1 at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority was filled to capacity with 60 persons during the presentation of 'Local Hero' medals and Creekwatch Certificates in recognition of current volunteer efforts towards caring for our coastal environments. 22 new volunteers attended the tour and registered their interest in becoming involved. The cooperative involvement of a large number of stakeholders in this event was the key to the day's success. The organisations involved in this event were: Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management; The Council of Thuringowa; The Townsville City Council (Integrated Sustainable Services); Creek to Coral; Conservation Volunteers Australia & The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

In Thuringowa, the Bushland Beach Community and surrounding residents have expressed support for the formation of a Bushland Beach Coastcare Group with 9 residents signing an expression of interest sheet at the Northern Beaches Lions Community Markets on Sunday the 2nd of December. Adam King, the Coastcare Facilitator for the BDTNRM hosted a Coastcare, Seagrasswatch and Creekwatch display stall at the venue. For further information regarding joining this new Coastcare Group or others near you please contact Adam on 47214077.

A major 'Clean Up' of the Coastal Saltpans south of Ross River by Natural Resources and Water & the Port Authority saw large amounts of dumped rubbish removed including many car bodies, domestic waste of all types, as well as truck loads of illegally dumped concrete and car tyres. This area is an important fish habitat link between the lower estuarine Stuart Creek and the upper freshwater section of Stuart Creek which is completely inundated during a major flood event. This event was supported by Oceanwatch.



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Creek to Coral Coordinator Connects

By Chris Manning (A/Coordinator)

Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Creek to Coral Echo. We had a strong and successful year of operations during 2007, and look forward to extending this on into 2008. As the acting Creek to Coral Coordinator it is my pleasure to continue to connect with you in this latest edition of the C2C Echo...

The Community Based Education and Involvement (CBE&I) program is continuing to be popular and successful, with student participation in catchment tours and associated activities in 2007 doubling from numbers in 2006. With able assistance from our partner organisations, participation in activities such as Creekwatch, Seagrasswatch and Reef Check is at an all time high.

The "Capturing our Catchment from Creek to Coral" competition, held in conjunction with the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, proved very successful with students and community members. We were pleased that this competition captured wide media interest in Total Water Cycle Management, a great reflection on the good work put in by so many.

We are also pleased with the release of our new website, creektocoral.org. It has loads of new and interesting information that is regularly updated, so please log on and have a look. We hope you like it!

My final thought for this edition... **Lessons from Geese**
As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an 'uplift' for the birds following. When the lead goose tires, it drops back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position. The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. By flying in a 'V' formation, the whole flock adds 71% extra flying range.

People who share a sense of community (i.e. create partnerships and collaborate)... will get where they are going more easily because they are traveling on the trust of one another.

We invite you to join with us in a collaborative effort to realise the vision of sustainable Total Water Cycle Management throughout our catchment area.