



Rainbow Beach Cooloola Coast COMMUNITY NEWS

Coastcare members now qualified Reef Check volunteers



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- Progress on Bullock Point boat ramp
 - Sign a petition for a full time GP at Rainbow
 - Come and try day for dragon boating!

Cooloola Coastcare volunteers joined a Reef Check Australia expedition and learnt all about our unique reefs in the Great Sandy Strait. Read more on page 18.

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An exciting month to volunteer!

LAST MONTH GAVE the volunteers of Cooloola Coastcare some unique opportunities to explore the different ecosystems of our beautiful coast. First we hopped on a catamaran and tagged along with Reef Check Australia up the Sandy Strait for a closer look at the reefs in this area. Using old maps as far back as twenty years we were able to confirm or deny the existence of different reefs along the strait, as well as marking new ones along the way.



Reef Check's enthusiasm and passion for the environment was infectious and you found yourself getting just as excited as them to spot soft coral amidst the sand.

The most exciting find was along the strait where two volunteers found a long unmarked reef drop off full of life.

Next in the month Cooloola CoastCare drove up to Boonooroo to monitor the quantity and health of seagrass growing in the area. Seagrass is an important food source for marine life big and small including dugongs, sea turtles and sea urchins.

If you want to get involved or have any questions please check out: www.cooloolacoastcare.org.au

Little things count on Fraser

EXPERT NATURALISTS and scientists from Darwin to Melbourne are preparing to converge on Fraser Island (K'gari) at the end of November to identify any living thing that swims, hops, runs, flies or blows in the breeze.

One of the organisers, John Sinclair said that it is vital to learn more about Fraser's eco system so that it can be better protected and managed, which is why FIDO (Fraser Island Defence Organisation), QPWS, and the University of the Sunshine Coast are collaborating to organise one of Australia's biggest BioBlitzs.

"It is difficult to know how to protect plant and animal species that you don't know even occur there and knowing them is critical to the island's World Heritage status," Mr Sinclair said.

UNESCO recognizes the Fraser Island as "an outstanding example of significant ongoing biological processes."

Mr Sinclair said that the response from scientists to scrutinize the 50 square kilometre study area between the beach and Lake Birrabeen so far has exceeded expectations.

He added that the experts who have so far nominated to take part in the BioBlitz are volunteers and are being drawn from naturalists clubs, various societies in biological specialties, museums, and universities.

"One of the scientists who help identify almost 300 species of ants and 57 species of Collembola (springtails) in a CSIRO study of Cooloola soils in the late 1970s will lead a team seeking to identify similar small critters that thrive over K'Gari's soils, while other experts are identifying fungi, mammals, reptiles, birds and spiders amongst other things," Mr Sinclair said.

Base camp for the BioBlitz will be at the University of the Sunshine Coast Dilli Village Fraser Island Research & Learning Centre. The study area extends from the ocean beach to Lake Birrabeen covering all six dune systems and encompassing most ecosystem types.

The BioBlitz will run from November 28 to December 4. While participants will need to meet their own costs, it is a unique opportunity to work with experts from an array of disciplines in a very attractive field setting.

Find out more: www.fido.org.au call John on 0418 650 535.

Free local plants!

FREE LOCAL PLANTS are available at Cooloola City Farm on your latest rates notice, so come in to see our range. City Farm will be open for the Garage Trail Sale on October 22, from 8am-1pm, with lots for sale, so please drop in.

Now is a great time to prepare your garden for the summer, before the weather gets too hot. Summer can be very taxing on even native plants, especially if there is an extended period of dry weather.

Mulching is the best way to help your plants through summer. Some of its many benefits are: it helps retain moisture, replenishes potassium and nitrogen in sandy soils, decays and provides humus which improves the soil, and reduces weed growth.

Keep mulch away from the stem to avoid fungal and other diseases. A good time to mulch is after rain. If your mulching is successful, fertilising should not be required, but if you do fertilise, use an organic fertiliser specifically for natives.

Lastly, encourage deep roots by watering minimally from the beginning. Deep roots will enable the plants to survive on less water.

City Farm, opposite the Community Centre, on Tin Can Bay Road, is open to the public for plant sales on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 8am-3pm, 07 5486 2304, ccfni09@gmail.com, www.cooloolacityfarm.org

Plant of the month is *Melaleuca pachyphylla* (Wallum bottlebrush) - previously known as *Callistemon pachyphyllus* - a shrub to 1.5 metres, flowering right now in its green or red form

Image Mary Boyce



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