A Walk on the “Wild Side” @ Tinaroo EEC

Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre (TEEC) has been getting local kids into the wild and restoring a local patch of forest.

Over 220 Primary, Secondary and University students, along with a host of adult volunteers, have already assisted with the project which sets aside the Activity Reserve for visiting students and members of the public.

The land had been suffering from decades of neglect and contained infestations of Lantana and other feral species. Rubbish has been “appearing” across the site since the 1940’s and a couple of hundred kilograms have been removed by TEEC staff and volunteers.

“Local community involvement was high on our agenda and the neighbours and Rural Fire Brigade were supportive from our very first discussions.”

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Networking with local individuals and agencies happened next. The Barron Catchment Care group, NQ Birdwatchers and local CSIRO scientist Matt Bradford have all given advice and support to the project.

“Barron Catchment Care proved invaluable in securing a grant from the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. This has allowed TEEC to employ a professional team to eradicate a huge number of weeds.” advised Tinaroo EEC Principal, Peter MacGregor.

TEEC has developed a number of programs for use in the reserve that address Sustainability issues of Waste, Biodiversity, Energy and Water.

As the Centre has thousands of students visiting annually, the Reserve will be an important teaching resource.

Article contributed by:
Darryl Dilger
Teacher,
Tinaroo EEC
Daradgee Environmental Education Centre (EEC) continues to inch closer to becoming a more weather (rain) friendly alternative venue for schools with the completion of our new covered area. With Daradgee receiving anything over 6 metres of rain in any given year, creating dry, functional space has always been a priority. It is great to now offer schools the ability to move from one end of the centre’s main facilities hub to the other and stay dry.

Most importantly the 20m x 14m covered area we have provides great space for challenge, problem solving, orientation and evening activities.

This project has been a long time in the making and has only been successful through close collaboration with Daradgee EEC and our Regional Facilities Service Officer. For those interested, the following steps were critical in the structure being built.

**Create a Plan:** About 5 years ago we identified the need to replace our existing covered area and ablutions roof through the maintenance process. All parties agreed that a much bigger picture project was required in our situation, but we needed to collaboratively fund it.

**Get it Designed:** Once the concept was agreed on we went about having plans drawn up and they then sat waiting for the perfect minor works storm - enough money to begin.

**Find the Money:** At the end of the 2012 financial year, FNQ Region came up with some residual dollars, added them in with our special maintenance budget and Daradgee EEC agreed to find the balance. In total, the Region brought in $128,000 and we contributed $90,000.

The end result is great. Everyone is able to function more comfortably and we have more options to select from during our extended, seasonal wet. In all this has been a very successful endeavour and one which has really helped change Daradgee for the better.

**What Next:** Our ongoing priority (for the last 29 years) is to get out of tents and into built accommodation. Once this begins, we will demolish our 10 bed Kingfisher Room which is taking up valuable space under the covered area and we can truly get full use of our new covered area.

Anyone know where there are a few dollars hiding?

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**Article contributed by:**  
**Noel Cristaudo**  
**Principal**  
**Daradgee EEC**

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**Congratulations Silkwood School!**  
**Sustainability in Education Award**

If you attended the Outdoor & Environmental Education Centres’ Staff Conference at the start of this year you will probably remember Kalindi Purtle from Silkwood School who spoke at one of the dinners.

They recently received the 2014 Premier’s Award for Sustainability in Education with their entry “Silkwood SEED - Growing Sustainability”. Well done staff and students.
This year, Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre introduced a new and exciting program to cater for gifted students at primary schools in the Cairns area. The Cairns District Schools Science and Sustainability Enrichment program provides opportunities for students to be further extended and challenged through being involved with the development and facilitation of community sustainability initiatives.

According to Watters and Diezmann's article, (Watters, James J and Diezmann, Carmel M (2003) The gifted student in science: Fulfilling potential. Australian Science Teachers Journal 49 (3) : 46-53), gifted students ‘ have a high sense of social responsibility and frequently have an interest in solving meaningful, significant world or local problems’ . The program implemented by Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre offers students real world projects, working with real experts, with results being presented to a real audience.

Students work with staff from Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre and industry experts in Far North Queensland. Through this Enrichment Program, students gain a working knowledge of the application of science to real issues and first -hand experience in working with community members as well as government and private industry to identify and implement practical solutions to local problems. The students go on to report and present the progress and success of their initiative to a range of organisations and agencies during and at the end of the school year.

All Education Queensland schools are committed to meeting the learning needs of students who are gifted. This program assists school principals in meeting their responsibilities, by increasing the school’s capacity to provide appropriate support options for students who are gifted, by increasing access to programs, expertise, facilities and information beyond the school; and engaging community support and involvement to extend the capacity of the school to engage gifted students in learning that challenges and supports them.

The program facilitator is Sandra Charlton from Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre, working under the guidance of Principal, Louise Carver. Sandra is an experienced senior teacher who also currently co-ordinates the very successful "Excelsior Program: A Whole Community Approach to Sustainability" at Gordonvale State School from which this Enrichment program has been developed.

Annette Ryan, the Gifted Education Program Co-ordinator at Whitfield State School, who has worked across the region with school personnel in developing gifted education programs and policies, along with Helen Underwood, Deputy Principal of Gordonvale State School, who has worked extensively in the area of sustainability and higher order thinking skills, are acting as advisors to this program.

The Enrichment Program promotes academic excellence and intellectual quality with high achieving students working with professionals from a range of industries including but not limited to CSIRO, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Cairns Regional Council, James Cook University and Catchment Groups to conceptualise, develop, implement and assess community-based environmental science projects around the Barron River catchment.

A total of thirteen students from four schools are currently participating in this pilot program in 2014. A key teacher from each school works with the students along with four mentors from James Cook University.

Positions for this program were offered to Year 5 students who met strict selection criteria based on their performance in a UNSW Science ICAS examination, school behaviour
and effort results as well as school homework ratings.

A three day student conference was conducted at the beginning of the program to provide students with an understanding of the program and the expectations required of students along with the necessary scaffolding to ensure each student was able to successfully undertake the program.

A ‘natural immersion’ tour during the conference provided the stimulus for students to identify environmental issues in the Barron River Catchment and then each student undertook a comprehensive project development process to work towards the project objectives in addressing the identified environmental problem.

The program facilitator provides online support and meets with students at their school once a month with the key teacher in each school meeting more regularly. Mentors from James Cook University have also been assigned to each school to provide feedback and guidance. All projects include data analysis by students.

An abstract of some of the current individual student projects is listed below:

- The environmental impact of paper tickets used by tourist companies in Far North Queensland will be investigated along with the feasibility of introducing a paperless ticket system to reduce this impact. An App will be created by the student that can scan ticket QR codes as a way to address this issue.
- The component of plastic cups in school litter will be determined with the objective being to totally remove that component by working with the school tuckshop. Alternative ways of providing frozen milk in the school tuckshop will be investigated.
- Using a GPS, the coverage area of Singapore Daisy will be mapped in an area at Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre. Comparing different control methods as recommended by land management officers from Cairns Regional Council, the student will recommend the most effective management to the school community.
- A literature research will be conducted to summarise findings about the impact of deserted boats on waterways. The student will then map the location of sunken boats in the Barron River and provide this information to the relevant government organisations to persuade them to introduce legislation to enforce the removal of these boats to reduce the environmental impact on the Barron River and other waterways.

TropFutures, James Cook University and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority through the “Ripples of Change’ Awards has provided both financial and inkind support to this program, with Education Queensland’s Cairns District Education Office also supporting this initiative.

Article contributed by:
Sandra Charlton
Teacher
Holloways Beach EEC

Above: Students selected to be part of this year’s Cairns District Schools Science and Sustainability Enrichment program.

Above: Turbidity testing as part of the ‘natural immersion’ tour.
SOMERSET RESIDENTS CONNECT TO THEIR CREEK

Dozens of Somerset residents discovered the beauty of Somerset Dam at the weekend by participating in a free canoeing day.

Somerset Regional Council partnered with the Stanley River Environmental Education Centre to deliver the Healthy Waterways Connect to Your Creek initiative.

Somerset Mayor Graeme Lehmann said Council held two events for the residents to enjoy.

“We held a canoeing day last weekend at Twin Bridges which was well attended and the event on Sunday at Stanley River was great too,” Cr Lehmann said. “Both events would not have been possible without the support and assistance of various community groups. It is great that they all came on board to help educate residents about the natural beauty of our waterways.”

Sunday’s event included various displays from Council, SEQ Water, Queensland Urban Utilities, Kilcoy Historical Society and the Hazeldean Rural Fire Brigade.

Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre (TEEC) has been working in partnership with Maroon Outdoor Education Centre (MOEC), to provide training and assessment for teachers and others in outdoor activity skills. Training courses are planned, delivered and assessed by a TEEC Teacher, and MOEC provides the RTO services. A teacher from Holloways Beach EEC assisted with the Canoe Guide course in November 2013.

Since August 2013, 4 courses have been run. This has included a Kayak Guide course, 2 Canoe Guide courses and a Bushwalking Guide course. A second Bushwalking Guide course is scheduled to run in late May 2014. In second semester 2014 further training courses in canoeing and other activity areas are planned.

There have been 17 participants in the 4 courses run so far, and 11 of these individuals have completed all the assessment requirements and have been issued with Statements of Attainment by Maroon OEC.

Course participants have included:
- Teachers (EQ and private schools)
- SU Chaplains
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Journey Supervisors
- Casual Outdoor Activity Guides
- Outdoor Instructors

Training courses start on Thursday afternoons and run through to Saturday afternoons. The courses involve group discussions, overnight journeys and practical exercises in activity skills, navigation, and radio communications. Participants then have workbooks and practical tasks to undertake after the course to complete their assessment.

Article that appeared in The Somerset Times, 28 May 2014

Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre Principal Sandra Hearnden said she was pleased to open the centre for the event. “It was great to be able to open our doors to the community and partner Council in this great initiative.”

Top & Above: Participants taking part in a Canoe Guide course and Bushwalking Guide course at the Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre.

Left: Paddlers enjoy taking in the sights of Somerset Dam at the inaugural Connect to Your Creek event.

Tinaroo EEC

Phil Harrison
Teacher
Tinaroo EEC

Sandra Hearnden
Principal, Stanley River EEC
Embedding indigenous perspectives into centre operations while also educating visitors regarding biodiversity and sustainability is likely to be an aim at many of Queensland’s Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres. Staff at Holloways Beach EEC have taken on a collaborative project with the Yirrganydji Traditional Owner Group aspiring to do just that.

Botanical Surveys throughout the centre grounds, conducted with magnificent assistance from staff of the Cairns Botanic Gardens and local branch members from the Society for Growing Australian Plants, revealed impressive plant biodiversity and a plethora of species (over 50) used traditionally by Aboriginal people for food, medicine, fibre, shelter, fire, weapons and tools. Extensive and authentic consultation with Yirrganydji Traditional Owners, the sharing of traditional knowledge regarding local biodiversity and the provision of advice regarding indigenous perspectives has added specific local content, credibility and value to the project.

This research and consultation has led to the development of extensive interpretive signage for the traditional plant species within the centre grounds. The signage includes traditional, scientific and common names, traditional usage of that species, modern mainstream usage, a flowering and fruiting calendar, an indication of toxicity, large colour images to assist identification and an insight into traditional life along the Far North Queensland coastline.

To live so successfully and sustainably for tens of thousands of years in this area, the Yirrganydji required an intimate understanding of the local environment. In particular, detailed knowledge of local plants allowed a rich and healthy diet and a sustainable way of life. We think that by better understanding the Yirrganydji connection to country, visitors to HBECC can also better understand and appreciate the local environment. We can all then make better choices that limit our impact upon the environment, form greater respect for the plants and animals living here and the people who came before.

Article contributed by: Chris White
Teacher
Holloways Beach EEC
New Ways of Working at Paluma EEC

This year, we have challenged ourselves to look ‘outside the square’ in the ways we deliver our quality excursion programs.

Here’s a snapshot of three new (for us anyway) ways that we’ve successfully delivered programs so far:

- An extended residential excursion program incorporating an online learning component and school-based lessons
- Adventure and challenge activities at Lake Paluma (Paluma Dam)
- Day trip programs delivered off-site (not at Paluma)

Small Schools Science Project
The North Queensland region contains a large number of small, rural and remote schools where teachers often lack the support in curriculum development that others in larger metropolitan schools may receive. The challenge of offering engaging lessons across the subject areas in multi-level classrooms is ever present, with many students finding themselves studying similar topics each year due to the provision of a limited number of multi-level curriculum cycles.

To assist teachers in meeting these challenges, teachers from the Paluma Environmental Education Centre (PEEC) worked closely with six of these smaller schools to contribute to the development of multi-age Science units that can be delivered across a cohort of schools via a range of mediums. This approach sees traditional classroom lessons scaffolded by weekly online lessons and supported by scientific investigations, field studies and school visits. In the unit offered in first term this year, students from four participating schools also visited PEEC for a three day residential excursion, where their field studies gathered information to assist in completion of their assessment tasks.

Feedback so far has been very positive, with an increased number of schools engaging in the second term’s offering.

Paluma Dam
Paluma EEC has been exploring options for expanded program offerings, this year partnering with a local service provider to deliver challenge and fitness activities at the Paluma Dam. Our teachers work with the accredited fitness coach, who also provides all equipment and safety devices. This allows us to offer these activities without an immediate and expensive investment in both training and gear. The challenge activities are designed to supplement our traditional curriculum offerings, and provide the opportunity for visiting students to experience a day of ‘adventure’ whilst staying at our centre.

Despite the logistical difficulties and added costs involved in transporting a group of students from Paluma to the dam (about an hour’s return drive on a good gravel road, if dry), the experience so far has been very successful, enjoyable and challenging! Our first school took up the program in early April and we have other bookings for this this term. Activities include stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, raft building, swimming and a mini ‘Amazing Race’, where students undertake a range of challenges in small groups. Depending on the age of students, the day can conclude with a walk through the forest, with some spectacular scenery in an almost untouched natural environment.

Magnetic Island
The closure of the Magnetic Island Active Recreation Centre at Picnic Bay impacted on a number of large schools in the Townsville area, who regularly used this facility for residential excursions. The facility is now being managed by Apex Camps, who welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with us in offering curriculum based programs for students staying at their centre.

Following two initial ‘recces’ to the Island, we developed a suite of Science-based day trip programs that we were confident we could deliver around Picnic Bay. At the start of May, our three teachers travelled to the Island for two days of a Year Four program based on the bush stone-curlew. Although listed as endangered or vulnerable in a number of Australian states, the bush stone-curlew is quite abundant in North Queensland and Magnetic Island offers a great location to observe them.

Students completed a rotation of three learning activities where they explored the curlew’s habitat, looked at factors impacting on the curlew’s survival, and observed the birds in the wild. Some students even displayed their skills of camouflage by mimicking the curlew’s natural defence of standing still when faced with a perceived threat! A trip to the local museum allowed students to reflect on the history of Magnetic Island, and to consider how the habitat at Picnic Bay has changed over the years.

Once again, feedback from this visit has been positive, and we look forward to providing further programs on Magnetic Island.

Article contributed by:
Ashley McLachlan
Acting Principal, Paluma EEC
Canoeing (Level 2) and Lightweight Camping units from the Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package (SIS10)
4pm Thursday 28th – 4pm Saturday 30th August 2014

Preamble
In 2014 Tinaroo EEC will continue to work in partnership with Maroon OEC to deliver quality training in outdoor activities for Teachers, Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Journey Supervisors, Chaplains and others who seek to gain formal recognition of skills. Four training workshop are proposed for 2014.

Context
Canoeing (Level 2) provides the knowledge and skills to plan for, participate in and control a canoe on:
- Up to Grade One Water with minimal flow of water.
- Sheltered and calm water with ease of access to shore and open lakes.

Qualifications
The EQ CARAs recommend a teacher leading canoeing and lightweight camping in this environment to possess the following units:
- Apply canoeing skills and Perform deep water rescues
- Demonstrate navigation skills in a controlled environment
- Guide canoeing trips on flat and undemanding water
- Interpret weather conditions in the field
- Minimise environmental impact
- Operate communication systems and equipment
- Use and maintain a temporary or overnight site
- Apply First Aid (must be held by applicant)

Adults other than registered teachers will require additional units for the full Skills Set in Guide Canoeing.

Details
Teachers and other Adults will need to demonstrate competence in leading student groups during this type of activity by:
- Applying the skills briefly outlined in the unit descriptions above.
- Leading student groups in a similar location on a minimum of 3 occasions.
- Personally participating in similar or higher level trips to other venues on at least 3 occasions.
- Conducting and recording the risk assessment process for the trips with students
- Planning and successfully leading the trips with students
- Concluding the activity successfully and recording the process and results.

Note that the weekend at Tinaroo EEC involves both training and assessment of current skill levels, so all participants will need to come prepared to demonstrate their skills. Participants will be camping out each night.

Costs and Enrolment
Cost for the training and assessment is $400 plus GST. Assessment timing is to be negotiated. Enrol online at http://www.maroonoec.eq.edu.au/RTO_Courses.htm and follow the link to Flatwater Canoeing Guide & Camping - TNQ

Further Information
Phil Harrison
Teacher, Tinaroo EEC
Phone: 4095 8382, email: pharr100@eq.edu.au
To access Outstanding Educator Skills Training for your teachers and view our program prices as well as full school subscription membership charges, please go to our website http://www.oestraining.eq.edu.au

We now design customised website solutions for EQ schools

Check out our website to view working demos of our fantastic range of online competency-based teacher training products.

You may be aware of “Websites for Schools” which has been built on the Microsoft Sharepoint software CMS. At OEST, we provide affordable services to build professional customised websites for state schools and education centres throughout Queensland. Please go to the OEST products tab for more information.

School Camps

- School Camps and Day Trips
- Cost effective all inclusive programs
- Personal and social well-being focus
- Sustainability focus
- Leadership and team building
- Education Queensland
- All programs planned and led by our qualified teachers
- Fun, adventurous and active learning in the outdoors
- Aligned with the Australian Curriculum ‘Learning Areas’

www.daradgeeec.eq.edu.au

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www.hollowayseecc.eq.edu.au

School Camps

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Atherton Tablelands

www.marooeecc.eq.edu.au