

Rumbalara

Environmental Education Centre

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Environmental Education News for Central Coast Teachers

Term 3 Week 6 2014

For distribution by the Environmental Education Contact

*Our email newsletters support environmental education in Central Coast schools by providing succinct information about environmental happenings, resources, events, grants etc. Your contributions are welcome. If you are receiving this newsletter as a paper copy **please consider providing us with your email so that we can send it directly.***

Events & Actions

National Science Week – 16 to 24 August, 2014

Wanted: Students to Count Cuckoos for Science.

Channel-billed cuckoos are the biggest (and noisiest) parasitic cuckoos in the world and migrate south at this time every year to lay eggs in the nests of unsuspecting Magpies, Currawongs and Crows. Waking to their repetitive, loud and raucous calls might send you cuckoo unless you could put it to a good use like helping scientists track the migration!

Scientists are predicting that a warming climate might result in changes to the migration pattern but evidence for such a change requires lots and lots of observations. That's why DEC Environmental and Zoo Education Centres are encouraging students to become citizen scientists by contributing sightings of Channel-billed cuckoos to the Climatewatch project.

Observations are mapped in real time so students can see the migration as it happens and appreciate their contribution to science. **To find out how to put your school on the map go to:**
www.climatewatch.org.au/news/climatewatch-cuckoo-count

School of Ants

Science Week is a good time to find out what ants are doing in your school! The School of Ants is an exciting international citizen-scientist project. In Australia it is led by researchers at the University of New England who want Australian school communities to get involved and uncover our ants. Where are the invasive species? Are there species that occur all across Australia? And can you find them?

Registered for School of Ants at <http://schoolofants.net.au/> and **download** your instructions. They are waiting to receive your specimens and data.

Rumbalara EEC will also be supporting students at the Umina campus of Brisbane Water Secondary college as they methodically measure and record their school environment during science week.

For more information about these and other science week activities go to:

<http://www.scienceweek.net.au/schools/>

September is Biodiversity Month

Threatened Species Day on 7 September commemorates the death in 1936 of the last remaining Tasmanian Tiger (thylacine). Australia holds the world record for extinctions –over 100 species including 27 mammals in the last 200 years. In NSW alone there are nearly 1000 species of native plants and animals threatened with extinction and the federal government has just listed our iconic Koala as vulnerable in NSW and Qld!

Fortunately we now have technology enabling each of us to keep an eye on our wildlife and identify population changes as they happen – rather than when it's too late.

The cuckoo count (above) introduces students to the power of Citizen Science. Here are some other useful links for exploring Biodiversity. In NSW <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspecies/>
In Australia <http://www.ala.org.au/> At an International Level <http://map.mol.org/>

The 2014 Year 11 ENVIROTHON is on Fri. 7th Oct. For students interested in a career in the field of environmental management this is the main event! It provides an opportunity for students to apply their knowledge and skills to solve real environmental problems. Register your team of 4 students before 19th October to compete in this year's challenge. Contact Rumbalara if you haven't yet received an application form.

GATS - Citizen Science Training Day for Schools

Friday, 5 Sept, 2014

The Central Coast Bioblitz is an event taking place in November, 2014 involving the community working collaboratively with scientists to monitor biodiversity in Bouddi National Park. **As part of this wider Bioblitz initiative, Rumbalara EEC is inviting schools to participate in a Citizen Science Training Day.**

This event is ideally suited to GAT Students from Years 5 to 10 who have an interest in the environment. Students will engage in a series of field survey activities in different habitats guided by staff from Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre. We will demonstrate how to identify species and log sightings into our databases. This will be a day of special Science enrichment.

There will be no cost to students. More information, including a Faxback form, is available on our website: <http://www.rumbalara-e.schools.nsw.edu.au/>. **We have a limited number of places - so please return the attached FAXBACK sheet by Monday, 25 August, 2014.** If you have any questions or would like further details please phone our Centre on 4324 7200 or email: rumbalara-e.school@det.nsw.edu.au.

Gosford Council – Greenhouse Program

Update:

The Greenhouse Program School Judging will commence on Mon, 8 Sept and finish on Fri, 19 Sept. Gosford Council Environmental Education Officers look forward to viewing all of the great environmental initiatives that all of the schools have done over the year in respect to the 2014 theme 'Taking the Next Step'.

The Greenhouse Program stage projects are due by Friday, 19 Sept. Council can pick them up whilst judging the schools, or they can be dropped off at Council chambers.

Gosford City Garden Competition

Entries are still open for the 2014 Gosford City Garden Competition.

This year there are 12 categories available for entry which **includes Best School Garden, Best Eco-friendly Garden, best Waterwise Garden and Best Theme or Specialty Garden**. The competition aims to stimulate interest in various types of gardens within our community.

Entries close on Wednesday 27 August 2014, and judging will run from Monday 1 to Friday 6 September 2014. For more information please view the Gosford City Council Website or follow this link <http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/community/gosford-city-garden-competition>

Professional Learning

Local History Information Session

Date: Mon, 25 August

Time: 3:45pm-6:30pm

Venue: Rumbalara Environmental Education Centre, Donnison St, Gosford

Cost: FREE

We are thrilled to have Leigh Williams from DEC to give an overview of the new syllabus, Dave Lardner to provide information on Aboriginal heritage and resources and also representatives from Gosford Council, Wyong Council and the local history community. The last part of the program is an opportunity to share what you are doing and any resources - so please bring along anything you think would be useful.

For more information, visit our website: <http://www.rumbalara-e.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

RSVP – Thurs, 21 Aug, 2014 - Ph: 4324 7200 or email: jane.smith27@det.nsw.edu.au

AAEE 2014 National Conference: 2-4 November

Registration for the 2014 Australian Association for Environmental Education Conference to be held in Hobart, Tasmania is now open! Guest Speakers: David W. Orr a well-known environmentalist and author and is active in many areas of environmental studies, including environmental education and environmental design. **Paul Gilding** author of The Great Disruption and as a keynote speaker on the theme of "Sustainability: Smart Strategies for the 21C." For further information, visit www.aaee2014.com.au

World Parks' Congress

12-19 November, 2014

Sydney will host the World Parks' Congress, a huge international gathering that takes place every decade to discuss the future of protected areas across the world. For more information see the World Parks' Congress website <http://worldparkscongress.org/>

Compost & Worm Farming workshop at your school

For schools in the Gosford LGA Council can present a Composting and Worm farming workshop at your school for your school community. Each participating household will receive either a FREE compost bin or worm farm to take home and start on the road to organics recycling.

- Council provides a free food waste workshop for School parents and staff, workshop length is 2.5 hours.
- Council will give each participating household a free worm farm or compost bin.
- Council will give a free worm farm and compost bin to the School for hosting the event.
- Council and the School schedule workshop either after school or on a weekend

- The School will provide a venue for the workshop free of charge
- The School will advertise the workshop to their parent body & community
- The School will take bookings for the workshop (minimum of 30, up to 50)

For more information or to book your schools Compost and Worm farm workshop, please contact Councils Environmental Education Officer Anni Griffiths on 4325 8222 or email: anni.griffiths@gosford.nsw.gov.au

Grants

Small grants available from Rumbalara EEC for Case Studies

Rumbalara is extending its small grants (up to \$500 to assist our local schools with environmental initiatives) to encourage teachers to share **the wonderful environmental education in your school**. The funding can now be used to document your successes and provide information and support for other teachers to follow your lead.

The case study needs to be in a form that we are able to load on to our website and share with other schools / teachers - for example, movie, report and photos etc. The Case Study would need to be completed within a school Term.

Funding requests should be – emailed as Expression of Interest to Mark Attwooll, Principal - mark.attwooll@det.nsw.edu.au. Your EOI needs to be approved by your School Principal.

Earthwatch fully funded expeditions for students!

Imagine spending a week in an amazing location around Australia with other teenagers finding solutions for a more sustainable planet. Work closely with leading scientists and discover whether science or the environment could be a career path for you. **Applications Close August 29th** Three expeditions to choose from:

1. Turtles on the Move; *wade through the waters in Melbourne to help understand how urbanisation is impacting freshwater turtles.*
2. Microbats; *help scientists determine the distribution and community composition of Microbats across greater Melbourne.*
3. Underwater Landscapes in Queensland's Moreton Bay; *snorkel, boat and wade collecting ecological data to determine how increased pollutants are impacting the marine species.*

In the last three years, 138 students have partaken in the program across Australia. Download Application form at <http://au.earthwatch.org/education/student-fellowships/student-challenge-australia>

Rural Education Australia Program – REAPing Rewards

Funding up to \$10,000 supporting locally-driven projects and programs that directly benefit children and youth (0-18 years) and their educators in rural and remote communities. **Closes 25 August 2014.** Website: www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/G06207/info

Canon Environmental Grant for schools

For an environmental project being run by a primary or secondary school. **Closes 29 August 2014.** Website: www.fundingcentre.com.au/grant/G04565/info

Resources

Field Guide to NSW Fauna – free mobile App

Explore and identify the unique and diverse fauna of New South Wales with this free app from the Australian Museum.

Our Place - three short films that celebrate Aboriginal cultural heritage.

These places are close to the Central Coast. <http://aries.mq.edu.au/projects/our-place/>

NatureWatch diary

Channel-billed Cuckoos start to arrive

Both Northern Brown & Long-nosed Bandicoots commence breeding

Pee-wees & White-winged Choughs start building their mud nests

Male Brown Antichinus (a locally common marsupial mouse) die after mating

Pallid Cuckoos arrive and commence their semi-toned ascending calls

Wedge-tailed Shearwaters (mutton birds) return to NSW waters from the seas around The Phillipines

Golden Donkey Orchids *Diuris aurea* & Pink-finger Orchids *Caladenia carnea* flower.

Young Magpies hatch in the nests, and male Magpies start swooping on us!

Little Penguin eggs hatch on Lion Island

Gosford Wattle *Acacia prominens* commences flower attracting bees and butterflies.

Bush Flies overwinter as larvae and pupae in crevices

The purple native Iris *Patersonia sericea* flowering.

White Donkey Orchid *Diuris alba*, White Finger Orchid *Caladenia catenata* & the Spotted Sun

Orchid *Thelymitra ixiodes* all commence flowering in low coastal heath

Sawfly grubs cluster on Eucalypt leaves

Fringed Wattle *Acacia fimbriata*, and Prickly Moses *Acacia ulicifolia* flower during August

Grevillea shiressii is now rare on the Central Coast but may be found flowering in some gullies

Green Dates

19-25 Aug	Keep Australia Beautiful Week
All Sept	Biodiversity Month
1 Sept	Wattle Day
2-8 Sept	National Landcare week
7 Sept	BUPA Walk to Work Day Pedestrian Council of Australia
7 Sept	National Threatened Species Day
8 Sept	Sustainable House Day
All Oct	International Walk to School Month
4-13 Oct	National Organic Week
16 Oct	Ride to Work Day
19-25 Oct	National Water Week

19 Nov	World Toilet Day
10-16 Nov	National Recycling week
21 Nov	World Fisheries Day

***TO UNSUBSCRIBE TO THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE CLICK REPLY, TYPE 'UNSUBSCRIBE' IN THE SUBJECT LINE AND SEND BACK TO RUMBALARA EEC - THANK YOU**