



In this newsletter

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CITIZEN SCIENCE FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR REEFS



Ocean Club, Bowen Multiple days/locations

Kate and Ben, 2 teachers from Bowen attended the CoralWatch Ambassadors workshop in 2019 with the idea to setup an afterschool Ocean Club in Bowen to create an experience that allows children to appreciate and learn more about the GBR.

In July, the Ocean Club visited Rose Bay, Bowen. In September they visited Hardy Reef, the outer reef from Airlie Beach and in October they went to Horseshoe Bay, Bowen. Group shot is from the day at Rose Bay. Well done on setting up this club and collecting CoralWatch data!



Participants: 20 secondary students

Kate and Ben



CoralWatch return workshops Ambassador 2020 18 August

Thanks 'Ambassadors 2020' for attending our return workshop. After yummy pizza, everybody did a fantastic presentation sharing their favourites and challenges. Amazing how much we still achieved together in this challenging year!

Two people received our special annual award. The outreach award went to Haley for the high number of events she was involved in and Phoebe received the education award for all her efforts to setup the CoralWatch4schools program. Well done both and all of you! Your input and passion for the reef is very inspiring.

Haley, Phebe, Take, Yohana, Diana, Karen, Justin



Wonder of Science (WOS) Regional Conference 14 September, Kimberley Park State School, Shailer Park

Kimberly Park State School hosted the WOS Regional Conference for four participating junior secondary schools. CoralWatch provided two hands-on workshops sessions for 100 students and their teachers. Activities included: virtual reef monitoring; Moreton Bay quiz; and sustainability pledges. Prizes were given to students, and Moreton Bay Teacher Packs were provided to teachers from participating schools.

CoralWatch recently started collaborating with [Wonder of Science at UQ](#), which organises STEM conferences with science and curriculum-based teaching to schools in Queensland including remote areas.

This was our first event with WOS and it became apparent that the provided itinerary logistics and format were at best a 'rough guide'. Instead of 25 students a session for half an hour, we had 50 students for 1 hour who arrived for the workshops 20 min early. The venue space CoralWatch was allocated was small and struggled to be suitable given the increased numbers. Luckily we learned to be creative and flexible so the day turned out fine and students loved it, but next time will invite some of you to help.

Participants: 100 junior secondary students and seven teachers

Diana, Karen





NEW CoralWatch Global Database 29 September online, powered by ALA

The [CoralWatch global database](https://biocollect.ala.org.au/coralwatch) has migrated to the Atlas of Living Australia, the Biocollect platform, which shares the data from many citizen science groups. (<https://biocollect.ala.org.au/coralwatch>). The multiple benefits of being integrated in this larger centrally maintained data system alongside other citizen science data includes increased exposure, availability, and longevity. The ALA/BioCollect Australian Citizen Science Project Finder currently holds 581 different citizen science projects of which 281 are in Queensland and 47 ocean related projects including Virtual Reef Diver, Redmap and Project Manta.

All existing data has been migrated over to this new system, which has a fresh look and a variety of exciting new features such as: uploading photos, adding species, and using filters for easy data access. The ALA website is mobile-compatible. The original CoralWatch mobile apps are no longer in use.

To view the instructions:

- <https://coralwatch.org/index.php/data/database-instructions/>

All data is publicly accessible, and anyone can download any data. New features in the CoralWatch data platform allow the upload of photos of the reef and individual corals, include coral species. Since the launch of the new database 448 new surveys have been added of which 175 in Australia and 66 in Thailand.

The development of CoralWatch's new database has been supported by the partnership between the Australian Government's ReefTrust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. Additional support is provided by Atlas of Living Australia and The University of Queensland. Read [more](#)



Wonder of Science 6 October, UQ Centre

A wonderful outreach event in which we were able to educate year 8 and 9 students about our beautiful coral reefs and the CoralWatch mission. Many of these students didn't necessarily feel that they had a connection with the coast being from inland areas such as Ipswich which made the 'what we can do from home' and pledges activity so important.

Many of the students were super engaged and really wanted to learn which was awesome to see!

The students absolutely loved getting to see the clownfish that Abby and Justin brought along.

Having the pledges as an activity on its own was a little bit tricky in terms of timing. The virtual reef and quiz take up a solid amount of time while the students are quick to write their pledges and some would become disinterested in the activity quite quickly even when I would go around to each and discuss what they've written and other things they could do. We could have the pledges as it's own thing that the students can do at the end once they've been to all the other stations. I think we did this one other time and I think it worked well.

Number of participants: 120 students

4 groups of 30 year 8/9 students from various schools (mostly around Ipswich area)

Hayley, Sophie, Justin, Abby





Harbour cruise, Port Curtis 18 October, Gladstone

58 people of all ages were treated to a tour of Port Curtis. The cruise was organised by the Port Curtis HarbourWatch programme. HarbourWatch is a citizen science programme established a number of years ago by Ambassador Dave. The aim of the programme is to monitor both the biotic and abiotic elements of Port Curtis and the streams that flow into it. With seagrass being monitored by the local university with the assistance of the community, coral was one aspect that still remained and was the motivation for establishing the local Coralwatch programme. Participants in the cruise undertook water quality monitoring but as they did not exit the vessel no in-field coral monitoring was undertaken. However, Coralwatch had a display and I was able to engage with people describing the programme and the issue of coral bleaching. Materials were handed out including 1 local Corals at your Doorstep kit.

Number of participants: 58

David



Marine Cupcake fundraiser and CoralWatch display Brisbane Boys College

In November 2021, the Brisbane Boys College STEM Club Ecomarine Ambassadors decided to make a contribution to environmental conservation by hosting a Marine cupcake fundraiser event. Their aim was to create awareness of the ongoing threats of climate change to our marine environment

and highlight the impacts to our coral reefs. Our students and STEM teachers created some tasty marine-inspired treats with sharks, corals and turtles galore, to sweeten the learning experience. The event also included a CoralWatch information display, and we even had a 'How healthy is your cupcake?' challenge, where students had to assess the health of the corals on their cupcake using Coralwatch Health Charts.

Over 200 cupcakes were sold and the students raised \$250 for CoralWatch. The funds raised have been used to provide educational resources for students at one of Cooktown's regional schools.

The students loved the wide variety of activities, especially the virtual reality. They also really enjoyed the quiz and had some great ideas on how to protect the reefs on our doorstep!

Number of participants: 10 teachers and 200+ Middle school students

Maria, Senior STEM Club teachers, and BBC STEM Club EcoMarine Ambassadors

Tangalooma Ecomarines – The Wave 2021 8 November, Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

The Wave is a major highlight in the Tangalooma EcoMarines calendar, where primary & high school Ecomarine Ambassadors gather together to celebrate the environmental achievements in their respective schools. CoralWatch Ambassador Dini Kanagaratnam who is EcoMarines Program Coordinator, invited the Brisbane Boys College EcoMarine Ambassadors to host the CoralWatch display at The Wave.

The CoralWatch display was visited by EcoMarine students and teachers from schools all over SE Queensland. Our BBC EcoMarines (and CoralWatch trainees) talked to fellow Ecomarine students about the threats and impacts to coral reefs worldwide, and demonstrated how they can become involved in reef citizen science by using the CoralWatch Health Charts. The CoralWatch display offered so many interactive experiences to engage students, from corals skeletons to see and touch, coral quizzes to test their coral knowledge, and the ever popular virtual reef glasses.

All of the students and teachers enjoyed the interactive elements of the CoralWatch display including the corals, CoralWatch mats, and Coral quiz. The virtual reality was a really big hit.

Number of participants: 300+ primary & high school students and teachers

*Maria Bavins,
Juliet Stone (BBC Science teacher & STEM Club teacher)
Senior STEM Club EcoMarine Ambassadors*





Qld Museum World of Science Festival
7 November 2021, Community Day
8 November 2021, Schoolday
The Workshops Rail Museum, North Ipswich

World Science Festival is a free outreach opportunity for the general public to engage and explore science through a range of hands on activities. CoralWatch was invited to participate and had a stall over the two-day event which was split into community day on Sunday and school's program on Monday.

Location, location – the CoralWatch stall was nestled between the digital creator's new technology table with their 3 D printing, and the Space VR 3D experience so lots of passing teachers and students to interact with. Our clay coral reef display is a definite draw card and such an attention grabber. Education packs for the educators, these are always so well received. We also handed out DVD's to families and students who wanted to learn more about corals and the kids loved these.

No VR headsets. We felt it would have been too hard to reintroduce our VR headsets back to the activities program given COVID sensibilities. The brochures table was under a slow drip/leaky roof overnight, so some pamphlets got a little damp. Might have been more of a problem if we'd had more rain on the day.

Number of participants at the community event:
250, possibly up to 300
Number of participants at the school event: 150 students,
teachers and home school educators

Sophie, Karen, Jason



New corals selected for Heron Permanent transect
November, Sunshine Beach SHS, Heron Island

Sunshine Beach State High School checked out all the corals from the permanent transect at Research Beach Heron Island. The original transect was established in 2014, with the aim to monitor corals over time. Unfortunately half the corals died during a bleaching event in 2019. Together with the students we have added four new corals, the common names chosen by the students are Shreks rear, Cinnamon Bun, Covid 19 and Echidna turtle.

The updated permanent transect photoset and instruction can be found online: <https://coralwatch.org/index.php/education-2/field-materials-2/>



More new materials for Heron

Apart from the updated permanent transect we also created a document for schools with data from the most common visited site and a community report card for Heron Island. All these materials can be downloaded from our website in the education: [field](#) and [other materials](#) section.





5th Ambassador workshop 10-14 January 2022, Heron Island

Based on the success of previous Ambassador workshops, CoralWatch staff Justin, Diana, Sophie, Karen trained 13 people from various locations and demographics to become our 2022 CoralWatch Ambassadors.

Ambassador locations: Heron island (1), Sunshine Coast (1), Brisbane (6), Bundaberg (3), and Keppel Island (1), and Rockampton (1).

Ambassador demographics: UQ Students (4), Naturalist guide on Heron Island (1), Professional sportsperson (2), Playwrite (1), Young person (1), Prep Teacher Aid (1), River Manager (1), Marine Education Officer (1), and Disability support staff (1)

Like previous years, workshop participants were selected through a formal application process in which participants had to propose an Ambassador idea for a project to educate and reach out to the public. During the actual workshop, the initial proposed applicant ideas were executed into individual Ambassador projects. These Ambassador projects vary from: Creating a junior rangers program on Heron Island that integrates CoralWatch materials, pop-up stalls at supermarkets encouraging waste-conscious buying, educational talks at music festivals, workshops for groups of students around the reefs Goat Island in Moreton Bay, incorporating CoralWatch



into a play for young people on rising sea levels, beach clean-up and videos for schools, integrating CoralWatch into an existing work beach cleanup, a reef focused card game for kids, CoralWatch event tents at local netball games and integrating CoralWatch materials into programs for disabled people.

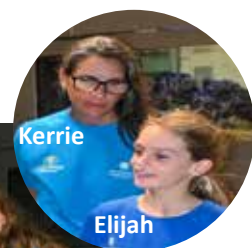
Workshop Favourites:

- Snorkelling in groups and hearing from each other about different corals, fish and other creatures.
- Being in Justin's world for a bit, learning from him and feeling the passion for healthy oceans.
- Outer reef visit, reefwalk, informal chats.
- Meeting and connecting with awesome human beings, very inspirational.

Workshop challenges:

- Some anxiety about COVID.
- No challenges, all was very clear and well explained
- Roleplay, I have always struggled with roleplay and this was the first time I was actually able to do it well due to the support
- First time snorkeler, the deep sea was initially a little scary but not too much
- Feel a bit out of my depth. My knowledge is not extensive

Number of participants: 13 Ambassadors





Junior Rangers, Heron Island Resort 12 January 2022

During the Ambassador workshop we always create practice opportunities with Heron Island resort guest. Unfortunately due to COVID restrictions we could not offer our usual presentation, display, CoralWatch reef walk and touch tank experience and offered these activities in roleplay scenarios. However, we did manage to 'practice' our new Junior Ranger program that Ambassador Susy who works in the Heron Island activities team will lead during school holidays. Elijah came along to talk to the children about how to save reefs from home. In this case only 2 children signed up but there is the option for 10 at the time to participate. It is an 1.5 hour program where children receive a take-home workbook, learn about corals, search for coral skeletons on the beach, practice reef monitoring and complete a pledge for the reef.

Apart from the Junior Rangers program, which will be officially offered during the next school holidays, Susy is keen to offer presentations at the resort so guests can learn more about coral reefs and can get involved in CoralWatch during reef walks.

Number of participants: 2

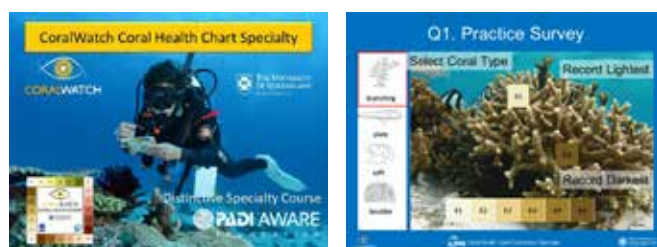
Susy, Elijah, Kerrie, Karen

NEW CoralWatch Products

We have updated our English **'Do It Yourself' (DIY) instructions** leaflet. How to use the Coral Health Chart remains the same, but since we moved our database to the Atlas of Living Australia, the instructions for uploading data changed substantially. The original CoralWatch mobile apps are no longer in use but the new ALA website is mobile-compatible. In addition we created a separate document with more detailed instructions on uploading, downloading and data analyses.



CoralWatch DIY instructions are available in **13 languages**: [English](#), Spanish, German, French, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia, Arabic, and Portugese. Unfortunately most of these translated documents are now out of date. If you do speak another language or know someone who is willing to help with updating these documents, please let us know and we can send you a word template for translating.



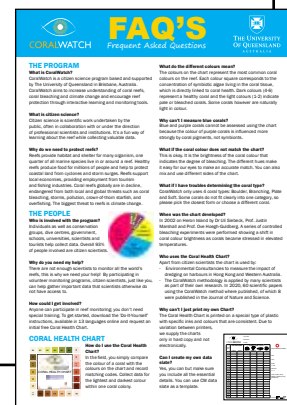
CoralWatch PADI Specialty materials

Thanks Amber Moran for all your hard work on updating all the materials for the CoralWatch [Coral Health Chart - PADI Distinctive Specialty](#). In this course, instructors will gain the skills to teach, dive and certify their students about coral monitoring and data collection! This specialty is available to teach for both snorkelers and SCUBA divers! The updated education materials are:

1. Knowledge Development Session 1: coral biology, coral bleaching and the threats to coral reefs.
2. Knowledge Development Session 2: how to conduct a Coral Health Survey and upload data in the global database.
3. Virtual Practice Survey.
4. Knowledge Review.

Frequent Asked Questions

Finally we updated our [FAQ's](#)! This document will provide you with a lot of answers about the CoralWatch program, the use of the Coral Health Chart, Coral Biology, Data, Education and how to save reefs from home.





Billie Eilish said YES
October/November 2021

After over 12 months of planning, production and covid delays we launched in October, our biggest and craziest social media campaign yet - Our [‘Open letter to Billie Eilish’](#) asking for permission to use her song ‘Ocean Eyes’ to support the reef.

The fantastic [video](#) produced by Rem from Brainheart and his extended team of professionals was posted on facebook and instagram and we asked everyone to share it with friends, family and colleagues who love the ocean and want to help to protect this beautiful environment. We created about 40 posts and reached over 56,000 people. Our hope was that if Billie sees this, she’ll lend us her music to help raise further awareness about the reef and make more people care for it.

A month later, BILLIE EILISH SAID YES!

This exciting news was announced by our youngest CoralWatch hero Elijah Richardson from Bagara. Together with his mum, Elijah was three times on television, two times on radio, and mentioned in more than 60 articles online.



Television and radio links

- 21 November, [Todays show](#) Eight-year-old Elijah Richardson’s campaign to save the coral reef, calls on Billie Eilish for help. See also [CoralWatch news](#) item.
- 22 November, [Win news](#) on channel 9 STAR SUPPORT - An 8-year-old Queensland boy is on a mission to help save our Great Barrier Reef - and he’s scored the help of renowned pop superstar, Billie Eilish!
- 23 November, seven news on channel 7. An eight-year-old conservationist is celebrating a major coup, after securing support from music sensation Billie Eilish in his efforts to help save the reef. Elijah Richardson says he wants to recruit more celebrities to the campaign. ••
- 24 November, [ABC mornings](#), 8-year-old eco warrior gets help from US popstar

In addition there were around 60 online news articles worldwide (small selection)

- [Billie Eilish news: Eight-year-old Elija Richardson recruits Billie Eilish to help save the Great Barrier Reef - 9Celebrity](#)
- [Aussie schoolboy, eight, reveals how he enlisted Billie Eilish to help save the Great Barrier Reef | Daily Mail Online](#)
- [Billie Eilish news: Eight-year-old Elija Richardson recruits](#)

Billie Eilish to help save the Great Barrier Reef - [New Self New Life](#)

- *Pop superstar Billie Eilish steps in to save Great Barrier Reef – [The West Australian](#)*

An incredible THANK YOU to everyone who has be involved, shared, and supported our campaign so far – without you this would not have been possible. A special thanks goes to Rem from Brainheart for his fantastic ideas and input!



Now we are eyeing off the next big goal: Getting Kit Harrington and Robert DeNiro to join our watch ... “Summer is coming and you know what comes with it” ... Coral Bleaching. We need your help to reach out to Game of Thrones superstar Kit Harrington, to warn him about the dangers of summer! Our planet is warming up, and our reefs are under threat. Here at CoralWatch, we monitor coral reef health and educate others to do the same! We need as many people as we can to join our watch – there is no planet B
So, please share our “Open letter to Kit Harrington” We don’t quite know how to reach him, but we want to try! Share our videos to Kit and Robert to spread the word!



Other ...

CoralWatch would like to thank Lady Elliot Island (LEI) Eco Resort and Peter Gash for the fantastic opportunity for Elijah and family to experience the amazing underwater world and wonderful stay at Lady Elliot. LEI sponsored our social media campaign 'Come Join our Watch and offered very generously a 2-day stay for the person with the most media outreach. Elijah who recently became an official ambassador delivered 15 new Coral Health Chart sets to the activities team at LEI, handed over to Master reef guide Josh.



New staff

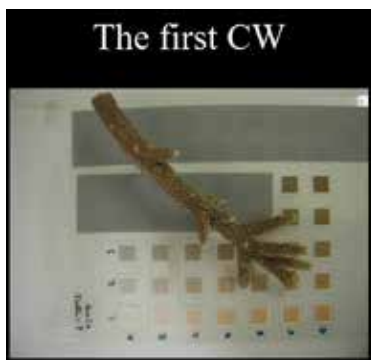
Sophie Kalkowski-Pope joined the CoralWatch team in August 2021 on a casual base to help with social media, data analyses and general office tasks. Sophie is also studying marine science at UQ. Her first few months were pretty hectic with the launch of the database and all the media outreach with Billie Eilish.

Cancelled events due to COVID-19

- Citizen Science Festival at Boyne Island Environmental Education Center
- Brisbane Street Science
- UQ Experience Science Events
- National Youth Science Forum ANU

CoralWatch 20 Years

This year CoralWatch exists 20 years!! The first fieldtrip was organised in March 2002 on Heron Island with a series of tank experiments. Four different species of corals were exposed to elevated water temperatures for 1, 3 and 7 days. Each day one nubbin from each species was removed to quantify symbionts and colour change. The picture shows our first Coral Health Chart, coloured blocks are living tissue. Of course we will celebrate the succes of our succesfull global citizen science program and will keep you posted!



CoralWatch 2021

In 2021, we organised 39 events and talked face-to-face to 3134 people of which 260 are teachers, 1147 are students, 1692 community members and 35 other. Great effort considering we were still in the middle of the pandemic! We reached over 56,000 people with our social media campaign.

Full details on all upcoming events will be emailed and posted on the Ambassador facebook page.



Zoom meeting Ambassadors

Tuesday 15 February 6-7PM

To catch up, and plan our upcoming World Science Festival and other events.

World Science Festival - City of Science

Wednesday 9 through to Sunday 13 March

Wed 9 March 09:30 – 14:30

Thu 10 March 09:30 – 14:30

Fri 11 March 09:30 – 14:30

Sat 12 March 08:00 – 16:00

Sun 13 March 08:00 – 16:00

This is an outdoor event, so different from other years when we were located inside the museum. We will have a marquee, with posters, our social media pledgeframe, a table with brochures and are currently finalising our activities and volunteers.

World Science Festival 2022 Regional Dates

More WSF events will take place in the following locations throughout the year.

Townsville - Friday 13 and Saturday 14 May (Museum Of Tropical Queensland)

Gladstone - Friday 17 and Saturday 18 June (Gladstone Entertainment and Convention Centre)

Chinchilla - Friday 29 and Saturday 30 July (Chinchilla Cultural Centre)

Mackay - Sunday, 21 August (Mackay Entertainment & Convention Centre)

Ipswich - Friday 9 and Saturday 10 September (The Workshop Rail Museum)

Toowoomba Sunday 9 and Monday 10 October (Cobb+Co Museum)

Schools visit Mansfield SHS - Meet a Scientist

27th April, 3-4PM

CoralWatch workshop as afterschool activity.

Market stall Conservation Volunteers Australia

23rd April 08:30-14:00 Wynnum

CW market stall at National Day of Action. The focus of this event is on ocean litter and citizen science opportunities.