

CoralWatch Yeppoon Youth Ambassador Workshop

8-11 April, 2025

Outcomes Report



CoralWatch's third Youth Ambassador workshop was held at The Hub, Yeppoon for participants within a radius of 150km of Rockhampton.

Three CoralWatch staff and two local trained Ambassadors assisted with the workshop.

Nine child/parent teams, with children aged from 8-14 years participated.

Support

This workshop and the CoralWatch "What can I do?" program is funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, and The University of Queensland. Additionally, in-kind support was received from Livingstone Shire Council, Keppel-Dive Funtastic Cruises and Ergon Energy.

Workshop AIMS

To create an Ambassador community and network on the Capricorn Coast, to raise awareness about local coral reefs, the CoralWatch citizen science program, and ways to inspire their community to look after reefs. This differs from our regular adult Ambassador workshops where participants are from all different locations, including overseas.

During the workshop, participants:

- Gain knowledge about coral reefs, CoralWatch tools and survey techniques
- Gain field experience working together, in and for the marine environment
- Increase sustainability knowledge, and look at solutions: 'How to Act to Protect our GBR'
- Exchange ideas and inspire / help each other
- Get to know each other – fellow Ambassadors
- Create their own resources – poster with positive solution to help look after reefs
- Plan outreach activities in the Rockhampton area

CoralWatch is committed to building capacity and will provide materials, expertise and support in planning and implementation of all events. Additional resources will be printed as required because of the increased demand of our new Ambassadors. All Ambassadors received a t-shirt to wear during events.

Workshop OUTCOMES

- Participants increased their understanding of:
 - CoralWatch's philosophy and its monitoring, education and outreach programs
 - Coral biology, science and value of the Great Barrier Reef and local reefs
 - Sustainable solutions to save reefs from home
- Nine inspired local families ready to make a difference. Our Ambassadors learn about what is happening to our reefs and how to deliver positive motivational messages to inspire audiences to act.
- All parents are keen to implement what they have learned and incorporate CoralWatch resources within their own communities.
- Youth Ambassadors are keen to explain to students at their school what they have learned.
- Our new group of Ambassadors will be invited to assist with CoralWatch regular events and have created an event list for their local area.
- All adult participants will complete UQ inductions and paperwork to become registered UQ volunteers, with responsibility for their child always.

The workshop program included

Presentations: CoralWatch, Coral Biology, Sustainability.

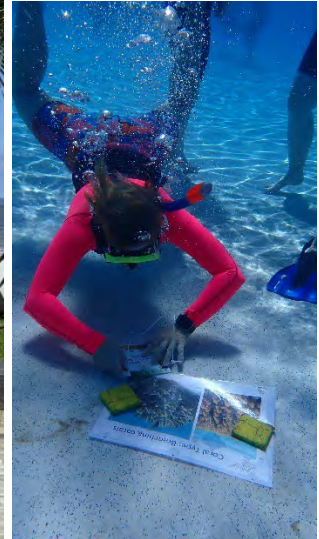
Guest speakers: Elijah Richardson explaining about his Ambassador activities.



Learning about CoralWatch resources: Virtual reef monitoring, virtual reality, ozbots, reef and sustainability quizzes, dos and don'ts for the reef.

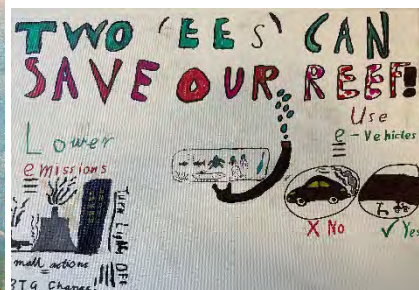
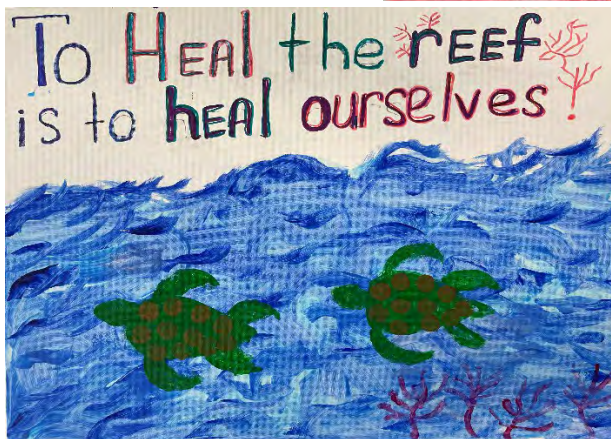
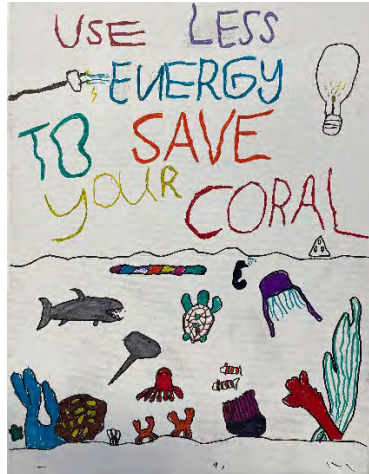


In-Water sessions: Pool sessions at The Lagoon, Yeppoon to check swimming skills and practice reef monitoring; Exploring bays at Woppa snorkelling and collecting CoralWatch data. All data has been entered on the global database.



Poster session

All teams created a poster raising awareness about the reef incorporating a positive solution.



Working sessions: Science communication role-play, science communication frequently asked questions discussion, data entry, sustainability, planning of events with risk assessment session.



Corals at Your Doorstep public event, 12:30-2:30 on the last day – 30 visitors

- Ambassadors practiced setting up displays and activities, created and distributed event posters, and shared the social media event.
- Ambassadors communicated what they learned at the displays and four Ambassadors, Xavier Pittman (10 years), Holly Franceschin (10 years), Freddie Rasmussen (11 years) and Owen Harris (10 years) presented part of the 'Corals at Your Doorstep' presentation.
- ABC Capricornia Radio presenter Karyn Wilson prerecorded an interview with Ambassador Holly Franceschin and Karen for her Saturday breakfast broadcast which went to air on Saturday 12 April.



Indigenous Engagement and Caring for Country

Woppaburra Land and Sea Rangers, from the Woppaburra TUMRA Aboriginal Corporation joined the workshop for a day snorkelling on the fringing reefs at Woppa. The Traditional Owners officially welcomed the CoralWatch Ambassadors to Sea Country on the Island and we were led through a traditional cleansing ceremony to leave behind mainland stresses. Darcy shared with the Ambassadors that his Grandmother was born on Kinome. Both Aaron and Darcy spoke of their strong ancestral, spiritual and cultural connection to Sea Country and their involvement in reef conservation and restoration of degraded reefs and their on-going monitoring roles as Rangers. CoralWatch is currently exploring opportunities with the Woppaburra TUMRA Aboriginal Corporation to incorporate a CoralWatch training program for Rangers on Woppa.



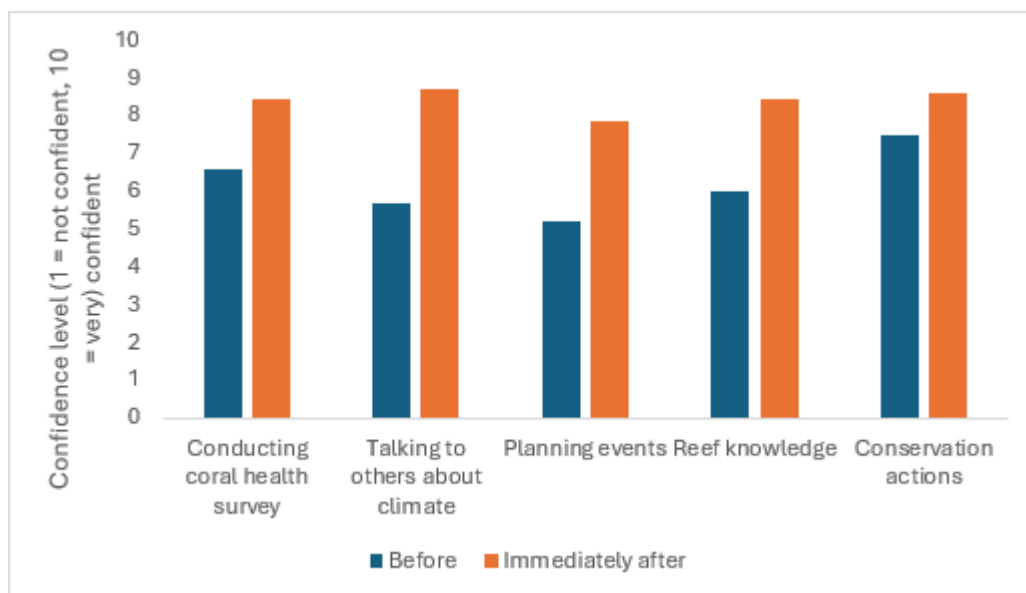
Darumbal Land and Sea Rangers from the Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation joined the workshop in Yeppoon and invited participants to a talking circle. Aunty Ro, Lionel, Anton, and Zarly spoke about their current project caring for Darumbal Land and Sea Country in a collaborative native seed conservation scheme with Council, the Herbarium and regional conservation groups. The project was an excellent example of what integrating valuable Traditional Knowledge into western practices can look like. We heard about how intergenerational Knowledge and learning and the caring for native plants had been passed down from grandfather to father to sons. The Rangers spoke about the many cultures and knowledge bases that are needed and fundamental in guiding the fight against climate change and how it will take all communities working together, First Nations and non-Indigenous. The Rangers encouraged questions.



At its core reconciliation is about strengthening cross cultural connections. The workshop provided opportunity to strengthen connection with First Nations People, acknowledge custodianship, and demonstrate respect and inclusion.

Youth Ambassador Learning Outcomes

A preworkshop and post workshop survey was conducted across the participants to gauge learning outcomes.



Graph shows Outcomes from the pre and post survey

% Change in self-reported knowledge and confidence

Conducting coral health survey	18.28571
Talking to others about climate	30.47619
Planning events	26.57143
Reef knowledge	24.28571
Conservation actions	11.25

Feedback provided by workshop participants

Describe your workshop experience:

"It was fun, creative, interactive and inspiring"

"An amazing valuable experience"

"It was an amazing time, loved it"

Favourites:

"The mock set up for the event, and snorkelling"

Snorkeling day, using coral health chart, meeting likeminded people and making connections"

"Diving on the reef"

Challenges:

"At times X and I got a little frustrated with on another. The joys of doing something like this with a family member!"

"Yes, the weather conditions on the way to Great Keppel"

"It was sometimes tiring sitting for two hours"

Upcoming potential events with our new group of Coral Coast Ambassadors

- zoom meeting to catch up and make plans
- EcoFest Gladstone 1 June
- Rockhampton River Festival, 25-27 July

Team players make a difference!



Thanks for becoming a Youth Ambassador for the reef with CoralWatch!

