

Landcare Link

Quarterly Newsletter of the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee
January 2009

Contact Us

Renee Fletcher
(Toowoomba)
Ph: 4637 6224
E: reneef@qmdc.org.au

Pip Bagshaw
(Goondiwindi)
Ph: 4671 7900
E: pipb@qmdc.org.au

www.qmdc.org.au

*"Vision without action
is a dream.
Action without vision
is simply passing
the time.
Action with vision is
making a positive
difference."
Joel Barker*

Welcome to 2009!

We would like to welcome everyone to a new and exciting year in sustainability education. We are now half way through the United Nations' Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. In the past five years there has been some great advances in Queensland in support of school sustainability actions and the next five years promises to be very exciting for our region with the further development of the Darling Downs and South West Queensland QESSI Hub. We have a range of activities and programs lined up for 2009 including a wide ranging series of teacher professional development workshops. Pippa and I are very keen to support schools to achieve school sustainability actions and welcome your inquiries.

Renee & Pippa, Landcare Education Officers, QMDC

Inglewood Bush Tucker Gardens

The students of Inglewood State School and St Maria Goretti's School and Inglewood Landcare coordinator, Veronica Aster were busy during 2008 designing and building bush tucker gardens in the Inglewood school grounds. On December 2, 2008 the official opening of the gardens was held. More than 120 students from both schools were present for the opening and later participated in traditional games and enjoyed a barbecue lunch.

Various businesses and individuals in and around Inglewood donated materials and time to assist in the construction of the gardens which include native 'bush tucker' plants, such as Wild Lime (*Citrus glauca*), Old Man Saltbush (*Atriplex nummularia*) and Native Leek (*Bulbine bulbosa*).

A booklet about the gardens has also been produced, *Australian bush tucker and other cultural uses*, which contains information about the Inglewood bush tucker gardens, the processes involved in their construction, Aboriginal history and plant profiles. Contact Inglewood Landcare if you are interested in viewing a copy.



Western Boobiolla



Kangaroo Apple



Inglewood State School students playing traditional games





Professional Development Workshops Planned for Teachers

An exciting range of professional development workshops are planned for 2009. The workshops will be delivered in conjunction with the Southern Queensland Science Centre for Innovation and Professional Practice. Topics to be covered:

- Sustainability science for primary teachers
- Sustainability science for secondary teachers
- Soil - water interactions
- Digital mapping
- Water quality testing and river health
- Energy
- Propagation

The workshops will predominantly occur as afternoon sessions. The dates and times will be confirmed in Term One.

We need a minimum of 10 participants to run a professional development session. The sessions can be open to all staff and interested parents and community members. So if you have an enthusiastic group and a topic you would like covered please give us a call to see if we can deliver a workshop in your school.

Need Resources or Information?

The Landcare Discovery Centre in Toowoomba has a resource library open to schools and the community. The library contains **books, brochures, resource packs, posters, models** (worm farm and compost) and a **range of kits** including: macro-invertebrate survey kit, biodiversity sampling kit, paper making kit, bird watching kit (includes 10 binoculars) and more. The resources are free to borrow and if you can't make it into Toowoomba we can arrange alternative pick-up points or post resources (excluding larger kits and models) to you.

If you are thinking of looking at weeds, we have just received some copies of, **Misbehaving Plants** which is a big book designed for the lower grades.

The resource has a number of different sections including a narrative story, a cartoon story, information on weeds and biological controls and teaching suggestions.

Other Resources

Home Energywise Kits—The Department of Mines and Energy has given kits to local council libraries to help the community monitor and reduce their energy use. The kits contain a Power-Mate energy meter (as featured on the left) and various booklets and worksheets. Most council libraries in the region should have kits for loan. Contact your local library for loan details.

Primary Connections Support Kits—The Southern Queensland Science Centre of Innovation and Professional Practice (SCIPP) has developed resource kits to support Primary schools to implement Primary Connection Science units. Kits currently available:

Early Stage 1: What's it made of?

Stage 1: Sounds Sensational, Push-Pull

Stage 2: Spinning in Space, Plants In Action

Stage 3: It's Electrifying, Marvellous Micro-organisms, Package it Better

Four kits of each topic are available. A \$15 replenishment levy per kit is charged to cover kit maintenance. Contact Kay Lembo for further details 0407 028 182.



Water quality testing kit

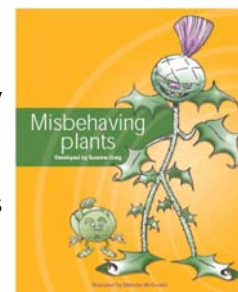
On Borrowed Time—A resource for secondary students exploring key biodiversity issues. The resource features interactive case-studies and is linked to the learning areas of Science, Mathematics and English. The resource is available in the QMDC library or visit www.publish.csiro.au/onborrowedtime/sections/index.html



Power-Mate energy meter—can tell you the energy consumption of individual electrical appliances



Worm farm model



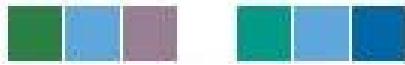


Schools Striving to Achieve Sustainability

A number of schools have already signed up to become part of the statewide Sustainable Schools Initiative for 2009. Ballandean State School has kicked off the year with a planning session to incorporate sustainability concepts into the curriculum. Schools involved in the initiative will be undertaking audits of their schools to establish the baseline conditions for energy use, water consumption, biodiversity value and waste production.

Groups of environment leaders from each QESSI school will have the opportunity to attend a workshop facilitated by OzGreen in early March (www.ozgreen.org.au). The workshop will provide the school leaders with the chance to develop their leadership skills and look at the process for putting ideas for sustainability into action.

The QMDC **Property Planning program** will be running again in 2009. The program will be offered over Term Two with the field trip scheduled for May on a property near Allora. To register interest please call Renee (4637 6224) or Pippa (4671 7900).



Plant Smart Schools

Laura Sutton, Greening Australia

Plant Smart is inviting your school to become Plant Smart. Plant Smart is a vegetation management partnership between Ergon Energy and Greening Australia Queensland. The program objective is to educate councils, businesses, communities, nursery industries and schools on planting the correct vegetation under and around powerlines. The Plant Smart schools program has been developed to provide education on vegetation management and powerline safety.



School planting at Bunkers Hill State School, August 2008

Plant Smart coordinators visit schools within Ergon Energy territory not only to provide education on powerline safety, but also to assist schools in becoming sustainable by reducing their energy consumption and improving biodiversity within the school grounds. Our message is delivered through a range of engaging activities catering for all ages, including biodiversity audits, energy audits, school and community plantings, all at no cost to the school.

If you would like more information on the Plant Smart program please contact Laura Sutton, Plant Smart Coordinator, Western Region.
Phone: 0448 753 971

Green and Healthy Schools 2009

Kim Croker, Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland

To celebrate 2009, the Year of Creativity in Queensland's schools during Q150, Green and Healthy Schools will be encouraged to bury a time capsule, in the state's sesquicentenary.

The Q150 Time Capsule, *Reflect the past, imagine the future*, contents should incorporate a depiction of the future and aspects of their community over the last 150 years, in regards to; climate, environment, people, economy, community governance/leadership, news, aspirations and values of their community. Ideally the Q150 Time Capsule would be buried on or near Queensland Day (6 June 2009), or an alternatively significant date.

Schools will be judged on their creativity, using innovative ideas/concepts to produce an effective solution to preserving a lasting account of their community and recording of their project (to be presented at the Green & Healthy School Regional Awards). The winner will receive a \$7,000 Computerised Weather Station for their school.

To register as a Green & Healthy School visit

www.KeepAustraliaBeautiful.org.au/qld/01_cms/details.asp?ID=7





Funding Opportunities, Events and Competitions

The beginning of a year always opens up a whole new round of funding opportunities. There are a number of other grants that are available to schools and community groups not listed below. If you would like a copy of the complete listing of grants please contact us.

2009 is the **International Year of Natural Fibres**.

OzProjects has created a project site in recognition of the international year. The site includes links to resources and activities to increase student understanding of the importance of natural fibres.

www.ozprojects.edu.au/course/view.php?id=57

The University of New South Wales School of Photovoltaics & Renewable Energy Engineering (SPREE) has assembled a **Photovoltaic Solar Energy Course Pack** designed for anyone wanting to study or teach Photovoltaics at a high-school level.

This package includes a module syllabus, a teacher's resource document, an engineering report assignment, a sample engineering report, experiment guides, worksheets, worksheet solutions, and at the core, a self-study PowerPoint software unit for students to work through on their own.

All can be downloaded free-of-charge from the SPREE website.
www.pv.unsw.edu.au/estudies/

Landcare Australia - Junior Landcare Grants Program

The grants fund activities to help young people participate in Landcare projects, at their school or within their local community and environment. There are a number of grants on offer within the program:

- Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grant** – projects up to \$1,000.
- Australia Post Junior Landcare Biodiversity Grant** – projects up to \$550.
- VISY Junior Landcare Recycling Grant** - projects up to \$1,100.

Emphasis is placed on projects which:

- involve the school community or broader local community;
- have determined educational outcomes with an environmental focus;
- link with a community landcare group; and
- are student-oriented and allow maximum student involvement.

For more information on closing dates for 2009 rounds visit

www.landcareonline.com/funding_opportunity_details.asp?fo_id=6

Australia Post Community Development Grant

Community groups across Australia can apply for yearly grants of up to \$3,300 (including GST) to help improve their local community and environment. The grants can fulfill a community groups' "wish list" and directly fund a community project, help buy much needed tools and equipment, or help raise awareness and encourage more community members to get involved. Groups that are not incorporated will need to form a partnership with an organisation that can accept responsibility for administering the financial aspects of the grant, including insurance. Visit www.landcareonline.com/funding_opportunity_details.asp?fo_id=9 for application forms and details.

Myer Family Philanthropy

There are two categories of interest, G4 Small Grants and Small Grants - Education. The **G4 Small Grant** is open to small community-based organisations and provides up to \$5000 for projects focusing on youth and the environment. There are four rounds for 2009 with the second closing on **14 April 2009**.

The **Small Grants—Education** grant offers up to \$10,000 for projects that address priorities in the area of education including local community and school based projects to achieve education outcomes for 0-25 year olds and projects in rural and regional communities. There is no closing date for the Education grant, applications are accepted on an on-going basis. For more information on both grants go to www.myerfoundation.org.au

Clean Up Schools Day—27 February 2009

Schools' Clean Up Day is specifically designed to allow students to participate in Clean Up Australia as part of a school activity. It's a great way for students of all ages to learn about how to reduce the impact of waste on our environment and make a real difference in their local community. Schools that register a School Clean Up Day event will have access to resources and information to help with classroom activities. Visit www.cleanup.com.au/au/Campaigns/overview-scutd.html to register your event.





We want to hear from you!

Have your students produced some artwork relating to a school sustainability project or have they composed a interesting short story or poem they would like to share? The Landcare Link Newsletter would love to feature inspirational pieces from students across the region. We are also interested to receive information from teachers on the projects and learning activities being undertaken. Students that contribute work will receive an encouragement prize for their efforts.

Toowoomba Environmental Educators Network (TEEN)

The first meeting of the TEEN group will be held in the week of 23 February. The network meets in Toowoomba from 3.30pm - 5pm to share ideas, resources and information in the area of sustainability education. All are welcome to attend. Contact Renee for more information. We are looking at facilitating other networks across the region. If you are interested in starting a group please give us a call on 4637 6224.

Funded by:



Australian Government



Queensland
Government



Green Teacher Award

Clean Up Australia also holds the Green Teacher Award to celebrate and recognise teachers who have been a positive influence on students by carrying out environmental projects within their school community. Visit the website to view the criteria and online nomination form. <http://cleanup.org.au/Campaigns/green-teacher-award.html>

2009 DPI&F Hermitage Research Station Schools' Plant Science Competition

The Plant Science Competition relates well to the Primary connections Plants in action book. The competition starts at the beginning of Term 1 2009 and closes on 22 May 2009. The 2009 topic is "There's a grain in my food!" and focuses on a range of projects looking at the identification of different grains used to feed humans and animals. The winner receives: a medallion, certificate and \$1,000 to go towards books or reference materials for the student's first year of tertiary study. The runner up receives: a medallion, certificate and a 12 month subscription to a science journal of their choice to the value of \$500. To register or for more information contact Kerrie Rubie on 07 4660 3666, email kerrie.rubie@dpi.qld.gov.au or visit www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/4791_4235_ENA_HTML.htm

Waterwise Recognition Program

Queensland primary schools are invited to participate in a Waterwise Recognition Program, which aims to encourage Waterwise attitudes and behaviours through the implementation of the *Water: Learn it for life!* program. Schools that achieve the status of Waterwise School or Lighthouse Waterwise School of Excellence will be eligible to be considered for awards of \$500 and \$5,000 respectively. For more information and to register visit www.nrw.qld.gov.au/waterwise/education.

Water: Learn it for Life! is an excellent online resource providing a well structured approach to water education for early and middle years students. The program was designed by teachers and complements the Queensland Essential Learnings.



Events Calendar

February

- 2 - **World Wetlands Day** www.ramsar.org/wwd/8/wwd2008_index.htm
- 27 - **Clean Up Schools Day** www.cleanup.com.au/au/Campaigns/overview-scud.html

March

- 1 - **Clean Up Australia Day** www.cleanup.com.au
- 2-8 - **Sea Week** www.mesa.edu.au/seaweek.asp
- 7 - **Science is Primary Conference**, Graceville State School www.staq.qld.edu.au/
- 8-14 - **National Groundwater Awareness Week** www.ngwa.org/public/awarenessweek/index.aspx
- 11 - **Environmental Education Conference**, Everton Park State High School www.nudgeebheec.eq.edu.au
- 22 - **World Water Day** www.worldwaterday.org/

April

- 22 - **World Earth Day** www.earthday.net/