



**A Community Coastcare Project**

Helping community volunteers learn about mangroves and monitor environmental change in local estuaries

# Mangrove Watcher

The official newsletter of MangroveWatch Burnett Mary Region

Issue 3

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## **MangroveWatch going strong and expanding!!**

### **'Life in the mangroves' forum**

One hundred people crowded the Hervey Bay Sailing Club to hear about Life in the Mangroves, and MangroveWatch in their region, as well as viewing a mangrove art display, on Saturday morning of the 13th of November last.

MangroveWatchers were joined by additional community enthusiasts, all eager to learn about the programs' success in their region of the Burnett Mary and Wide Bay.



Jock presenting at the recent "Life in the Mangroves' forum.

Photo: MangroveWatch Hub

Dr Norm Duke, Director of the Mangrove Hub at the University of Queensland, explained the wonders and benefits of tidal wetlands – 'No Mangroves, No Fish!' However, the message was clear, mangrove habitats are under threat from increasing human activities and global climate change. The answer locally is to learn more about these threatened habitats, and to enlist people to monitor and assess mangrove condition. This is only possible with the help of local community enthusiasts building knowledge and watching what is going on in their own backyards. Maintaining natural ecosystems in the area is primarily a local issue. And, the MangroveWatch program plays a key role with its partnership between community members and science specialists working together.

### **The Burnett Mary Region's mangroves are being watched!**

Jock Mackenzie, Coordinator of MangroveWatch, told the gathering about how the program works, what it has achieved, and where it is going.

A summary of achievements in the Burnett Mary Region so far:

76 active participants have collected almost 40 hours of video representing almost 300kms of coastline and estuary banks. This represents 150 + hours of community volunteer time and 250 volunteer hours of assessment time for the busy Mangrove Hub team.

The result of all of this hard work has been 9 estuary report cards and dozens of pairs of eyes paying attention to changes in their local waterways. We've been assured that our Burnett Mary teams of Mangrove Watchers are planning more filming trips to keep the footage rolling in!

Be sure to check out our progress at [www.mangrovetwatch.org.au](http://www.mangrovetwatch.org.au)

### More arty mangrovetwatching

It has become a trademark event with MangroveWatch meetings to host an art show. The Hervey Bay events provided another excellent display of local community spirit dedicated to conserving our mangrove coasts and shorelines. The amazing display of mangrove art showcased the unique visual experience that reflects the magnificence of these valuable ecosystems.

Once again, community awareness and appreciation for precious coastal environments was expressed in wonderful artistic detail. A special thanks goes out to our artistic MangroveWatch volunteers: sculptor Bob Anderson; printmaker Sarah Mitchell; and Lindsay and Noela Titmarsh whose brilliant **artwork**

**portrayed** diverse aspects of life in the mangroves.



Artist Liz Sawry presents her work to Norm as winner of the charity art auction in Tin Can Bay during the August re-launch workshop.  
Photo: MangroveWatch Hub

### Where to now?

The role of MangroveWatch is to provide a structure for community groups to monitor environmental condition using a standard practical methodology, share experiences, and build networks to achieve common outcomes.



Members of the Mangrove Hub enjoying the art show in Hervey Bay at the August re-launch.  
Photo: MangroveWatch Hub

The Mangrove Hub has a supporting role delivered in a number of key ways, including: coordination of events; training workshops; information feedback sessions; a point of contact for expert information; standardized assessment of monitoring data as report cards; a facility for community networking within the region; and a platform for sharing information with other regions in Queensland, in Australia, and around the world. It is however, only with local community involvement in well-directed environmental monitoring and assessment that encourages managers to conserve our valuable and beautiful tidal wetland environments.



Learning about tracking mangrove-loving sea turtles from Aub at the August re-launch in Hervey Bay.

Photo: MangroveWatch Hub

Additional funding has been obtained by at least one community group to continue MangroveWatch Program in Burnett Mary region during 2011 (Caring for our Country grants); plus, new funding to start groups in Port Philip Bay and Western Port Bay (Victorian Government), Noosa (Caring for Our Country grant), Trinity Inlet with Traditional Owners (Australian Government plus Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority). Several others are also in the pipeline – with an important group being trained for Moreton Bay region. The latter proposal has strong support from Queensland

Conservation Council, Queensland Wildlife Preservation Society, SE Queensland Catchments, Healthy Waterways Partnership, Brisbane Port Corporation, Brisbane City Council, DERM, and Queensland Fisheries DEEDI.

The MangroveWatch website ([www.mangrovetwatch.org.au](http://www.mangrovetwatch.org.au)) hosted by UQ, and launched in July 2010 – now receives upward of 300 hits per week. The site has received more than 4200 hits from Australia alone. This demonstrates the subject and the issues are of great interest to people around Australia, and the world.

Unique technical innovations are planned that will see the website become an important hub for networking amongst researchers, managers, students, teachers, and enthusiasts seeking information and news on tidal wetland condition and current issues. For this innovation, we have devised a conceptual model for showing coastal shorelines using an online viewing format, to access video imagery collected by community volunteers and others. External funding is being sought for this technical innovation along with our UQ IT partner – the Queensland Cyber Infrastructure Foundation.

We look forward to hearing more!

### **SVAMing Facts Update**

In addition to the MangroveWatch program in Burnett Mary region, members of the Mangrove Hub have been busy using the SVAM (Shoreline Video Assessment Method) program to film other shorelines – some by small boat, and others by helicopter.

- Jock and Norm filmed 300 km of the shoreline of Kien Giang Province in southern Vietnam with GTZ and AusAID,
- Julian filmed 70 km of the Brisbane River as a student project,
- Norm filmed 20 km of Boigu Island in Torres Strait with the local Sea Rangers and Damien Burrows from James Cook University,
- Jock and Norm filmed 63 km of the Daintree River shoreline with students from Stanford University,
- Norm filmed 15 km of the Domgas Pipeline Landing site south of Karratha in WA with colleagues from Aquanel and Chevron,
- Norm was joined by Colin Field to film 36 km of Shute Bay with Save our Shorelines local OUCH community groups, and
- Norm filmed 3 km Heron Island with students from Stanford University,

**In addition, shoreline video image data** has been acquired using **helicopter** for more than 5000 km of coastline from Darwin to Broome by the Mangrove Hub research team including: Norm, Jock, Apanie, Alex and more. This was a project assessing shoreline baseline condition of ecosystems present with PTTEP Australasia.

**Further video data capture** with research projects by Mangrove Hub are scheduled for Solomon Islands in February 2011 (funded by AusAID), other southern Pacific Islands including: Tonga, Vanuatu and Fiji (funded by GTZ and AusAID); and, New Caledonia (funded by Koniambo PL) in May-August 2011.

**MangroveWatch this space!!**

A big thank you goes out to Marc Russell, of Fraser Coast Regional Council, for organizing the 'Life on the Mangroves' event in early November. The event was wonderfully presented and brilliantly delivered. We had plenty of excellent company, good food and enthusiastic conversations.

If you have any questions, please contact MangroveWatch on (07) 3365 2073 or [mangrovewatch@gmail.com](mailto:mangrovewatch@gmail.com). In the meantime, we continue to receive and analyze videos, and offer advice on mangrove matters. We look forward to hear from you soon.

Many thanks and happy Mangrooving!

From your enthusiastic friends at the UQ Mangrove Hub:  
Norm, Jock, Apanie, Britt, Julian & Alex



Jock presenting local report cards to MangroveWatchers in Tin Can Bay at the August re-launch workshop.

Photo: Mangrove Hub