

Seagrass-Watch HQ

From: Seagrass-Watch HQ [hq@seagrasswatch.org]
Sent: Monday, 22 January 2007 8:48 PM
To: Seagrass-Watch HQ
Subject: SEAGRASS-WATCH BULLETIN - 22 January 2007



SEAGRASS-WATCH BULLETIN

22 January 2007

Seagrass-Watch's electronic news service, providing marine and coastal news of international and national interest.

Seagrass-Watch welcomes feedback on the bulletins, and you are free to distribute it amongst your own networks.

NEWS

World Wetlands Day: 2 February 2007

World Wetlands Day is celebrated each year on the 2 of February. It marks the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) in Ramsar, Iran, on 2 February 1971.

World Wetlands Day was first celebrated in 1997. Since this time government agencies, non-government organisations and community groups have celebrated World Wetlands Day by undertaking actions to raise public awareness of wetland values and benefits and promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands.

The international theme for World Wetlands Day 2007 is 'Wetlands and Fisheries', in recognition of the importance of fish and fisheries to all people around the world....*more*
<http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>

Invitation to World Wetlands Day Forum at Boondall Wetlands (Brisbane, Australia) January 2007

Boondall Wetlands Environment Centre will once again be hosting a free Forum evening with a panel of specialists in Wetlands and Fisheries on Wednesday 31st January 2007.

One of the speakers is Kurt Derbyshire DPI&F who will speak on *Managing Queensland's Fish Habitats To Sustain Fisheries*

An evening of stimulating presentations and discussion over wine and cheese at Boondall Wetlands Environment Centre (31 Paperbark Drive, Boondall), 6-9pm. Wine and cheese will be served from 5:45pm. Bookings are essential: please call the Brisbane City Call Centre on 3403

8888....[more http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

SeaRead profiles Seagrass-Watch Local Coordinator Lux Foot (Australia)

November/December 2006

The latest edition of SeaRead, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's Marine Park news from catchment to coral, has profiled Lux Foot, Seagrass-Watch coordinator of Bushland Beach.

Lux Foot has been involved in the Seagrass Watch programme for four years and says he will stay with the programme for as long as he can manage to get out there and monitor seagrass. The 69-year-old retired nursery worker became involved in Seagrass-Watch through his involvement with the Rotary Club.

He says he enjoys the volunteer work as it allows him to use his background in horticulture and he is interested in learning about different plant environments. "I love learning about new things and the marine environment is very interesting. ...

[more http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

Croc attacks policeman in Torres Strait (Queensland, Australia)

Monday, January 8, 2007. 7:12pm (AEDT)

An off-duty policeman has escaped from an attack by a large crocodile in the Torres Strait in far north Queensland. Sergeant Jeff Tanswell from Thursday Island police station was snorkelling on a reef near Adolphus Island when the croc attacked him about 15 metres from shore just after 12pm AEST. He was at the reef with his wife, who is also a police officer, and three other off-duty police officers. It is believed he was attacked from behind by the crocodile, which grabbed him by the head and shoulders and pulled him under the water. The crocodile swam away and his wife managed to get him back into the boat. He suffered wounds to his face and ear, but his injuries are not life-threatening..... [more http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

Seagrass-Watch has monitoring sites in the region [more http://www.seagrasswatch.org/torres_strait.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/torres_strait.html)

Man of sod takes on grasses of sea (Florida, USA)

By TIMES WIRES, December 17, 2006

When Hillsborough County leaders threatened to shut down Jim Anderson's favorite fishing spot, he fought back. There were no fists or fighting words, merely a rigged pontoon boat and organic seagrass food.

It was 1995 when county commissioners threatened to close parts of Cockroach Bay because much of the area's seagrass beds had been destroyed by boat propellers. Cockroach Bay had lost 80 percent of its sea grass, more than anywhere else in Florida. Anderson disagreed with county officials' logic. "You don't close a road when it has a lot of potholes," he said. "You fix it". So Anderson, a sod farmer by trade, began devising ways to fix the prop scars.

In a barn on his Ruskin property, Anderson and some friends rigged an "injection vessel." The boat inserted a nutritional mix in the prop scars to encourage seagrass growth. His efforts resulted in a significant visual improvement in Cockroach Bay's seagrass population. Full story http://www.sptimes.com/2006/12/17/Northoftampa/Man_of_sod_takes_on_g.shtml

FROM THE FIELD

First Team Seagrass Field Orientation at Chek Jawa (Singapore) Jan 21, 2007

It was a rather gloomy first field orientation for TeamSeagrass at Chek Jawa on 20 Jan 07. And it was not just due to the weather. Adelle and Choon Beng had earlier updated TeamSeagrass about the mass death at Chek Jawa. We steeled ourselves, but still our hearts broke when we arrived. Carpet anemones and sea cucumbers appear to be the main casualties. Despite the sombre scene and smell of death everywhere, TeamSeagrass carried on with our mission. The cause of death? Possibly the huge influx of freshwater from the Johor River due to the recent massive flooding there, following the highest recorded rainfall in 100 years. Chek Jawa lies just at the mouth of the Johor River. Locally, Singapore has also experienced record rainfall. All that freshwater probably affected the osmotic pressure of these marine animals. Adelle shared that the Ubin villagers say this sort of thing has happened before in the past. And Chek Jawa eventually recovers. So there's some hope yet. We're trying to find out more about this. For more information, visit <http://teamseagrass.blogspot.com/>

GALLERY

Yule Point (Cairns, Qld): 20 January 2007

<http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

*Seagrass-Watch HQ sampled Yule Point on Saturday. Although the tides were not the greatest, sampling was completed. A new patch of *Zostera capricorni* was discovered close to YP1 with dugong feeding trails abundant at YP2.*

Fiji: January 2007 <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

Seagrass-Watch HQ visited Fiji in early 2007 to monitor the four Seagrass-Watch Sites on the islands of Viti Levu and Ovalau and catch up with Seagrass-Watch teams. Below are images from Seagrass-Watch sites on Viti Levu - NN2, TQ1 and SV1, and on Ovalau - CW1 and CW2.

Singapore: 14 January 2007 <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

"The very 1st TeamSeagrass indoor orientation kicked off today with many people, great talks, yummy snacks and drinks! Everyone listened intently as Ria gave an introduction of our shores and what you can find there. Next, Siti took over and gave us lots of juicy green details on seagrass biology and of SeagrassWatch. Of course, she also took pains to drive home the important message that "algae are not seagrasses!". The fun part began when volunteers got into action and form groups to do 'dry runs'. Siti gave us a briefing and demonstration on what to do... Weiling also chipped in (with a serious look - we mean real seagrass business!) to get the ball rolling...Dr Shawn Lum, got some 'specimens' and helped explained the seagrass monitoring methods". Text: Team Seagrass-Singapore. TeamSeagrass Website <http://teamseagrass.blogspot.com/>

Semakau (Singapore): 02 January 2007 <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/gallery.html>

*"A frolicking great start to 2007. Team Seagrass spent the new year with the green and grassy denizens of Chek Jawa. We were joined by Chay Hoon of WildFilms and Joe Lai who did a survey of coastal plants of CJ. We were Seagrassers with a mission, and that was to do a bit of *Halophila beccarii* spotting and to plot the areas suitable for Seagrass-Watch transects. And so we trekked across the flats of CJ, with a single-mindedness rarely seen (if ever) on previous recce trips. The reward was sweet and the weary pilgrims rejoiced by going down on all fours to meet these enigmatic little plants (and they were very little). In keeping with tradition on its hallowed ground, we made a New Years' Day toast to Chek Jawa- may there be many more years of untouched glory - and to Team Seagrass :)" Text: Team Seagrass-Singapore. TeamSeagrass Website <http://teamseagrass.blogspot.com/>*

FROM HQ**Future sampling dates** <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html#SAMPL>

Now is the time to plan your sampling for 2007. Please send your sampling dates to hq@seagrasswatch.org so they can be posted on the website and to assist HQ with possible training visits/workshops.

Please note: all sampling dates and times are provided by local coordinators and monitoring groups. Seagrass-Watch HQ provides technical support and does not direct local on-ground activities with the exception of Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Protection Plan biological monitoring (RWQPP).

For any other Giveaways (incl. Phytoplankton Guide, Manual for Assessing Fish Stocks on Pacific Corral Reefs, Seagrass Biology) - <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/shop.html#GIVE1>**Seagrass-Watch News Issue 27** <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/newsletters.html>**Handy Seagrass Links** <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/links.html>

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Seagrass-Watch is supported by the Marine & Tropical Scientific Research Facility (Department of Environment & Heritage), the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), the Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (EPA), the David & Lucile Packard Foundation and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries.

Seagrass-Watch Bulletin is compiled by Rudi Yoshida & Len McKenzie.