

'i sea, i care' Ambassadors in Action...

On a beautiful sunny day Ambassadors from local Dandenong schools took part in their first Catchment workshop. We met at Dandenong Wetlands on Stud Road to watch the Melbourne Water crew empty the net bags in the creek that collect large pieces of rubbish. Then it was over to Dallas and Simonette to plant a host of native wetland tubestock into the parkland.

The afternoon saw us move to another great location at Tirhatuan Park, home of the World Wetland Day festival in February. Here the students learnt about

water testing for oxygen, phosphates and turbidity. The Ambassadors then thoroughly enjoyed getting wet looking for freshwater invertebrates in the ponds.

To complete the day, the Ambassadors collected bags of litter from around the park.

Many thanks to Kirstine, Dallas and Simonette from the council, Mitch Peters and the Melbourne Water crew, and Jess and Kristin from DRI for making the day possible.



WINTER WHALES

Winters in our bays and surrounding coastal waters have become a busy time for whale activity. Humpback and southern right whales are being seen regularly in our waters.

Hunted to the edge of extinction during the industrial whaling era, humpback and southern right whales are making a comeback, though the latter still have a long way to go. The east coast population of humpback whales is expected to reach around 26,000 animals this season.

The news is not so good for the slow-to-reproduce southern right whale, with their southeast Australian numbers estimated to be between just 224 and 251.

The Dolphin Research Institute has joined with Wildlife Coast Cruises and Killer Whales Australia to form the citizen science initiative; Two Bays Whale Project. We invite people and organisations to report sightings

and contribute images of whales to a collaborative database. This forms the basis of an annual summary that is available to wildlife managers and other government organisations to assist with management decisions and conservation measures.

Data collected over the years can be used to compare sighting rates and monitor changes in behaviour. It gives an overall understanding to trends in numbers of animals visiting our waters.



dolphinresearch.org.au/sightings
or facebook.com/twobayswhales/



DRI Image, Phillip Island 2016

Victoria's whale watching regulations prevent boats from approaching whales closer than 200 metres. For PWCs (jetskis and the like) the minimum distance is 300 metres. Serious penalties apply for breaches of this regulation.

