



## BIRDS, BUGS AND A LITTLE BIT OF BLING!!



Pencil Park is an amazing wetland reserve tucked away in a quiet corner of Keysborough. Quiet was not the word for the recent workshop, however, as we were treated to the sounds of several of the native frogs that live here as the Ambassadors learned all about them from Jess.

Black-tailed cockatoos flew past as the students headed off to slip back in time with indigenous guide Dean. A look at the macro invertebrates of the wetlands and then a dolphin and whale fin activity rounded off the days' workshop.

No session here is complete without a barbecue and the kids couldn't resist playing in the puddles that had formed after the heavy rain the day before. A spectacular end to a busy year.

Congratulations to all Ambassadors for an amazing year of hard work and real achievements in your school communities.

Many thanks to Kirstine Oh from the City of Greater Dandenong bush crew and Dean Stewart from ATEAM for your wonderful knowledge and enthusiasm.



Ambassador of the Year - Melek Duman (Mt Hira College)

Fundraiser - Silverton PS

Outstanding Contribution - Em Emile Blake (Silverton PS)



## ONE BLOWHOLE OR TWO?

Dolphins and whales, being mammals, need to breathe air just like we do. Living in water obviously creates a challenge as they need to come to the surface to do this. Consequently the blowhole(s) are located on the top of the head, behind the skull. These blowholes are akin to our nostrils.

In the ancestor of all modern whales and dolphins, they were located in the same place, on the face. This ancestor lived around 50 million years ago and was a small, deer-like animal that lived on land. As evolutionary changes occurred, the nostrils gradually migrated to the top of the head to allow the animals to become completely amphibious.

But why do some species only have one blowhole when we have two nostrils? The answer lies in the communication used by each species. In whales like humpbacks, blue and southern rights, there are still two blowholes. These whales are called baleen whales as they have baleen plates in their mouth instead of teeth.

For all the dolphins and toothed whales such as sperm whales, however, there is only one blowhole - the other one has evolved into the sonar centre that these animals use to communicate, navigate and also hunt! These sounds travel through the water as pressure waves and bounce back off schools of fish, boats and reefs.

Look out for our two dolphin species, the bottlenose and common, this summer and marvel at their amazing history.



Above: common dolphin (Port Phillip) Below: humpback whale calf (Bass Strait) DRI images

