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DOLPHIN RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Newsletter

Term Three 2026

City of Casey

RESEARCH | EDUCATION | LEADERSHIP

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COASTAL WORKSHOP

We had a beautiful day for our Coastal Workshop in Tooradin beginning with Jen and her awesome team from Casey Council. Ambassadors enjoyed a walk-and-talk along Sawtells Inlet, and then participated in a fantastic planting session, which they all took to with great enthusiasm!

Ambassadors loved their session with the fabulous Lionel from Living Culture, who wowed everyone with his knowledge of our Indigenous history and his amazing indigenous artefacts. We then got hands on during the Sand Sort activity, with Ambassadors racing to identify marine litter items. We followed up with a great discussion regarding a range of solutions to the litter items through reduction, reusing and recycling.

Ambassadors were treated to afternoon snack and there were smiles all around as they returned to school to share their new knowledge with their communities. Thank you to Jen and the City of Casey, Living Culture, and our ISIC teachers and parent/carers for transporting Ambassadors to the Workshop we are so grateful for your support!

RESEARCH NEWS

The DRI Research Team had a fantastic experience during one of their winter survey of common dolphins and whales off the Phillip Island and the Bunurong Coast with two very close encounters with humpback whales that were interacting with drift algae. One of the whales approached the vessel to a distance of only a couple of metres, giving the team some fantastic photographic opportunities.

In reviewing the images, the team discovered two interesting things. Firstly, that cyamids (whale lice) were visible in a couple of images but that wasn't all, on closer inspection, the hair that emerges from the tubercles of the humpback whale were also visible.

If you want to get involved with our whale and dolphin citizen scienc project, Podwatch scan the QR code to find out how!

Pod Watch
REPORT DOLPHIN AND WHALE SIGHTINGS

Two Bays Whale Project
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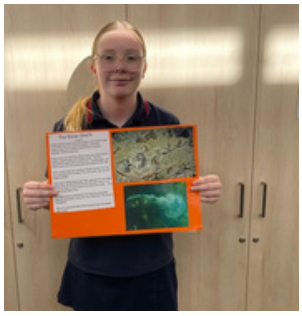
AMBASSADOR HIGHLIGHTS

The awesome ISIC Coordinator Bec and her Ambassadors from Christ Our Holy Redeemer organised a whole school World Ocean's Day event! The day began with a school assembly where ISIC leaders presented on the importance of our oceans, where they are located and the impact humans are having on them. This was followed by a parade of all the costumes.

Students then participated in allocated activities including an ocean themed scavenger hunt, a water pollution activity, and an Art competition. Pictured are some of the fantastic artworks produced. In addition, STEM students turned something old into something new using a cardboard tube and scrap materials to make an animal. The Grade 5/6's used one piece of scrap paper to create the longest paper chain possible with the final chain reaching over 3m!

What a fantastic effort from Bec and her Ambassadors to educate the whole school on marine conservation!!

St Anne's Marine Ambassadors have also been busy building a Sustainability Wall at school. They also researched and created fantastic posters on some of the marine creature that live in our bay. What a great idea to produce educational materials to educate their school on some of the beautiful local marine animals and how everyone can help to protect them. Well done to Michael and his Ambassadors!



COMING UP: DOVETON SHOW

Looking for something awesome to do with your family and friends this school holidays, and have fun while you help the planet? Come and visit the DRI stall to talk all things whales, dolphins and marine conservation at Myuna Farm on Sunday, September 20!

The Doveton show is in it's 21st year, and we are so grateful to be once again invited to join the amazing City of Casey as they host this fantastic family friendly, waste wise festival!! We hope to see you there!

Image: Paul Kreutzer

LIFE OF A SHORE CRAB POEM

The tide rolls in and out, but no day is the same.
This is the story of me, shore crab is my name.
Life by the shore is full of ups and downs –
listen to me and I'll tell you how.

Across the water the sun comes up
and the rays shine over my special rock.
Although there's danger on the big wide beach,
I leave my safe spot 'cause it's time to eat.

I scuttle around on my eight walking legs,
picking at seagrass, kelp, and things that are dead.
With an eye on the sky to watch for birds flying low,
another on the rocks for crabs stealing my home.

If I get into a fight with a cheeky home-pincher
I can protect myself from a jabbing pincer.
Unlike you, I don't have bones on the inside,
but my shell made of chitin is what keeps me alive.

However, this protection does have one fault,
as I grow bigger I need to moult.
Too big for my shell, the pressure builds up,
and across my back a crack opens up.

Bit by bit I wriggle myself out
until my old shell sits empty on the ground.
For the next few hours I lay pretty low
as I'm squishy and soft and my legs won't go!

Once my shell hardens up, I can walk and I'm safe,
and it's time to set off and find me a mate.
For countless years we've bred in the intertidal,
and now it's my turn to continue that cycle.

You might be surprised to learn that we have tails
which are 'U-shaped' for females and 'V-shaped' for males.
Our tails are bent under our body, in between our legs.
Between her tail and her belly, a female carries her eggs.

She carries thousands of tiny eggs at a time,
splashing them with water to keep them alive.
When the tiny babies hatch they get washed away
and drift in the currents throughout their larval stage.

After a few body changes, they will begin to settle.
Floating down to the seafloor where their new
legs start to scuttle.
Soon my babies will follow that path too,
floating around in the endless blue.

So here I am looking for a mate and growing strong,
ensuring the next generation will continue to go on.
So be sure to look after our oceans and intertidal zones,
and that way shore crabs like me, have a place to call home.

To read the rest of our 'Discover Port Phillip: Water & Wildlife stories' scan the QR code.