

## Ecosystem on view at Rowes Bay

Residents and visitors to Townsville now have a new way to soak up spectacular views of Rowes Bay while learning more about the importance of the city's diverse coastal ecosystem.

A new 35 square metre viewing platform, made from recycled plastic, protrudes over the existing rock face, offering enhanced views of Rowes Bay.

Environment and Sustainable Development Committee chairman, Cr Vern Veitch, said the new platform offered new ways to connect with the coastal environment and intertidal zone.

"This is about giving residents and visitors the chance to discover and learn more about the local marine environment without actually impacting on it," Cr Veitch said.

"From here, you can see a vast array of sea creatures and plant life, including coral species and the many different habitats that shelter and sustain our marine creatures.

"Signage on the platform offers information about the abundant life within the mangroves, the rocks, the seagrass and the mud flats, and how different species form part of a much larger and complex ecosystem.

"It's also an opportunity for people to develop a greater understanding of how our marine communities are constantly changing along with the seasons and the tides."

The valuable work carried out by volunteer groups, including Seagrass Watch, Mundy Creek Watch and the Belgian Gardens State School Rowes Bay Junior Rangers, has also been recognised in the project.

The \$80,000 platform is being built by council through the assistance of State and Federal Government grants.

The Rowes Bay platform is located on the edge of the foreshore at the corner of Cook Street and the Esplanade, and will complement the Borrow Pits to Rowes Bay Learnscapes Project that links over 20 different points across Townsville and Magnetic Island by an eco-trail.

## CityLibraries receives heritage award for lecture series

CityLibraries has won a Queensland Heritage Award for its Sir Robert Philp Lecture Series on the history of the Townsville region.

At a ceremony in Brisbane in August, CityLibraries received a silver Governor's Heritage Award, organised by the National Trust of Queensland.

The award recognises outstanding work undertaken by individuals, local government authorities or commercial entities. It assesses the understanding of heritage values, actions towards conservation or promotion and

evidence of good planning.

Queensland Governor, Her Excellency, Penelope Wensley, presented the award to CityLibraries' coordinator of lifelong learning, historian Dr Judith Jensen, at a function at Government House.

The Sir Robert Philp Lecture Series ran from May last year to June this year as a local Q150 celebration in Townsville.

Dr Jensen said she was proud to receive the award on behalf of CityLibraries and fellow librarian and historian, Trisha Fielding.

"We're honoured to receive this award from a leading heritage organisation," she said.

"Their recognition of the contribution of the project to Queensland's 150th birthday celebrations makes all our hard work worthwhile.

"It is gratifying that, through our historical lecture series, we reached a new audience who are



CityLibraries' Trisha Fielding holds the Queensland Heritage Award won recently.

eager for us to provide more historical lectures. These are scheduled for later in the year.

"This award is not just for CityLibraries but also for those people who attended the lectures each month and for the presenters whose lectures were colourful and

interesting.

"It was the combined enthusiasm of staff, presenters and audience at the Sir Robert Philp Lecture Series that made it so successful."

Transcripts and audio from the lectures are available at [www.townsville.qld.gov.au](http://www.townsville.qld.gov.au).

## Slip, slop, slap, slide and seek for safety over summer

We may be officially still in spring, but with temperatures venturing over the 30°C mark each day, it's time to mentally and physically prepare for summer.

For many years we've heard the familiar Slip Slop Slap message, but according to Townsville's SunSafety Steering Committee member, Julie Witty, our scorching climate demands more.

"Suitable clothing, sunscreen and hats are absolutely essential as we

head outdoors for the warmer months, but it's equally important to protect our eyes with sunglasses and seek out a shady spot during the hottest part of the day to fully protect ourselves from the dangers of the sun," Ms Witty said.

Townsville's SunSafety program, a Together Townsville partnership between Townsville City Council and Suncorp, has worked for several years to build community awareness and encourage

residents to be more proactive when it comes to sun safety. The group provides shade marquees, attends events and supports sporting and community groups to improve their response to sun safety.

"While there may be some exceptions, locals should expect UV ratings to be extreme right across the summer, and respond by taking precautions to stay out of the sun between 11am

**STINGER NETS WILL BE INSTALLED AT BEACHES ACROSS TOWNSVILLE IN THE FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER.**

and 3pm wherever possible, and always wearing adequate protection, including shirts, hats and sunglasses, as well as a high SPF sunscreen," Ms Witty said.

Locals and visitors are also heading to the water as the weather heats up, and Surf Life Saving Queensland lifeguards have warned swimmers to be aware of the dangers posed by the forthcoming stinger season.

The group regularly checks the water for stingers, but beach-goers need to be aware of the higher risk of being stung by marine stingers between November and May.

Matthew Bishop, from Surf Life Saving Queensland, said to avoid being stung, swimmers should swim only in netted and patrolled areas, wear a protective stinger body suit, and of course, never swim alone, or enter the water if the beach is closed. It is also recommended swimmers enter the water slowly, to give stingers a chance to move away.

Lifeguards urge swimmers not to sit on, or interfere with the plastic pontoons that line stinger nets, as this greatly increases the risks of being stung by jellyfish tentacles reaching through, or being pushed up against the barrier.



Lilli (5) and Thomas (7) find out about beach safety from SLSQ lifeguard David Xabregas. With summer approaching, council is urging residents to take extra safety precautions from the sun and marine stingers.