

News from...

healthy habitats  
AN INITIATIVE OF THE BURNETT MARY REGIONAL GROUP



## Bundy to Burrum Trek

On 30 January, the 'Bundy to the Burrum' field trip brought together more than 60 people in 25 4wds from across the Wide Bay region, including families, educators and members of local 4WD clubs. The activity will support the development of a Code of Practice for recreational access to Tidal Wetlands and a Best Management Practice document and Training program for Commercial and Recreation users of Sandy Foreshores.

People took the opportunity to learn more about the fabulous coastal zone which makes up part of the northern extent of the Great Sandy Biosphere. With funding from the Burnett Mary Regional Group (BMRG) through Caring for our Country, Dave Darmody from P7Offroad and Michelle Haase from OceanWatch Australia headed up the group. Meeting in Bundaberg, the group formed a loose convoy for a full day stopping at Coonarr Beach, Palm Beach, Theodolite Creek and Walker's Point.

Coonarr Beach provided an excellent example of uncontrolled access to saltmarsh and mangrove communities adjacent to the beach to get participants thinking about management techniques. The convoy then slowly wound its way towards Palm Beach which presented another talking point based on differences in hydrology and coastal process compared to other beaches in the region.

At Theodolite Creek, at the northern end of Woodgate, Michelle from OceanWatch Australia discussed measures that are planned to restrict access to the foredunes adjacent to the public boat ramp. Lively discussion ensued about the merit of fences as opposed to community education, with most of the participants understanding, some for the first time, the pressures placed on the delicate pioneer species by careless vehicle access.

After a successful trek, the convoy ended up at Walkers Point on the Burrum River, where participants 'aired up' their tyres for the trip home along the highway. All participants were given an information pack which included an invitation to join the Technical Working Group who are developing the Code of Practice and related documents, and the online discussion forum at [www.4x4training.com.au](http://www.4x4training.com.au)

If you would like to get involved, or would like more information on the process and progress please contact Dave from P7Offroad – Accredited Offroad Driver Training on 0417 761 610 or [dave@P7Offroad.com.au](mailto:dave@P7Offroad.com.au).

Photos: D Darmody



Photo: M Connell



## Nesting time for the Elseya

As part of conservation efforts for the White Throated Snapping Turtle, Elseya albagula, the Burnett Catchment Care Association (BCCA) needs people to keep an eye on nesting areas along the Burnett River near South Kolan.

Nesting season for the turtle starts in March with most turtles only laying one clutch per year. Shallow nests are dug on the river banks, with eggs remaining underground until December when the hatchlings emerge.

BCCA is working with the Dept of Environment and Resource Management and other partners on the recovery of this freshwater turtle that only occurs in the Burnett, Fitzroy and Mary Catchments.

One of the unique attributes of this turtle is its ability to absorb oxygen under water through their cloacal bursae, giving them the nickname of being 'bum breathers'.

One of the key threats to their survival is poor breeding success due to the predation of nests by foxes and wild dogs. BCCA is working with local landholders to undertake fox baiting, erect fences to prevent trampling by stock, and assist in the use of nest protection devices in an attempt to help the Elseya.

For more information on these conservation efforts or to become involved, contact BCCA on (07) 4165 3551