SNORKELING AUSTRALIA’S UNDERWATER MEADOWS
DEAR EARTHWATCHER

I am delighted you have decided to join this program and look forward to meeting you soon. This program forms part of Healthy Waterways recently expanded monitoring program. Healthy Waterways is a not-for-profit NGO dedicated to ensuring that scientific knowledge and understanding is applied to the management of South East Queensland waterways. Our aim is to ensure that the community and decision makers understand the intrinsic ecological, social and economic values of maintaining healthy waterways. To achieve this, we produce a Healthy Waterways report card that focuses community and political attention on waterway issues.

Healthy Waterways led the world in monitoring to support management in 1999, when it launched the Ecosystem Health Monitoring Program (EHMP). This is one of the first times, in the world that a regional environmental report card was used to synthesis complex environmental data and influence waterway management. Fifteen years on, Healthy Waterways is still leading the world in this waterway monitoring, and is now expanding the program to meet the changing information needs of waterway managers.

The objective of Healthy Waterways monitoring and reporting is to provide information that inspires and informs actions to achieve healthy waterways. In addition to the traditional environmental indicators, we are implementing indicators that quantify the social and economic aspects of waterway management, demonstrating the community benefits of waterways that extend beyond environmental aspects.

This Earthwatch program will provide substantial components of the annual assessment of seagrass habitats in Moreton Bay, arguably the most important natural asset of the bay. The seagrass of Moreton Bay support numerous animals through the provision of food and shelter from predation. Without extensive seagrass meadows in Moreton Bay, some species could go regionally extinct and other species would have large declines in their populations.

This is the first time volunteer scientists will be contributing information that forms a core component of Healthy Waterways annual report card. The Healthy Waterways Scientific Expert Panel on Coastal Ecosystems designed the sampling program to ensure the data collected is of optimal use and relevance to managers.

Participants in this program will be responsible for establishing a long term data set on the extent and condition of seagrass in Moreton Bay as well as providing an early warning if seagrass meadows begin to decline. The program has been designed to include an assessment of the major threat to seagrass [dirty water and mud from adjacent catchments] as well as seagrass condition. As Moreton Bay is a RAMSAR wetland, this information is of both national and international significance.

I am looking forward to working with you in the field to achieve our common interest of providing knowledge that will help the South East Queensland community preserve the amazing underwater habitats of Moreton Bay.

Dr. James Udy
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GENERAL INFORMATION
SNORKELING AUSTRALIA'S UNDERWATER MEADOWS

EARTHWATCH SCIENTISTS
Dr. James Udy [Science Under Sail Australia]
Dr. Alistair Grinham [University of Queensland]
Dr. Paul Maxwell [Healthy Waterways, Griffith University]
Prof. Rod Connolly [Griffith University]
Dr. Tim Stevens [Griffith University]
Dr. Chris Roelfsema [University of Queensland]

RESEARCH SITE
Moreton Bay, Queensland, Australia.

EXPEDITION DATES
Team 1: March 24–27, 2017
Team 2: September 3–6, 2017

Complete travel information is not available in this version of the briefing.
Please contact Earthwatch with any questions.
Read this expedition briefing thoroughly. It provides the most accurate information available at the time of your Earthwatch scientist’s project planning, and will likely answer any questions you have about the project. However, please also keep in mind that research requires improvisation, and you may need to be flexible. Research plans evolve in response to new findings, as well as to unpredictable factors such as weather, equipment failure, and travel challenges. To enjoy your expedition to the fullest, remember to expect the unexpected, be tolerant of repetitive tasks, and try to find humor in difficult situations. If there are any major changes in the research plan or field logistics, Earthwatch will make every effort to keep you well informed before you go into the field.
THE STORY

Moreton Bay in South East Queensland is an iconic marine ecosystem, as it provides habitat that supports dugongs, turtles, shore birds and many other species. The combination of muddy habitats on the western side of the Bay, sandy habitats on the Eastern side of the Bay, corals and large areas dominated by seagrass allows the Bay to support highly diverse marine life, including dolphins, dugongs, turtles and more than 43 species of shorebirds (Queensland Environmental Protection Agency). The bay is ranked among the top ten dugong habitats in Australia (Queensland Environmental Protection Agency), and is the only place in Australia where herds of dugongs gather. Furthermore, the loggerhead turtle population in Moreton Bay is the most significant in the country. It was declared a Marine Park and listed as a RAMSAR site in 1993. RAMSAR sites are sites that have been nominated by the RAMSAR Convention, which is formally known as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat. These sites were nominated because they are rare, unique or representative wetlands, important for conserving biological diversity. Moreton Bay was added to this list due to its significance in terms of providing habitat for many marine and shore animals, as well as being a critical link between the estuaries of South East Queensland and the Pacific Ocean.

It is one of Queensland’s most important coastal resources, but is being threatened by Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, which is a rapidly expanding city only 14 km away from the bay. This puts the marine ecosystems of Moreton Bay under extreme danger of degradation or loss, due to the increasing pollution from the adjacent catchment. The greatest threat to Moreton Bay is the increased levels of mud and toxins entering the Bay from surrounding areas. These anthropogenic inputs are harmful to the plants and macro invertebrates living in the bay, resulting in a decrease in the abundance of species that make up the base of the food chain that support the important populations of dugongs, turtles and shore birds.
It is clear that Moreton Bay is in danger, and it will be disastrous for the species that currently inhabit it if it becomes overly degraded by human impacts and climate change. This project aims to collect ecological data on the condition of seagrass habitats and macro invertebrate communities, as well as quantify critical processes within the meadows and determine the extent of anthropogenic threats, such as mud and turbidity (dirty water). Seagrass habitats form the base of the food webs for many vulnerable or endangered species that exist in Moreton Bay, including dugongs, turtles and migratory shorebirds. By better understanding the condition of seagrass and the threats they are currently exposed to, it is possible to identify changes in management practices that can reduce harm to these important habitats and ultimately improve the health of species that depend upon them for food and/or protection.

THE RESEARCH

This project will integrate a community-monitoring program into an established regional monitoring program. Healthy Waterways was the first organization in Australia to use an environmental report card to deliver complex scientific data in a clear format. They have been reporting annually for 12 years, providing annual updates on the health of many aquatic ecosystems to the community, environmental managers and politicians. The integration of this Earthwatch program will enhance the quality of ecological data that can be collected, demonstrate the value of volunteer programs in ecological monitoring and provide a new avenue for educating community members on the main impacts on marine ecosystems.

The project aims to:

• Create a long-term data set that will enable ecological shifts, due to changes in water quality and climate change, to be identified quickly and brought to the attention of the community, environmental managers and politicians.

• Assist Healthy Waterways to maintain and enhance the condition of the South East Queensland waterways and support the implementation of management practices that provide sustainable use and benefit from the waterways. This can only be achieved by providing ecological information to support knowledge-based management decisions. This research project will be integrated into the various monitoring and research programs that Healthy Waterways undertakes or supports to ensure that the information collected is relevant to resource managers, and the findings are regularly synthesized and provided to resource managers, politicians and the community.

In order to achieve all of these project aims, 3 important aspects of Moreton Bay’s ecology need to be quantified. Therefore, the objectives of the project are to:

1. Quantify changes in the sediment composition in Moreton Bay.
2. Maintain an up-to-date map of seagrass extent and condition in Moreton Bay and work with scientists to measure critical processes that make seagrass resilient.
3. Establish a long-term data set of small fish and other marine animals that inhabit the seagrass meadows. This project has three themed objectives:

HOW YOU WILL HELP

Gathering all of the necessary data to achieve this project requires people power, which is where you come in. You’ll help with all aspects of the fieldwork. You will also help process samples taken and compare our findings with findings from previous expeditions to establish whether there have been changes throughout the years. There are tasks associated with each of the three objectives, and they are as follows:

OBJECTIVE 1—Maintain an up-to-date map of seagrass extent and condition in Moreton Bay and work with scientists to measure critical processes that make seagrass resilient.

• Collect visual observations at specific locations on seagrass presence/absence and condition (will be snorkeling in order to do this).

• Use observations, remote sensing and underwater video to map seagrass extent and condition in the Moreton Bay region.

• Quantify the benthic light throughout a tidal cycle, determine the impact of seagrass on sediment resuspension and deposition, and investigate nutrient release rates from seagrass meadows compared to bare sediment.

OBJECTIVE 2—Establish a long-term data set of small fish and other marine animals that inhabit the seagrass meadows.

• Setting up baited remote underwater videos (BRUVS) to survey the marine life in the seagrass meadows. This will involve setting bait and attaching it to an underwater camera, and then retrieving the video later to see what came by to check it out. BRUVS are a standard methodology for abundance surveys of marine life. Between setting and retrieving the camera, you have some time to explore seagrass meadows.
TRAINING

While we sail to Tangalooma Resort, we’ll have lectures and training sessions to orient you to the general biogeography, flora and fauna of the region. Another talk will be given on the “dos and don’ts” of fieldwork, including the most likely hazards and ways to avoid and/or deal with them. All volunteers will be trained in a variety of field skills and survey techniques.

Demonstrations will be given on each separate activity in the field prior to commencement of that technique. These will include:

- Using a sediment grab or corer to sample the sediment. This activity will be done from the boat. If you’re lucky, you may be able to see dolphins, whales and dugongs swim by!
- Using sieves to analyze sediment particle sizes.
- Using virtual observations, remote sensing and underwater video to map the seagrass coverage and assess its condition. An underwater camera will be dropped from the boat and you will film and take GPS points of the seagrass as you cruise along. You will also get to snorkel along transects near the shore to collect seagrass samples. On the first day you will need to perform a swim/snorkel test in order to be able to snorkel throughout the rest of the trip. A snorkel demonstration can be given if requested.
- How to bait and secure an underwater camera, and how to position them for best video monitoring. BRUVS are a fascinating way to see what’s happening under the water.

Additional talks will be given on

- The Healthy Waterways program—how it has provided the foundation to support knowledge-based decision-making in relation to the management of waterways for over 20 years.
- The role of seagrass in maintaining healthy coastal ecosystems, with a focus on their importance in supporting vulnerable and endangered marine vertebrates as well as commercial and recreational fisheries.

Once all of the training and talks are done, you will have a swimming and snorkeling assessment and perhaps undertake our first bit of fieldwork. Then, you can explore the island and the resort until dinner and will then have more free time in the evening. Days 2-3 will be full days of fieldwork, with some laboratory work and data analysis in the evenings. There are many activities for you to do at the resort during your free time.

TRANSPORT AND DRIVING POLICY

Tangalooma does not allow cars on the resort, but you will see people driving around in golf buggies. However, it is an Earthwatch Policy that participants may not drive any type of vehicle while on the project. This includes time that has been designated as non-research time. Participants who ignore this policy and do drive or ride in another participant’s vehicle during the project will be doing so at their own risk and will not be covered under the Earthwatch insurance policy for the expedition.

ITINERARY AND DAILY SCHEDULE

Weather and research needs can lead to changes in the daily schedule. It may be necessary to have land only days if the water is too rough or it is raining too hard to do the water-based field activities. However, there are plenty of activities that can still be undertaken from the island if required. Please understand if the daily schedule changes due to weather.

TYPICAL DAY IN THE FIELD

A typical day of field sampling will involve getting up early and having breakfast at 7:00 am then preparing equipment for the day’s activities. The team will be broken up into several groups and will rotate through the different research activities. These activities are dependent on the tide times, so different activities will be done at different times during the tidal cycle. Each participant will get the chance to do each activity. You will return to the resort around 5:00 pm each evening, giving you time to clean up and relax before dinner. Some nights after dinner you will be required to do additional laboratory work with the samples collected throughout the day and/or to analyze the data. You will also have free time during some of the evenings when
you can relax and unwind after a hard day’s work.

## DAY 1: ARRIVAL DAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Meet at the rendezvous in Brisbane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Sail to Tangalooma Resort on Moreton Island with talks on safety, logistics, and sampling techniques along the way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and settle in to the accommodation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m. | **FIELD ACTIVITIES:**
|               | • Sampling sediment from the boat or on land |
|               | • Mapping seagrass using video footage and remote sensing equipment |
|               | • Snorkeling to collect seagrass samples |
|               | • Setting and collecting BRUVs |
|               | • Setting up measuring devices such as light loggers, sediment traps and benthic nutrient flux chambers. |
| 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. | Dinner |

## DAYS 2-3: FIELDWORK DAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m. | • Breakfast
|               | • Prepare equipment |
| Morning      | **FIELD ACTIVITIES:**
|               | • Sampling sediment from the boat or on land |
|               | • Mapping seagrass using video footage and remote sensing equipment |
|               | • Snorkeling to collect seagrass samples |
|               | • Setting and collecting BRUVs |
|               | • Setting up measuring devices such as light loggers, sediment traps and benthic nutrient flux chambers. |
| 12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m. | Lunch |
| Afternoon    | **FIELD ACTIVITIES:**
|               | • Sampling sediment from the boat or on land |
|               | • Mapping seagrass using video footage and remote sensing equipment |
|               | • Snorkeling to collect seagrass samples |
|               | • Setting and collecting BRUVs |
|               | • Setting up measuring devices such as light loggers, sediment traps and benthic nutrient flux chambers. |
| 5:00 p.m.    | Return to resort |
| 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. | Dinner |
| Evening      | Lab work, data analysis and/or free time |

## DAY 4: DEPARTURE DAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m.–8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Breakfast, pack and tidy up, check out of accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Wrap up and potential field activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch on board the boat and sail back to Brisbane.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ACCOMMODATIONS AND FOOD
ABOUT YOUR HOME IN THE FIELD

SLEEPING
The accommodation consists of beachfront villas, each sleeping 7. Each villa spans 2 levels and has 2 bedrooms with private balconies with spectacular views across Moreton Bay. There is a queen bed in the main bedroom, 2 single beds in the second bedroom, 2 single bunks in the upstairs alcove, and 1 single divan and single trundle in the lounge room. The villas are furnished in a relaxed island décor and have ceiling fans throughout. There is a fully self-contained kitchen, including a full size fridge, convection oven, microwave oven, dual gas stovetop, electric frying pan, kettle and toaster.

BATHROOMS AND LAUNDRY FACILITIES
Each villa has a bathroom on the upper level, with hot showers and flushing toilets. The villas also contain a washing machine, vacuum cleaner, iron and ironing board for your use.

ELECTRICITY
Electricity is 24 hours at the resort. There are power points available in the rooms for recharging your electronic equipment.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS
Optus Mobile Broadband modems are available from reception and cost $10 per day plus a $150 refundable deposit. There are also 4 internet kiosks available for use in the Cane Lounge at a cost of $4 for 15 minutes. The resort has access to Telstra 3G and Optus Internet reception so you can bring your own portable internet stick with you if you would like access to the internet without spending too much money. However, please note that Vodafone reception is very weak and in some places non-existent.

There is standard telstra phone reception but it is limited on the island. Earthwatch encourages volunteers to minimize outgoing calls and immerse themselves in the experience. Likewise, family and friends should restrict calls to urgent messages only.
DISTANCE TO FIELD SITE
Travel to the field site will change slightly with different sampling areas, but it will never be more than 90 minutes.

RECREATION
Each villa has a living room with a TV and DVD player if you wish to relax in the evenings. The most exciting evening activity however is the wild dolphin feeding program, which occurs every evening at sunset. One night of this is included in the accommodation for each person; therefore you can partake in this activity once for free. There are 8 playful bottlenose dolphins that visit the shores, and with the help of a member of the Dolphin Care team you can get up close to these beautiful creatures by feeding them. There are strict guidelines that are followed however, to ensure that the dolphins maintain their natural instincts and independence. They are only fed 10-20% of their daily food requirements so they must also hunt for themselves and do not become too reliant on the resort’s feeding program. You also get the chance to learn more about these dolphins during the free daily Dolphin Behavior and Data Collection Presentation in the Marine Education and Conservation Centre.

There are over 40 free activities at the resort that you can partake in during your recreational time. These include a variety of eco walks and presentations, tennis, archery, basketball, golf putting and many more. You will be working hard during the day collecting data and helping with the research, but there are many fun and relaxing things for you to do in the evenings to unwind.

FOOD AND WATER
A wide variety of fresh foods will be available throughout the expedition. The team will prepare his/her own meals in the villa kitchens. Fresh drinking water will always be available at the accommodation.

TYPICAL MEALS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BREQUFEAT</th>
<th>LUNCH</th>
<th>DINNER</th>
<th>SNACKS</th>
<th>BEVERAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BREAKFAST</td>
<td>Cereals, toast, pastries and spreads</td>
<td>Sandwich meats, spreads and salads, cheese, fresh fruit, muesli bars</td>
<td>Pasta, curries, stir-fries, BBQ meat, salads, etc.</td>
<td>fruit, crackers, sweet biscuits, muesli bars</td>
<td>coffee, tea, milk, fruit juices/cordial, water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LUNCH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DINNER</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SNACKS</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BEVERAGES</td>
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SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS
Please alert Earthwatch to any special dietary requirements (e.g., diabetes, lactose intolerance, nut or other food allergies, vegetarian or vegan diets) as soon as possible, and note them in the space provided on your volunteer forms.

Accommodating special diets is not guaranteed. Vegetarian and vegan diets will be accommodated.
PROJECT CONDITIONS
THE FIELD ENVIRONMENT

The information that follows is as accurate as possible, but please keep in mind that conditions may change.

The climate in South East Queensland is subtropical with an average year round temperature of approximately 23°C/73.4°F. It is generally fairly mild and dry during the winter. The southeast trade winds are a predominant feature with occasional westerlies during the winter and northerlies during the summer. There are two tidal cycles each day in Moreton Bay, with a maximum range of approximately 2.5m.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL CONDITIONS</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEAN HUMIDITY</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAN TEMPERATURE RANGE</td>
<td>25–29°C / 77–84°F</td>
<td>18-25°C / 64-77 °C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEAN RAINFALL</td>
<td>32.0 mm / 0.11 ft.</td>
<td>23.0 mm / 0.06 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALTITUDE</td>
<td>Sea level</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WATER CONDITIONS</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>September</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEAN WATER TEMPERATURES</td>
<td>26°C / 79°F</td>
<td>22°C / 72°F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMING OF SEAGRASS SAMPLING</td>
<td>Seagrass sampling will be done during low tide times when possible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

PHYSICAL DEMANDS
The project can be demanding physically, due to strong currents and sea swells while snorkeling. Those who are prone to seasickness should bring preventative treatments with them since you will be spending time on the boat for some of the research activities.

EXPECTED DEMANDS OF THE PROJECT
Please keep in mind that conditions may change and the project could potentially be more or less strenuous than these points indicate. All participants must be able, independently or with the assistance of a companion, to:

All participants must be able to:
• Follow verbal and/or visual instructions independently or with the assistance of a companion.
• Enjoy being outdoors all day in all types of weather, in the potential presence of wild animals and insects.
• Tolerate 30°C (85°F) heat and high humidity levels.
• Travel in a boat in potentially bumpy conditions for several hours while doing live videoing of seagrass beds and/or collecting sediment using a sediment grab. Those with chronic or constant back or neck pain should be considering their ability to participate.
• Be comfortable swimming and snorkeling in slightly wavy conditions (will not snorkel if the water is too rough).
• Adhere to the briefing guidelines, be aware of their limitations and apply common sense while participating.

PLEASE NOTE: Those with known allergies should bring appropriate medications in order to participate on this project. Those with severe allergies should bring an Epi-kit and carry it with them at all times.

BOATING REQUIREMENTS:
In order to assist on the research boat you will need to be relatively fit and agile. Although research boats may have a canopy for shading, sun protection is required. Depending on winds, the trip may be bumpy and participants may feel cold on the return trip after being in the water all day. An all-weather proof or windbreaker jacket may be advisable.

SNORKELING REQUIREMENTS:
In order to participate in the project you must visit a General Practitioner with the Doctor’s Signature Form to confirm you are fit to participate in water and snorkel activities. You will need to undertake a snorkel/swim test on Day 1 of the project to ensure you are able to perform the research tasks that require snorkeling.
### Activity Workload/Intensity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Workload/Intensity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sit</td>
<td>For several hours at a time while sitting in the boat doing live videoing of seagrass beds and collecting sediment using a sediment grab. Also while listening to various talks and presentations and while performing data analysis and entry at the end of a field day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bend</td>
<td>For several hours at a time while sampling flora and fauna in seagrass meadows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>For several hours during surveys of intertidal areas collecting seagrass, sediment and fish and other marine creatures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carry</td>
<td>Participants will be expected to carry their own backpacks with their lunch, water and personal supplies and will need to assist with carrying research equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand</td>
<td>For several hours during surveys of intertidal areas collecting seagrass, sediment and fish and other marine creatures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim</td>
<td>For several hours at a time during the snorkeling activities. Participants should be able to do some duck-diving, which includes the ability to equalize their ears, and small amounts of holding their breath.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

**POTENTIAL HAZARDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAZARD TYPE</th>
<th>ASSOCIATED RISKS AND PRECAUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Transportation during the day will be by boat. There is potential for the boat to capsize, for people to slip on the boat or fall overboard, or for unsecured equipment to cause personal injury. Participants will be briefed on boat safety at the beginning of the project. All participants are to remain seated when the boat is in motion and should not lean over the railings or dangle body parts or personal effects over the side of the boat. All equipment, including research equipment and snorkel gear will be stowed safely so it cannot move around. Life jackets are located under the seat benches and are clearly marked. Only qualified and experienced staff will operate the boats and the boats will be fitted with first aid kits, a GPS and a UHF radio. The team may also be driven to some of the field sites if the weather does not permit us to go by boat. If this is the case, a Tangalooma staff member will drive the team in one of their four wheel drive coaches. It is possible for the vehicles to get in a road accident. Licensed resort staff that has experience driving in this area will do all driving, and participants are not permitted to drive at any time during the project. Everyone in the vehicles will be wearing seatbelts at all times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in boats</td>
<td>Boats are well maintained, and include, UHF radio, life preservers, emergency flares, fire extinguisher, and first aid kit. Life jackets are available for all passengers. All participants must be able to swim. The boat is only used in daylight hours and only when sea state is acceptable to the skipper. The skipper is certified and experienced in driving boats in the area. Boat communications include EPIRB, flares, UHF radio and mobile phones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking/Hiking/Climbing</td>
<td>Participants will be walking on muddy and rough terrain and in intertidal flats. There is the potential for sprains, strains, breaks, fractures, etc. to occur. It is also possible for people to cut themselves on coral in the intertidal flats. Participants must wear thick-soled dive booties when walking in these areas to protect their feet. They must walk carefully in these areas and always watch where they are walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snorkeling</td>
<td>Only participants with appropriate swimming abilities and fitness are allowed to participate in the fieldwork that involves snorkeling. Participants are paired up so that a strong snorkeler is matched with a weaker snorkeler. An experienced project staff member is always present, in order to supervise snorkelers. Participants will wear wetsuits, which provide buoyancy. During the safety briefing participants learn snorkeling safety signals, and are advised how to use them if they run into trouble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate/Weather</td>
<td>Most people underestimate how harsh the sun can be in Australia, even in winter. Working for long periods in warm conditions can result in rapid fluid loss and dehydration, therefore participants should be drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Spare drinking water will be on the boat each day. Sunscreen (SPF 30 or above), long sleeves, a hat and sunglasses are essential and should be worn even when the sky is overcast; be sure to bring these items with you. If participants are feeling faint or dizzy, they should cool themselves off by dipping in the ocean and sitting in the shade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Tasks/Equipment</td>
<td>It is possible for a participant to be injured by the improper use of field equipment or by performing a field task incorrectly. In order to increase safety, a safety briefing will be given on the first day to familiarize you with specific risks and methods, and proper PPE will be worn. Project staff will be supervising field activities at all times to ensure that participants are using the equipment safely and performing the tasks properly. If anyone is unsure of how to properly do a task or use a piece of equipment, they should ask project staff. If someone is injured during fieldwork, the injury will be cleaned thoroughly and monitored throughout the next few days for infection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Animals and Plants**

There are dangerous stinging marine organisms in this region including stonefish, blue bottle jellyfish (also known as a Portuguese Man of War), cone shells and blue ring octopuses. Participants will be briefed on these organisms at the start of the project. During stinger season (generally from early November to early June), participants will be required to wear personal protective equipment (wetsuits/stinger suits) while snorkeling. It is required that participants wear appropriate closed shoes while walking on sand/mudflats and in intertidal areas.

There are a number of annoying invertebrates, such as leeches, mosquitoes, spiders, wasps, bees, and March flies on the island. These can mostly be avoided by being aware of your surroundings, tucking pants into socks and applying insect repellent. Participants with allergies to insects should come prepared with the necessary treatment (at least two Epi-Pens, antihistamines, etc.) and inform project staff of these allergies. Participants are encouraged to check themselves for leeches regularly.

There are poisonous snakes and spiders present on the Island but encounters with them are uncommon. All snakes should be treated as venomous as it requires skilled identification to tell otherwise. Participants should not go anywhere near a snake if one is seen and should warn others nearby that the snake is there. Participants should keep the doors of their villas closed at night and should check shoes before putting them on if they were left outside. If a snake or a spider bites you, tell someone nearby so you can get to a medical center or hospital as soon as possible. If you saw the snake or spider, remember what it looked like so you can receive the correct anti-venom from the medical center.

It is possible to encounter a shark in these waters (although very unlikely). While snorkelers are in the water, someone on the boat will be doing a surface lookout and all snorkelers should be scanning the water while in it. If a shark showing aggressive behaviors is spotted, snorkelers are to move slowly away from the area and exit the water.

A type of marine cyanobacteria called Lyngbya occurs in Queensland coastal waters, and has at times been quite abundant in Moreton Bay. It grows attached to seagrass, corals and other shallow substrates and can grow rapidly to form blooms under certain conditions. It can produce skin and eye irritation following direct contact. If ingested or inhaled it can cause irritation to the respiratory and gastrointestinal tracts. You should avoid swimming or wading in areas where Lyngbya is growing or floating in the water and should not have direct contact with material washed onto the beach.

**Disease**

There are a number of tropical diseases in the area, but the chances of contracting one is very low. Instruction will be provided on how to minimize this risk. Diseases found in tropical regions include Ross River fever, Australian bat lyssavirus, leptospirosis, Q fever, Queensland tick typhus, scrub typhus, melioidosis, Japanese encephalitis, dengue fever, filariasis, leishmaniasis, onchocerciasis, trypanosomiasis, schistosomiasis, hepatitis, and typhoid. Please see the Health Information section for immunization recommendations. Most diseases are preventable with basic safety precautions. Many of these diseases can be contracted through insect bites, so participants should wear protective clothing, including long sleeved shirts and pants to prevent bites. They are also advised to apply insect repellent frequently.

**Distance from Medical Care**

There are no hospitals on Moreton Island itself, but there are several on the mainland and a few medical centers on an Island nearby (Bribie Island). There is a ferry that can take you across to the mainland and it takes approximately 75 minutes. There is an emergency services helipad on the Island so you can get to a hospital more quickly in an emergency. If you are pregnant, have any serious and life-threatening allergies or medical conditions you should talk with your physician prior to joining this expedition.

**Severe Weather**

Conditions Storms, winds and rains may cause field conditions to become more hazardous. Weather will be monitored daily and activities will be cancelled if severe weather warnings are present.
EMERGENCIES IN THE FIELD
The project will be equipped with an Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) in the event that a life-threatening emergency should occur. All teams will carry a first-aid kit and a staff member with a senior first aid certificate will be present.

If an accident or emergency occurs project staff will assess the severity of the problem and notify emergency authorities or transport any injured person(s) to medical attention immediately. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency that cannot be handled by a local doctor, the patient will be taken by car or ambulance to the nearest hospital [one of the hospitals in Brisbane]. From there the patient can be transferred, if necessary, to another medical institution via a Queensland Rescue Service helicopter. It is unlikely that volunteers will be more than 50 kilometers or two hours from medical aid at any time.

PROXIMITY TO MEDICAL CARE
Physician, Nurse, or EMT on Staff: Project staff are not medical professionals. However, there is a nursing station and ambulance on the island if required.

Staff Certified in Safety Training: All project scientists and Earthwatch team leaders are qualified in CPR and hold a First Aid certificate.

NEAREST MEDICAL TREATMENT
St. Andrew’s War Memorial Hospital
457 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane, QLD 4001
Telephone: +61 7 3834 4444

Redland Hospital
Weppin Street, Cleveland, QLD 4163
Telephone: +61 7 3488 3111

Redcliffe Hospital (only if air ambulance needed)
ANZAC Ave, Recliffe, QLD 4020
Telephone: +61 7 3883 777

There is an emergency helipad on the Island so it is possible to reach a hospital on the mainland more quickly than by ferry if necessary.

For emergency assistance in the field, please contact Earthwatch’s 24-hour emergency hotline number on the last page of this briefing. Earthwatch is available to assist you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; someone is always on call to respond to messages that come into our live answering service.

IMMUNIZATIONS
Please be sure your routine immunizations are up-to-date [for example: diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella]. Medical decisions are the responsibility of each volunteer and his or her doctor, and the following are recommendations only. Visit the Healix Travel Oracle website through the “Travel Assistance and Advice” page in your Earthwatch portal, cdc.gov or who.int for guidance on immunizations.

Any prescription medication brought into Australia needs to be accompanied with a letter from your doctor for Customs Inspection purposes. For further information about the regulation of medications, please see: tga.gov.au/consumers/travellers.htm. Medical attention, of high quality, will be sought should any serious ailments occur.

PROJECT VACCINATIONS
REQUIRED: If traveling from countries or region where yellow fever is endemic, you must have a certificate of vaccination.

RECOMMENDED: Tetanus is generally recommended for health reasons.
ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION RESOURCES
Travel Health Website: mdtravelhealth.com
The Travel Doctor: tmvc.com.au
Australian Department of Health and Aging: health.gov.au
Hospital for Tropical Diseases: thehtd.org

ADVICE REGARDING DISEASES
Traveler’s diarrhea affects many international travellers. Other diseases found in tropical regions within Australia may include (but are not limited too):

Ross River Fever: In Queensland, cases of Ross River virus occur throughout the year, but most cases occur between February and May. The virus is not fatal, but the time it takes to recover fully is prolonged in some people. For further information, please see the factsheet at http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ViralInfections/rossRiverVirus_fs.asp

Dengue Fever: Dengue mosquitoes do not breed in rivers, swamps, creeks, bush land or mangroves; they breed in containers of standing water, particularly during the wet season (November to March). For further information, visit www.health.qld.gov.au/dengue/info/definition.asp

Barmah Forest Virus: Barmah Forest virus has similar symptoms to Ross River virus although usually the illness is of shorter duration. For further information, please see the factsheet at http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/ViralInfections/barmahForestVirus_fs.asp

Zika virus: Zika is generally a mild illness, although its effects on unborn babies can be much more detrimental. Cases of Zika virus have been reported in Queensland, although these are not locally-acquired (meaning the reported cases were contracted overseas), and Zika is not known to be present in local mosquitoes. More information on Zika in Queensland can be found at: https://www.health.qld.gov.au/news-alerts/health-alerts/zika/.

• You can decrease your risk of most diseases above by avoiding mosquito bites:
• Use insect repellents and wear protective, light-colored clothing.
• Avoid being outside during times of heavy infestation of mosquitoes, e.g. early evenings in the warmer months.
• Screen living and sleeping areas.
• Check your home regularly for potential mosquito breeding areas, e.g. any uncovered water containers, small wading pools and old tyres should be emptied regularly.

Leptospirosis: Ensure all cuts and grazes are covered if handling animals, plants, or soil in tropical and sub-tropical areas. For detailed information please refer to the factsheet. http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/BacterialInfections/leptospirosis_fs.asp

If you feel ill once you return from your trip, make sure you inform your doctor that you have recently returned from a tropical or sub-tropical region.
YOUR DESTINATION
LANGUAGE: English
TIME ZONE: GMT/UTC +10
ELECTRICITY: The electricity in Australia is 230 V and 50 Hz so you may need to bring a converter if you are from another country. The plugs have three prongs, as illustrated below. You should be able to buy one at the airport when you arrive, but it may be more expensive so it is a good idea to buy one at home before you leave.

TELEPHONE DIALING CODES: When calling Australia from another country, dial the country’s international dialing code, followed by 61 and the number. When calling within Australia, omit the 61. When calling another country from Australia dial 0011, followed by the other country’s country code and the number. NOTE: you should check with your cell phone provider to obtain any carrier-specific dialing codes you may need; many providers have dialing procedures that may differ in whole or in part from these directions.

LUGGAGE
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: Do not bring more luggage than you can carry and handle on your own. If travelling by air and checking your luggage, you are advised to pack an extra set of field clothing and personal essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost and/or takes several days to catch up with you. Many airlines have strict baggage policies. Please check with your airline(s) on baggage weight limits, liquid restrictions, fees for checked baggage, etc.

TRANSFERRED LUGGAGE: If you will take an international flight with one or more connections in the country of your destination, you must collect any checked bags at the airport where you first arrive in the destination country. After proceeding through customs, you must recheck your luggage before flying on to your final destination.

PACKING YOUR LUGGAGE: Make sure to check the Expedition Packing Checklist for a complete list of what you will need to take with you. You are encouraged to go through the list and mark off each required item right before you leave for your expedition. Also take weather conditions into consideration when packing.

LOST AND DELAYED LUGGAGE: If your luggage goes astray, please have the airline send it to Tangalooma Island Resort (Moreton Island, QLD 4025).

MONEY MATTERS
LOCAL CURRENCY: Australian Dollar.
PERSONAL FUNDS: No personal funds are required during the expedition, but you may want to have some money (cash or credit cards are best) for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, or to participate in recreational activities. Money exchange is available at the Brisbane Airport in the International Terminal on levels 2 and 3 and in the Domestic Terminal on levels 1 and 2. You can also draw funds in Australian dollars at ATMs, which are found easily in Brisbane. Most Visa and MasterCard credit cards will work in Australian ATMs, but it is a good idea to check with your bank beforehand.

WHERE TO BUY SNORKEL GEAR
Listed below are a few dive shops in Brisbane that sell snorkel gear:
- Dive World: 12/17 Rivergate Place, Murrarie, QLD 4172
- ARENO Scuba Diving Centre: 54 Deshon Street, Woolloongabba, QLD 4102
- Go Dive Brisbane: 1/178 Albion Road, Windsor, QLD 4030

All of these dive shops are between a 10 to 20 minute drive from the rendezvous location. A snorkel set (flippers, mask and snorkel) should cost around $50.
PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Passport and visa requirements are subject to change. Check with your travel advisor, embassy or consulate in your home country for requirements specific to your circumstances. Generally, passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of entry and a return ticket is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIZENSHIP</th>
<th>PASSPORT REQUIRED?</th>
<th>VISA REQUIRED?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Europe</td>
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<td>Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
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If a visa is required, participants should apply for a TOURIST visa. Please note that obtaining a visa can take some time, and also can now be done online for people holding certain passports. Please check the following site for more information: http://www.border.gov.au/Lega/Lega/Form/Immi-FAQs/what-visa-do-i-need-to-visit-australia

CONTACT INFORMATION

You may be required to list the following contact information on your visa application and immigration form, or if your luggage does not make it to baggage claim at your destination:

**Andrea Haas**
Earthwatch Australia
Suite G-07, Ground Floor
60L Green Building, 60-66 Leicester Street
Carlton
VIC 3053, Australia
**EMAIL:** ahaas@earthwatch.org.au
**PH.:** +61 (0) 3 9016 7590

OTHER USEFUL LINKS:

- Country Information from Around the World: countryreports.org
- National Geographic Map Machine: Plasma.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine
- Online Unit Conversions: onlineconversion.com
- Worldwide Weather: wunderground.com or tutiempo.net/en
- Australian Government’s Travel Security Website: Information on security measures at Australian airports: travelsecure.infrastructure.gov.au
EXPEDITION PACKING CHECKLIST
WHAT TO BRING

GENERAL
- This expedition briefing
- Your travel plans, rendezvous details, and Earthwatch’s emergency contact information
- Photocopies of your passport, flight itinerary, and credit cards in case the originals are lost or stolen; the copies should be packed separately from the original documents
- Passport and/or visa (if necessary)
- Certification of vaccination (if necessary)
- Documentation for travel by minors (if necessary)
- A copy of your Doctor’s Signature Form
- Australian Residents Only: Please bring your Medicare card and (if applicable) your private health insurance and ambulance cover policy numbers

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR FIELDWORK
- Earthwatch T-shirt
- Lightweight and quick-drying long sleeve shirts (a must for safety reasons—for sun protection on the boat)
- Rash vest/swim shirt (made of spandex and nylon or polyester) to wear under wetsuit while snorkeling
- Wide-brimmed hat (preferably one that is at least partially waterproof)
- Swimsuit(s) for snorkeling
- Sunglasses (polarized lenses are best)—neck strap recommended
- Thick-soled dive booties for walking in muddy intertidal zones and rough terrain.
- Warm wind / waterproof jacket

NOTE: Volunteers will be getting in and out of the water at intervals throughout the day and travelling by boat to different research sites. It is essential to have a warm wind / waterproof jacket that can go over the top of your wet wetsuit to keep you warm. We would suggest bringing a second waterproof jacket that would stay dry on the inside for use on land.

- Snorkel gear (mask, flippers, snorkel). These can be hired from the resort if you do not own them, however it will cost you $35.00 per day to hire snorkel gear and a wetsuit. It will be cheaper to buy these before the expedition.
- Wetsuit (Full length, during cold August it must be at least 5 mm thickness). Can hire with snorkel gear from resort for $35.00 per day or can buy at one of the dive shops listed.

NOTE: Since water will be cooler in September, it is essential that your wetsuit is full length and approximately 5 mm thickness. 3-5mm thickness is appropriate for March.

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR LEISURE
- One set of clothing to keep clean for end of expedition
- Several changes of clothes to wear around resort (e.g. shorts and t-shirts)
- Warm clothing for cool mornings and evenings (e.g. jacket, sweater, fleece, jumper)
- Footwear for walking around resort (thongs, sandals or sneakers)
- Socks and underwear
- Pajamas or other sleepwear
- Second wind / waterproof jacket (for dry land use)

FIELD SUPPLIES
- Small daypack (large enough to hold below listed items)
- Dry-bag or plastic sealable bags (good for protecting equipment such as camera from dust, humidity, and water)
- Insect repellent spray
- Two one-liter refillable water bottle(s)
- Lunch box
- Waterproof sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher
- Beach Towel
**EXPEDITION PACKING CHECKLIST**

**BEDDING AND BATHING**

NOTE: the resort will provide Blankets, pillows and linen.

**PERSONAL SUPPLIES**

- Personal toiletries (biodegradable soaps and shampoos are encouraged)
- Antibacterial wipes or lotion (good for cleaning hands while in the field)
- Personal first aid kit [e.g., anti-diarrhea pills, antibiotics, antiseptic, itch-relief, pain reliever, bandages, blister covers, etc.] and medications

NOTE: Prescription medications must be accompanied by a doctor’s note to enter Australia.

- Spending money

**OPTIONAL ITEMS**

- Camera, film or memory card[s], extra camera battery
- Hardware for sharing digital photographs at the end of the expedition
- Dry bag or plastic sealable bags [e.g. Ziploc] to protect equipment like cameras from dust, humidity, and water
- Books, games, art supplies, etc. for free time
- Earplugs for light sleepers
- Flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries and extra bulb
- Travel guidebook
- Water-resistant wristwatch
- Binoculars [preferably waterproof]
- Pencil, pen, notebook
- Bathrobe
- Hood for wetsuit (if you feel the cold this will keep you warmer in September. Not necessary for other teams)

NOTE: Do not bring more luggage than you can carry and handle on your own. If traveling by air and checking your luggage, we advise you to pack an extra set of field clothing and personal essentials in your carry-on bag in case your luggage is lost or delayed.
PROJECT STAFF
YOUR RESOURCES IN THE FIELD

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST DR JAMES UDY is the Director of Science Under Sail (Australia) and works with Healthy Waterways to deliver this program. Dr. Udy has lead several multidisciplinary research groups focusing on improving our understanding of aquatic processes, with a focus on reducing the harmful effects of nutrients and sediment in freshwater and marine environments. Dr. Udy is a recognized expert in seagrass ecology and recently led two national workshops that provided advice to environmental managers on the current condition of seagrass habitats in Australia and the key threats to them. James is the Principal Investigator on Sailing for Seagrass and will be present on all teams.

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST DR ALISTAIR GRINHAM is a senior research fellow in the School of Civil Engineering and has been actively researching in South East Queensland and Solomon Islands for over 10 years. His research has focused on the development of physical and biogeochemical models of freshwater storages and coastal lagoonal systems including Moreton Bay. Primary research activities have been creating digital elevation models of these systems and monitoring sea level and water currents as well as benthic, pelagic and catchment biogeochemical processes. These research activities have been to support efforts in the sustainable development of marine resources in the face of global climate change as well as to better understand the impact of catchment modification (e.g. urbanization, logging and mining activities) on these systems.

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST DR PAUL MAXWELL is a marine ecologist leading the science and innovation team at Healthy Waterways, the organization responsible for improving waterways health in southeast Queensland. Paul has spent most of his career studying Moreton Bay and its catchments but is primarily interested in how critical coastal habitats can adapt to increasing pressures without losing the services they provide. Paul grew up in the region and spent lots of time exploring Moreton Bay and its tributaries. He is a member of the Queensland Waders study group that monitors the migratory shorebird populations in the Bay. He holds a PhD. in Marine Science from Griffith University.

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST PROF ROD CONNOLLY is a professor in Marine Science at Griffith University in southeast Queensland, Australia. His research expertise is in the links between fisheries and coastal habitats including coral, seagrass, mangroves and saltmarsh. He uses chemical tracers, particularly stable isotopes, to determine carbon pathways and sequestration in estuaries and coastal waters. Rod is a member of several scientific panels overseeing water quality and habitat conservation programs around Australia. He is interested in incorporating the science and monitoring of ecosystem health into adaptation strategies. Through his work on marine reserves and resilience he is helping to find sustainable solutions to the issues of urbanization and climate variability.
EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST DR TIM STEVENS has more than three decades experience working in the assessment and conservation of marine biodiversity, in Australia, Europe, and the UK. He has worked extensively on marine protected area design and management, as well as exploring the little known habitats of deep reefs. This has given him ample opportunity to spend time messing about in boats and diving as much as he can. He currently teaches Marine Biology at Griffith University, where he uses every opportunity to take his students out of the class room and get them wet and muddy, experiencing the marine environment at first hand.

EARTHWATCH SCIENTIST DR CHRIS ROELFSEMA is a researcher and lecturer at the School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Management at the University of Queensland. He specializes in integrating field and satellite or airborne satellite image data to map, monitor and model coral reef and seagrass environments. The work that he does helps to answer critical questions about the impacts of climate change in these marine environments. He has developed new mapping techniques using various methods for collecting field data, including using volunteers and robots. Since 1999, Chris has studied Asian Pacific coral reefs and seagrass habitats, in Moreton Bay as well as in many different locations. He is very experienced with seagrass mapping since he has mapped many seagrass properties in these research sites. As a scientist and diving instructor, Chris has assisted Reef Check and CoralWatch and has organized several volunteer marine conservation projects.

NOTE: In addition, there will be various Research Assistants joining the expedition. A staffing schedule is still to be announced.

EARTHWATCH FIELD STAFF An Earthwatch field staff member will accompany almost every team into the field to provide additional logistical support.

NOTE: Staff schedules are subject to change.
RECOMMENDED READING
YOUR RESOURCES AT HOME

RESOURCES

BOOKS


FIELD GUIDES


SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/EarthwatchAustralia
TWITTER: twitter.com/Earthwatch_Aus
YOUTUBE: youtube.com/user/EarthWebBoy
INSTAGRAM: instawebgram.com/i/earthwatch_aus
PINTEREST: pinterest.com/earthwatchaus/
GOOGLE+: plus.google.com/+EarthwatchSouthMelbourne/posts
FLICKR: flickr.com/photos/earthwatchaustralia/

SOCIAL MEDIA: EARTHWATCH INTERNATIONAL

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/Earthwatch
TWITTER: twitter.com/earthwatch_org
INSTAGRAM: instagram.com/earthwatch
BLOG: earthwatchunlocked.wordpress.com
YOUTUBE: youtube.com/earthwatchinstitute
EMERGENCY NUMBERS
AROUND-THE-CLOCK SUPPORT

EARTHWATCH’S 24-HOUR EMERGENCY HOTLINE

Call Earthwatch’s 24-hour on-call duty officer in the U.S.:
+1 (978) 461.0081
+1 (800) 776.0188 (toll-free for calls placed from within the U.S.)

After business hours, leave a message with our live answering service. State that you have an emergency and give the name of your expedition, your name, the location from which you are calling, and if possible, a phone number where you can be reached. An Earthwatch staff member will respond to your call within one hour.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER: HEALIX INTERNATIONAL

+44.20.3667.8991 (collect calls and reverse charges accepted)
U.S. TOLL FREE: +1.877.759.3917
U.K. FREE PHONE: 0.800.19.5180
E-MAIL: earthwatch@healix.com

You may contact Healix International at any time. They can assist in the event of a medical or evacuation emergency or for routine medical and travel advice, such as advice on visas and vaccine requirements.

FOR VOLUNTEERS BOOKED THROUGH THE EARTHWATCH AUSTRALIA OFFICE:

Earthwatch Australia 24-Hour Emergency Helpline
+61.0.3.8508.5537
MESSAGE FROM EARTHWATCH

DEAR EARTHWATCHER,

Hello and welcome to the team!

You will soon be embarking on an exciting and meaningful adventure to some of the most spectacular regions of our planet. It’s a special place here on Earth, and with your help we are working hard to keep it that way for all life that exists.

We unfortunately face a variety of environmental pressures today and by joining this Earthwatch expedition you are not only saying you care, but more significantly, that you are prepared to do something about it. The work you will undertake will help contribute to solving critical environmental issues, help shape policies and behaviors and enhance protection of culture, wildlife and ecosystems. Without your help scientists would need to spend weeks, months or even years collecting the same amount of data you and your team will collect in just a few days!

We can’t thank you enough for your choice to take a slightly different holiday this year, and we hope you get out of the experience as much as we do by bringing scientists and volunteers together to work towards a better future.

If you have questions as you prepare for your expedition, please contact our Earthwatch office. Thank you for your support, and enjoy your expedition!

Best regards,

Cassandra Nichols
Chief Executive Officer, Earthwatch Australia