



Householder's Options to Protect the Environment Inc.
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HOPE E-news Bulletin #23, 17 August 2009

Hi,

Would you like to win an LED TV? All you have to do is sign up to have the ClimateSmart Home Service done in your home. You will feel the benefits directly in your hip pocket and you'll reduce your carbon footprint at the same time. And if you happen to be the 100,000th customer you'll win an environmentally responsible TV. Check out the article below. If you are interested in environmental research read the article on whale research in Hervey Bay, and the Letter to the Editor. Or if you want to have some fun, check out our events notices. There is something for everyone!

Miriam Sharp, Secretary - office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Office news

Help sought from Toowoomba locals to:

- Assist with letter-boxing exercise
- Assist with staffing information displays at local and regional events
- Take responsibility for maintaining Environmental Information Displays

Give-aways

HOPE has access to hundreds of used plastic garden pots - various sizes and colours.

There are also several hundred half-sized plant trays available.

If your landcare or community group is interested in acquiring some of this stock, please contact Frank on 4639 2135 to arrange collection.

Wanted Used Postage Stamps

HOPE is collecting used postage stamps and un-wanted stamp albums to assist a local community organisation with its fund-raising activities. Please drop off packages of stamps to 22 Vacy St, Toowoomba or post to PO Box 6118, Toowoomba West QLD 4350. Every little bit helps!

Low Carbon Diet project and related news

HOPE LCD project update

Due to low attendances figures at our first three Information Sessions and our first Workshop, the HOPE Management Committee has been decided to cancel the remainder of these events; and instead, offer presentations by invitation only. So far, we have confirmed bookings with SQIT (Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE) for 3 September and *Science and Technology Forum*, Toowoomba SHS, 19 October. If your organisation would like to receive a FREE presentation on the *Low Carbon Diet* program, contact the HOPE office on 4639 2135 or email office@hopeaustralia.org.au .

HOPE is also hosting this year's *Sustainable House Day*, Sunday 13 September. More information on this event will be available soon.

Low Carbon Diet News

Money to help you go green

Going green at home needn't cost you the earth with a range of state and federal government rebates and grants available to help you reduce your carbon footprint. Here is a summary of some rebates and grants on offer to help you:

- Low Carbon Diet Community Funding - grants from \$2,000 to \$10,000 available to help community groups work together to implement the Low Carbon Diet. http://www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au/get_involved/low_carbon_diet
- Queensland Solar Hot Water Program - Fully installed solar hot water systems at a reduced price for Queensland households, pensioners and concession card holders. http://www.cleanenergy.qld.gov.au/queensland_solar_hot_water_program.cfm
- Residential Gas Installation Rebate Scheme - gas installation rebate of up to \$500 to Queensland homeowners installing gas appliances replacing electric, and some non-electric appliances, in existing homes. http://www.dme.qld.gov.au/Energy/gas_rebate.cfm
- The Federal Government website has a range of rebates and funding to help householders go green with ceiling insulation, solar, water, and energy. <http://www.environment.gov.au/rebates/>

No One Likes to Waste Energy - ClimateSmart Home Service

Have you signed up yet? This great service will help you conserve energy and save money. For only \$50 you get a service (normally \$250) that will help you improve the energy efficiency of your home and therefore help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A licensed electrician will visit your home and perform an energy efficiency service that includes the installation of a wireless energy monitor so that you can track exactly how much energy you use. You can save up to \$250 a year on your bill. Go to <http://www.climatesmarthome.com>, or call 13 20 40 to make an appointment. **Be the 100,000th customer to sign up for the ClimateSmart Home Service and you'll WIN a 6-start energy efficiency rated LED TV valued over \$5000!!**

The 1 Million Women Campaign

A national campaign of daughters, mothers, sisters and grandmothers committed to protecting our climate. The 1 Million Women campaign was launched in Queensland at Parliament House by Premier Anna Bligh and Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Kate Jones (both campaign ambassadors) in mid June. The campaign goal is to inspire 1 million Australian women to take practical action on climate change by cutting 1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂). Women can pledge online at www.1millionwomen.com.au to cut carbon pollution by committing to low carbon activities around food, shopping, transport, and travel. Each activity is linked to a reduction in CO₂, allowing women to select a range of activities which they can add up to a total CO₂ reduction of 1 tonne. Queensland has a target to sign up at least a quarter of the 1 million women (250,000) - so if you haven't already pledged to get involved, go online today at www.1millionwomen.com.au

Green Heart Schools program - a Brisbane City Council initiative

Green Heart Schools aims to work with schools to assist them in their education for sustainability programs. We work in five areas - waste, water, energy, biodiversity and transport - and we can come out to the school at your convenience to deliver workshops for the students, or for parent/teacher groups. Some of the projects we've assisted in the past include the set up of recycling systems, worm farms and compost bins, undertaking of waste, energy, water and biodiversity audits, design and implement of habitat trails, frog ponds or food gardens, instigation of student sustainable leadership, school environment groups and student led behaviour change projects such as "nude food" days and poster competitions. The range of projects being undertaken by schools is remarkable and we're excited to be able to help enthusiastic teachers along. The program is free and is available to all schools in the Brisbane local government area. For more information contact Faith Thomas.

Faith Thomas
Green Heart Schools Education Coordinator
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.
Natural Environment and Sustainability Brisbane City Council
Phone: 04 07 65 15 13 or (07) 3403 5043
Fax: (07) 3334 0011
Email: Faith.Thomas@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Letter to the Editor

Survey of the most popular material read on climate change

I am conducting a survey on the most popular material on climate change. This is material that deals with the impact of climate change on bio-diversity, human populations, political action, renewable energy, energy efficiency and carbon reduction. And, you believe these materials are significant to your learning and that you would like to share with others. A tabulation of the results will be carried out and sent back to you. All responses will remain anonymous. This material may be any type of material in the forms of books, magazines, reports, journal articles, web sites, videos, blogs, social networks or associations. Please provide the title and or sources of the material, numbered from 1 to 3, in any of the categories. You do not have to answer all the categories that are laid out below, just the material you believe are important to your learning. Please send your responses to Michael Christie, email christiemichaelj@gmail.com. I will tabulate the responses and have this back to you in the next month.

The categories are:

- *Books, Reports and Magazines*
- *Journal articles*
- *Web sites, Blogs and Social Networks*
- *DVD and TV Programs*
- *Associations*
- *Other.*

Looking forward to your response.

*Michael Christie, PhD
Email: christiemichaelj@gmail.com
http://www.scu.edu.au/staffdirectory/person_detail.php?person_id=13328*

Updates on upcoming events

The **Sunshine Coast Spring Wildflower Festival**, **15-29 August** offers free guided walks, talks and workshops to celebrate the Coast's spectacular native flora and fauna. Click for [program of events](#).

[24-30 August - Keep Australia Beautiful Week](#)

Sustainable House Day Sunday 13 September 2009

Visit a Sustainable House in your neighbourhood: <http://www.sustainablehouseday.com/>

Mt Barney Lodge is hosting an inaugural **Bird Week** with special emphasis on the Glossy Black-Cockatoo and Eastern Bristlebird on **9-13 September**, as part of National Threatened Species Week and is sponsoring a "Native Bird" photo competition in the lead-up to Bird Week. For more information, phone (07) 5544 3233, email info@mtbarneylodge.com.au or visit www.mtbarneylodge.com.au.

General

Donate Hair to Clean up Oil Spills *by Lyn Spence*

While watching the coverage of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989, hair stylist Phil McCrory noticed how rapidly otters' fur absorbed oil and wondered whether human hair could be utilized in some way to help clean up similar toxic spills. To test his idea, he collected a quantity of hair clippings from his salon, stuffed it into a pair of his wife's pantyhose, tied it into a ring to create a boom and put it in his son's wading pool with some oil. The oil quickly coated the tiny scales of the hair shafts, effectively and efficiently removing it from the water. McCrory then teamed with non-profit organisation Matter of Trust to develop the Oil Spill Hair Mat. Just one of these mats, 30cm square by 1cm thick (which would use approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ kilogram of hair clippings) can soak up about 1 litre of oil and can be wrung out and reused up to 100 times. These highly versatile mats are also used to line tarps when washing marine animals coated with oil. The oil washed from the animals sticks to the mats making the cleaning task far more efficient. There has been ongoing development and improvements to the original design of the mats and now Matter of Trust has taken further steps to ensure that the used mats can be disposed of in an environmentally friendly way instead of being incinerated. Two ideas have been implemented so far. The first - Oyster mushrooms are added to the mats after they have been used to absorb spills and after approximately 12 weeks the mushrooms absorb all the oil and the hair mats are left clean and safe to decompose creating landscape grade compost. In the second method green waste is added to the oily mats and fed to worms whose castings from this process make excellent, eco-friendly fertilizer. Following the hair mat's inception in 2000, salons around the world, including Australia, now donate their hair clippings to Matter of Trust to be recycled into oil absorbing mats. For more information - <http://www.matteroftrust.org/programs/hairmatsinfo.html>

The Environment Needs YOU! Volunteer Today!

Your time and talents are needed to help promote the activities of the following organisations:

CERES	http://www.ceres.org.au/
Clean Up Australia	http://www.cleanup.com.au
Environmental Defenders Office	http://www.edo.org.au/
Friends of the Earth Australia (FOE)	http://www.foe.org.au/
GeneEthics	http://www.geneethics.org
Greening Australia	http://www.greeningaustralia.org.au
Greenpeace	http://www.greenpeace.org.au/
Humane Society International	http://www.hsi.org.au
KABQ	http://www.keepaustraliabeautiful.org.au/
Landcare Australia Limited	http://www.landcareonline.com/
Landcare Queensland	http://www.landcare.org.au/
Marine & Coastal Community Network	http://www.mccn.org.au/
Planet Ark Foundation	http://planetark.org/
Reverse Garbage Co-op Ltd	http://www.reversegarbage.com.au
SEQ Catchments	http://www.seqcatchments.com.au/
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)	http://www.wwf.org.nz/

ADVERTISEMENT

Yarramine Environmental is pleased to introduce a new service for the households of Toowoomba and surrounds. Make your home sustainable - save money, save the environment and live better. Get a **Home Sustainability Assessment** today, priced from just \$85. Our consultant will visit your home to discuss opportunities for sustainability improvements. You will receive on the spot advice, plus a written report tailored specially to your home after our visit. For more information go to <http://www.yarramineconsulting.com.au/>

Queensland News

Whale Research Expedition Hervey Bay

The Oceania Project, established in 1988, is a Not-for-profit, research and information organisation dedicated to raising awareness about cetacea (whales, dolphins and porpoises) and the Ocean Environment. The Oceania Project's Whale Research Expeditions provide a dedicated long-term research platform to observe and study Humpback Whales in Hervey Bay. You can be part of this research program. The Oceania Project's Internship program offers a unique opportunity to support and participate in a Marine Mammal Science program and to learn about humpback whales and cetacea. Go to <http://www.oceania.org.au/> for more information on the program, and to sign up for the internship.

Queensland Parliament E-petition for the active protection of Koalas in South East Queensland

The petition outline is that Queensland Residents wishes to draw to the attention of the Queensland House of Representatives that for the last two years koalas have been disappearing from the Redlands Koala Coast area at the rate of 1000 per year. There are about 2400 koalas left in the Koala Coast now, but at the current rate of decline they will be completely gone by 2012. Council, the community and the state government need to work together to stop this from happening. Your petitioners therefore request the House to use its power to keep koalas alive in Redland City for future generations by ensuring the State government:

- Stop the removal of their trees;
- Stop koalas being killed on roads and railway lines;
- Stop dog attacks;
- Stop urbanisation from destroying their habitat; and
- Start using legislation and money to make it happen.

For more information and to sign the petition, go to

http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/view/EPetitions_qld/CurrentEPetition.aspx?PetNum=1260

World News

[Millennium Project Report Issued on the Future of the World](http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/sof2009.html)

A major report issued by the United Nations Millenium Project has just been released. It finds that half the world appears vulnerable to social instability and violence due to increasing and potentially prolonged unemployment from the recession as well as several longer-term issues: decreasing water, food, and energy supplies per person; the cumulative effects of climate change; and increasing migrations due to political, environmental, and economic conditions. It also finds some good in the global financial crisis, which may be helping humanity to move from its often selfish, self-centered adolescence to a more globally responsible adulthood. Visit <http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/sof2009.html>

The Biopori project: Preventing Floods, Reducing Trash and Enhancing Soil Capacity

Proposed by Bhuvana Nusantara - Jakarta, Indonesia

Biopori is a small tunnel (or pore) in the ground made by living things, such as soil organism and root of the trees. These tunnels have large number of stalks and very effective to circulate water and oxygen into and within the soil. The population and activity of soil organism can be increased by supplying sufficient organic matters (organic trash) into the soil. To ease supplying these organic matters into the soil we need to dig a vertical hole in the soil, **Biopori Hole**. This Biopori Project is to take place in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. As a big city, Jakarta encompasses two main environmental problem; regular floods and stacks of trash. Each area will be worked on by the project one at a time and the first part is South Jakarta. On a daily basis, starting from September 1st 2009, 100 holes will be made every Monday to Saturday until September 1st 2012. Total biopori holes to proceed during this first three-year of the project are 72.000 holes worth US \$216.000.00. Bhuvana Nusantara, the project developer, is seeking for endowment from interested party (or parties) to succeed this project. For more information go to : www.bhuvananusantara.org or visit the 'what's new' section on the HOPE website.

Top 10 Worst Polluted Places Remote but Toxic - <http://www.blacksmithinstitute.org/>

More than 10 million people in eight different countries are at serious risk for cancer, respiratory diseases, and premature death because they live in the 10 most polluted places on Earth, according to a report by the Blacksmith Institute, a non-profit organisation that works to identify and solve specific environmental problems worldwide. [Chernobyl](#) in the Ukraine, site of the world's worst nuclear accident to date, is the best known place on the list. The other places are unknown to most people, and located far from major cities and populations centres, yet 10 million people either suffer or risk serious health effects because of environmental problems ranging from lead contamination to radiation. "Living in a town with serious pollution is like living under a death sentence," the report says. "If the damage does not come from immediate poisoning, then cancers, lung infections, mental retardation, are likely outcomes."

Russia leads the list of eight nations, with three of the 10 worst polluted sites. Other sites were chosen because they are examples of problems found in many places around the world. For example, Haina, Dominican Republic has severe lead contamination—a problem that is common in many poor countries. Linfen, China is just one of several Chinese cities choking on industrial air pollution. And Ranipet, India is a nasty example of serious groundwater pollution by heavy metals.

The [Top 10](#) worst polluted places in the world are:

1. Chernobyl, Ukraine
2. Dzerzhinsk, Russia
3. Haina, Dominican Republic
4. Kabwe, Zambia
5. La Oroya, Peru
6. Linfen, China
7. Maiuu Suu, Kyrgyzstan
8. Norilsk, Russia
9. Ranipet, India
10. Rudnaya Pristan/Dalnegorsk, Russia

The Top 10 worst polluted places were chosen by the Blacksmith Institute's Technical Advisory Board from a list of [35 polluted places](#) that had been narrowed from 300 polluted places identified by the Institute or nominated by people worldwide.

Resources

Book review

The ABC of Carbon - Issues and opportunities in the global climate change environment by Ken Hickson

An illustrated, alphabetical digest with an encyclopaedic approach to carbon and climate change. Ken Hickson has used his business knowledge, journalistic ability and enthusiasm for matters environmental to bring together in one place all the current thinking and action on what is acknowledged as the most pressing problem facing the earth now and for this century. Opinions and facts are gathered together alongside global personalities and advocates for action. Insights into the latest research and innovations to produce energy that is carbon-free and climate-friendly. What you always wanted to know but were too afraid to ask. From a communicator who brings science and technology, as well as business and development, down to earth! Essential reading for anyone who cares about their future—and the future life on earth for their children and grandchildren—with ideas for individual and community action, as well as for business people and students of all ages. For more information or to purchase the book go to <http://www.carbonmarket.com.au/>

A tip / helpful hint

Melissa Glen has prepared a series of helpful hints information sheets on Sustainable Living. We will publish sections of these in our e-news bulletin on a regular basis. The full version of each information sheet is available from the office, and will also be available from the 'helpful hints' page on our website soon. Part one is on water. Thank you Melissa for your contribution.

Helpful Hints - Water

by Melissa Glen

Water is a very precious natural resource. Australia is the driest inhabited continent, with 70% of our land consisting of desert or semi-desert, and yet we are one of the biggest consumers per person of water on the planet. It is important to adopt sustainable practices, to think beyond our direct usage of water and also consider the water that goes into growing, processing and transporting the products we buy (embodied water). For example, it is estimated that it takes:

- 1000 litres of freshwater to produce 1 litre of milk
- 3000 litres of freshwater to produce 1 kilo of rice
- 16000 litres of freshwater to produce 1 kilo of beef

Your water footprint is the total volume of fresh water used to produce goods and services consumed, and it can be calculated at www.waterfootprint.org.

Be Water Wise

Often simple changes to your everyday lifestyle can make huge differences to your annual water usage, this not only helps conserve a valuable natural resource but it also saves you money in the long-run.

- **Water rating labels** - The National Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Scheme helps to make informed decisions about the most water-efficient products on the market by giving them a rating of one through to six. With six being the most efficient, a minimum three-star rating is advisable. You can search for the most water efficient products and look at their water consumption before purchasing at www.waterrating.gov.au.
- **Install aerators on taps** - Aerators or flow-control valves can be purchased from hardware stores and are easy to install yourself. They reduce water flow without reducing water pressure and can cut water usage from taps by half.
- **Fix any leaks** - Slow dripping taps can waste up to 20,000 litres of water a year! It's worth replacing that washer or tightening the connection when you think about the long term water wastage and cost. To check if you have any leaks, turn off all water sources in your house and then go and look at the water metre. If the metre is still moving, you have a leak somewhere and will need to find it.
- **Re-using grey water** - Water that is discharged from showers, washing machines and dishwasher can be re-used in other areas throughout your home. Grey water recycling can be as simple as buckets in the shower/kitchen or a more elaborate set-up that requires council approval. Grey water contains bacteria, organic matter, detergents, soaps and salt, so extreme care needs to be taken to ensure there is no possibility of it being consumed or coming into direct contact with people or pets.

Remember, you CAN make a difference!

Think before you print! 1 ream of paper = 6% of a tree and 5.4 kg CO₂ in the atmosphere; 3 sheets of A4 paper = 1 litre of water

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