



ATSIMS News

Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders in Marine Science

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ATSIMS, a James Cook University (JCU) marine science education and outreach program, connects First Nations high school students to marine science and management learning opportunities led by industry experts. ATSIMS engages Year 10 students from more than 13 schools from Burdekin to Ingham, and is supported by Traditional Owners and Indigenous Land & Sea Ranger groups within the North Queensland region. To learn more, visit us on our [website](#) and connect with us!

ATSIMS ALUMNA



Megan Carpenter, Ingham SHS Community Education Counsellor

ATSIMS asked Ingham State High School CEC Megan Carpenter, what it's like participating in ATSIMS from a teacher's perspective, and about the impact on students:

"ATSIMS was amazing to be a part of! The program provided a lot of insight into what marine science is and how important it is to [caring for] Sea Country, but also how... *continued pg 3*

NEW PARTNERSHIP!



Great Barrier Reef Foundation

We are thrilled to announce the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation is funding the ATSIMS program with a \$100,000 contribution to be spent over the next two years! The [Great Barrier Reef Foundation](#) brings together science, Traditional Owners, community, industry and government to find and grow conservation and restoration solutions for healthier coral reefs. We encourage all our partners and colleagues to visit their website and learn about the great work they do to protect the Reef! We look forward to including the Foundation in our program happenings this year and can't wait to see the impact achieved through our new partnership!





ATSIMS Coordinator Ally and Project Officer Jess visiting Gudjuda Rangers Eddie and Tracey, Oct 2022

2023 PROGRAM PREP

Preparation for our 2023 program kicked off with visits to our partners the Giringun Aboriginal Corporation and Gudjuda Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation at their headquarters last October. ATSIMS Coordinator Ally and Project Officer Jess road-tripped up to Cardwell to visit the [Giringun Aboriginal Rangers](#) for a key stakeholder meeting at their head office. After our meeting, we popped next door to check out the [Giringun Aboriginal Art Centre](#) and its displays of artwork and local history – we highly recommend you visit on your next trip through Cardwell! Our next stop was to the Burdekin to meet with the [Gudjuda Land and Sea Rangers](#) for a tour of their headquarters and another key stakeholder meeting. Before we hit the road we called in to the [Gudjuda Deck Café](#) for lunch with a couple of the female Rangers - Great spot for smoko the next time you're passing through! During our meetings we discussed feedback from the 2023 program and new ideas including the addition of a 'Ranger Day' module where students will spend time on Country connecting with culture and learning from the Rangers about their roles.



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Karen & Olivia, Giringun Rangers at Goolboddie (Orpheus Island), June 2022



Megan Carpenter and Coen Oates, Ingham SHS Teaching Staff at Goolboddi (Orpheus Island), June 2022

ATSIMS ALUMNA CONTINUED...

...First Nations people, especially our young people, can be a part of that. Networking with an array of ATSIMS' partners like the Giringun Rangers, JCU, ReefHQ and Traditional Owners is an extremely important part in working together to look after Country and was a standout for me and the students. Everyone has a role to play in caring for Country.

"Our Elders teach us that if we look after Country, Country looks after us. That's important for our young ones to know."

The students came to learn! They really enjoyed the field trips. Most of these students had never been to any of the places we visited with ATSIMS, but it sure did open their eyes so they could see, for themselves, what they can do in the future for employment or study. They enjoyed experiencing new things like snorkelling, studying reef data, getting insight on the different paths you can take to be involved in marine science, and understanding and respect for Country. I believe this program has given each and every one of them confidence in themselves to try new things, to tackle whatever is in front of them, to lead, have a greater understanding of marine science, but even more, a greater love and respect for Land and Sea Country. I thoroughly enjoyed the ATSIMS journey with all staff and students, it was an experience I won't forget!"



Megan Carpenter & student collecting data on the reef flat, June 2022

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If you participated in ATSIMS and want to share your story with us, please reach-out!

ATSIMS Alumna Jessie Courtney with the Reef50 Traditional Owner Steering group, Dec 2022



AMAZING ATSIMS ALUMNA

Jessie Courtney is a 2013 ATIMS alumna who is currently working for Pacific Marine Group in a COTS, Dive and Maritime Operations traineeship out of Townsville and working towards a Bachelor of Environmental Science at Central Queensland University. Recently she's become a part of the steering committee for [Reef.TO](#) – the [Traditional Owner Implementation Plan](#) (TOIP) as part of the Reef 2050 Plan. Reef.TO brings Traditional Owner actions together from across the Reef 2050 Plan into a cohesive framework for implementation. Since the 1990's Traditional Owners have been coming together to seek more cohesive approaches to securing their aspirations for a 'Healthy Reef and Healthy People.' Speaking of her work and connection with the Reef.TO TOIP, Jessie said that it



Jessie Courtney, ATSIMS (2013)

" ...took years of hard work and dedication from many ... Traditional Owners and ... partners who [came] before me. ...I am both honoured and humbled to have been a part of something that will go down in the history of our Land and Sea Country management."

Watch the animation about the Traditional Custodians of the Great Barrier Reef, titled '[Hear the Traditional Owners' Reef Story.](#)' The animation has been created by artists and creatives who are Traditional Custodians of the Reef - with guidance and support from the Reef2050 TOIP steering committee. We are so excited for Jessie, and greatly admire her perseverance in protecting Sea Country and many early successes in her burgeoning career!



Jessie Courtney, on Goolboddi (Orpheus Island), June 2022



CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

CAREER YARNS

ATSIMS Coordinator Ally was invited to an afternoon of Career Yarns with several young female students of the [NRL Cowboys House](#). The NRL Cowboys House provides accommodation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to remove distance as a barrier to accessing quality secondary education and is one branch of the [Cowboys Community Foundation](#). Having ‘Career Yarns’ offered students a chance to gain insight into the career progression and aspirations of several local female professionals. This was a great chance to highlight the steps required to get into and study at university, and the type of career that can follow. It was also inspiring to hear about the diverse aspirations of our young people and to think about the ways we can support them. We look forward to continuing to work with the Cowboys Community Foundation on student engagement opportunities!

PEOPLE, CULTURE & COUNTRY AWARDS

ATSIMS Project Officer Jess Smit attended the [People, Culture & Country 2022](#), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Project at the Townsville Civic Theatre on behalf of ATSIMS. For the project, students from schools across North Queensland produced contemporary wearable artworks that were showcased to the community throughout the year. Their final pieces were exhibited at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery. We are immensely proud of our ATSIMS partnering schools, students, and staff who were involved in this wonderfully creative project. The event highlighted the project’s success and gave everyone a chance to acknowledge their hard work and talent!





Co-Design Forum Participants on Palm Island, Dec 2022

CO-DESIGN FORUM ON PALM ISLAND

In December, ATSIMS was invited to participate in a Co-Design Forum on Palm Island hosted by Bwgcolman Community School and the MinggaMingga Rangers. ATSIMS Coordinator Ally and Project Officer Jess visited Palm Island for 2 days to connect with a small but growing team of people passionate about providing engaging learning opportunities for young people. The group, made up of representatives from JCU, Palm Island, GBRMPA, and DES, are grateful to newly minted Ranger Coordinator and Manbarra Traditional Owner Richard Cassady for connecting us all. During our visit we began to absorb the stories of the community and visit important sites including the bell/clock tower, the magnificent 7 monument, and the Story Tree where we all took part in a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony.



Magnificent 7 Monument, Palm Island



The Story Tree, Palm Island

"We're all [here as] knowledge holders, we all having something to contribute, and a story to share. Eventually, some of us become Elders, just like [our Story Tree]. Wonder the stories it has to share..." – Richard Cassady

We are thrilled that Bwgcolman CS are planning to participate in ATSIMS in 2023 and we can't wait for the rest of our students to engage with them on their traditional lands when we visit Goolboddi (Orpheus Island) this year! We will also continue to work with the Rangers as they develop their junior ranger program.



Gudjuda Reference Group's Turtle Catching boat was a big hit with the little ones at Gungu Day, Oct 2022



ATSIMS Coordinator Ally's son exploring turtle species at Gungu Day

GUNGU DAY AT JCU

In October the ATSIMS team (and family!) helped celebrate Gungu day at JCU with several of our partners. Gungu Day is a celebration of turtles, bringing together traditional culture, current research, and future conservation. Held annually at JCU's Bebegu Yumba Campus (Townsville), Gungu Day showcases the many different groups and organisations within and outside of JCU that have a cultural and conservation interest in sea turtles and the marine environment. The event opened with a Welcome to Country by Aunty Dorothy Savage followed by traditional dancing and a smoking ceremony. Many children from local daycares and schools enjoyed the festivities alongside students and faculty from across JCU. Attendees spent the rest of the morning chatting with industry experts including the Gudjuda and Giringun Land and Sea Rangers, and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Rangers. The kids enjoyed learning about the differences in shells between turtle species, and especially hopping on Gudjuda's turtle research vessel to test out the steering! There was even an opportunity to tour JCU's [Turtle Health Research Centre](#), the Caraplace, where we "oohed" and "awed" over 9-month-old baby Loggerhead Sea Turtles! It was wonderful to see so many of our partners and collaborators at the event including the [Reef Education Team](#) from ReefHQ and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and the [JCU Marine Society](#). In 2023 Gungu Day should return to being held in the cooler winter months – we encourage our schools to add it to their calendars and make a morning of it!

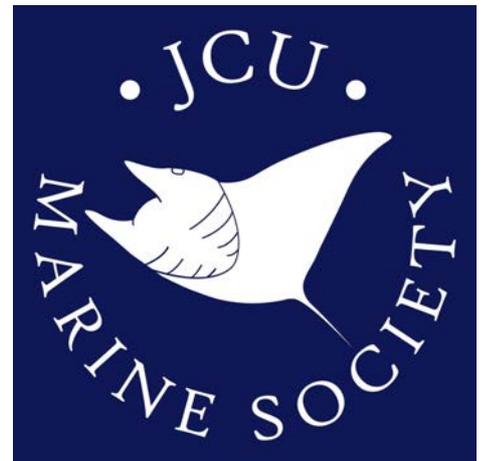


Gudjuda Ranger Jim Gaston with ATSIMS Coordinator Ally's son



CARING FOR SEA COUNTRY EVENT

In August ATSIMS Coordinator Ally along with 2022 ATSIMS Ambassador Laure Senior presented to [JCU Marine Society](#)'s inaugural Caring for Sea Country event – an evening providing insight into the partnership between First Nations groups and researchers working for the common goal of conserving the ocean landscape. Other presenters for the evening included Eddie Smallwood, Senior Ranger for Gudjuda Rangers, [Cliff Cobbo](#) Indigenous Engagement Manager for WWF Australia, and Associate [Professor Nathan Waltham](#) from JCU. Ally and Laure were able to share the motivation behind the ATSIMS program, some success stories to date and about Laure's personal experience acting in her role as an ATSIMS Ambassador. There was also a viewing of the [2022 ATSIMS Experience](#) film. It was an inspiring evening with a lovely opportunity for students and staff to mingle and chat with the presenters afterwards over canapes!



ATSIMS Ambassador Laure & Coordinator Ally ready to present



CHANGE IS IN THE AIR



For continuing and new participants please take note of some changes to the program for 2023:

Year 10 only -

Students must be 15 years old to participate.

No set number of students per school -

We will review all applications and try to ensure as many schools and students participate, budget allowing.

Ratio of 1 to 5 on excursions -

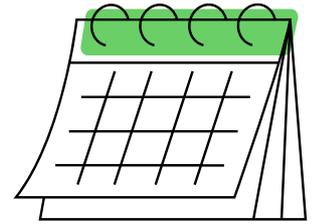
1 school staff member should accompany up to 5 students at program modules/field trips.



Application process

- We are happy to discuss with any interested teaching staff.

2023 PROGRAM CALENDAR



Below are key dates for the 5 program modules – please put them in your calendar and reach out if you foresee any schedule conflicts, we hope to include as many of you as possible.

- Program Commencement** - May 18 at JCU, Science Place
- Orpheus Island Trip** - Group 1: May 23-26
Group 2: May 26-29
Group 3: May 29 - June 1
- Ranger Day** - June 7 and 8, locations TBC
- Visit to AIMS** - June 13 and 14 at Australian Institute of Marine Science
- Program Graduation** - June 21 at JCU, Science Place



ATSIMS and Teaching Staff enjoying the waters of Goolboddi (Orpheus Island), June 2022

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LET'S GET SOCIAL!

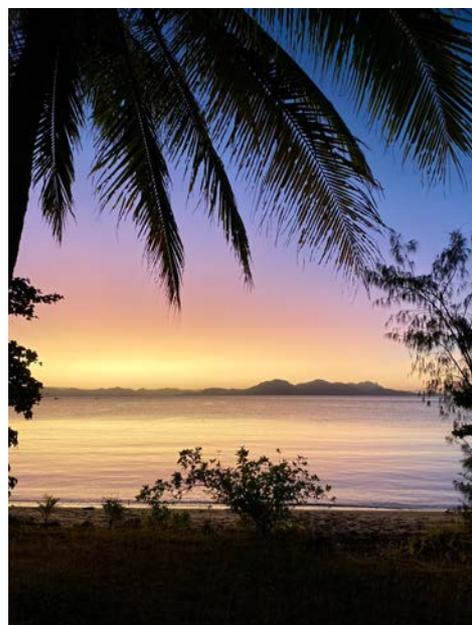
We are excited to announce the launch of the ATSIMS website hosted within the JCU domain – jump online to <https://www.jcu.edu.au/atsims> and check us out today! Is there something you would like to see on our website or newsletter that might not be there yet... please get in touch and let us know. We're on a number of social media outlets - click the logos of your favourite below and start connecting with us:



Don't hesitate to get in contact, we love hearing from our partners and participants! We're just a quick email or phone call away:

E: allison.paley@jcu.edu.au P: (07) 4781 4853

E: jess.smit@jcu.edu.au P: (07) 4781 4737



OUR SPONSORING PARTNERSHIPS

Click the logo images below to visit the websites of our sponsoring partnerships. If your organisation would like to talk to us about sponsoring the program - please get in touch!



Australian Government



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE



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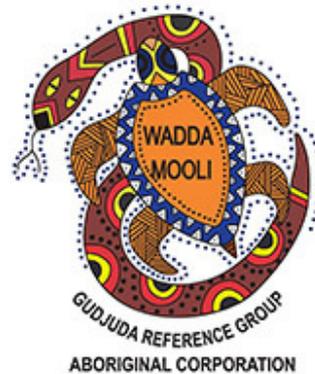
Reef Guardian School

An initiative of the Reef Authority



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