

3 February 2017

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## STUDENTS LEAP INTO ACTION TO DECORATE FROG-THEMED ARTWORK AT AURA FOR WORLD WETLANDS DAY

Scores of students from Unity College have leapt into action for World Wetlands Day by decorating frog-themed artwork at Stockland's brand new \$5 billion Aura community under construction on the Sunshine Coast.

Students and staff from the college, along with members of the Aura Community Advisory Group, were supported by staff from SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast today (February 3) as they added colour to the artwork which is located on an innovative underpass of a major new arterial road.

The underpass has been installed to ensure native fauna, such as the protected Wallum Sedgefrog species, can move safely across the landscape to feed and breed.

SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast commissioned talented artists DRAPL and LEANS from the acclaimed company Graffiti Murals to create the abstract environmental artwork which includes characterised wallum sedge frogs.

Frog expert Doctor Ed Meyer, from the School of Environmental and Applied Sciences at Griffith University's Gold Coast campus, spoke to students, staff and members of the Aura Community Advisory Group at Unity College about the acid frog populations and local wetland as part of the celebrations. MP for Caloundra Mark McArdle and local councillor Rick Baberowski were also in attendance.

Dr Meyer explained that the protected wallum sedge frogs and wallum froglets found at Aura needed highly acidic, tannin-stained and low nutrient water in a connected wetland system to thrive in the developing landscape.

Whilst on site at Aura, Dr Meyer, along with Dr Mark Bayley from Australian Wetland Consulting and Mark Sanders from EcoSmart Ecology, tested water quality and planted native sedges. They also explained to students how people could maintain sedges by not allowing run-off of fertilisers or pollutants such as car washing detergent to reach the waterways.

Mark Stephens, Senior Environment and Community Development Manager for Stockland, said it was exciting to be celebrating World Wetlands Day again at Aura, which features Australia's largest wetland rehabilitation project, with much of the site dedicated to frog habitat.

"This event is a signature day on Aura's event calendar and it is so good to hear from the experts and see the passion being developed by the school kids and community members to ensure the protection of our natural environments," Mr Stephens said.

"Having SEA LIFE involved to facilitate funky eco-street art to the frog underpasses is also a fantastic initiative to commemorate the day."

Boyd Watson from SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast said the organisation was delighted with the powerful artwork.

"It will really help to educate the community on the purpose of the dedicated frog underpasses and we are proud to have contributed," Mr Watson said.

Healthy Waterways and Catchments facilitate the Aura Community Stewardship Program. CEO of Healthy Waterways and Catchments, Julie McLellan said it was important to continue to protect the Acid Frog populations across the site.

"Acid frogs have always been of integral value to this landscape and with the involvement of community and with industry support we are confident they will remain so well into the future,"

"Involving the community early in the development of Aura on events such as World Wetlands Day, which acknowledges the invaluable contribution of wetlands in supporting native species, improving water quality and buffering our ecosystems, is also a key part of the culture of the community," Ms McLellan said.

In 2015, Stockland's ground-breaking Aura community received the world leadership certification of a 6 Star Green Star - Communities rating from the Green Building Council of Australia.

Aura has been a hive of activity lately with the first sod being turned on a revolutionary new STEM-based school for students in Preparatory to Year 6.

Initial enrolments for the public primary school, which will have state-of-the-art facilities such as a robotics lab, recording studio and innovation hub, will commence later this year for the start of the 2018 school year.

Scores of home are also under construction in Aura's first suburb of Baringa and the founding residents have moved in.

By completion, more than 20,000 new homes for more than 50,000 people will be developed at Aura and the project will contribute around 20,000 new jobs to the Sunshine Coast region. The homes will be built over the next three decades, with the new community ultimately covering 24 square kilometres.

For more information on Aura, go to [www.cityofcolour.com](http://www.cityofcolour.com) , visit the Aura Sales and Vision Centre on Bells Reach Drive, Bells Reach or phone 1300 762 058. You can also keep up with the community's progress on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/auraqld](http://www.facebook.com/auraqld).

## **ENDS**

### **Aura's 6 Star Green Star – Communities rating**

- In early 2015, the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) endorsed the master plan for Aura by accrediting the project with the highly coveted 6 Star Green Star – Communities rating. The rating signifies 'world leadership' for the design of the future city.
- Stockland's master plan has achieved the highest possible standards for the future community's long-term economic prosperity, 'liveability' and environmental responsibility during, and well after construction is completed and the community is established.

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