

Brother Scientist for a Day Pilot Overview

The Brother-Earth Partnership kicked off in 2009 with two pilot teams in late January. Teams were recruited following the New Year break, with Brisbane and Sydney offices fielding maximum numbers required for both teams. This included both Brother staff members and clients. Overall teams ran smoothly and feedback from participants was very positive with the Brother Team members providing useful ideas for improvements to logistics.

The Trouble with Turtles, North Stradbroke Island

Brother's Brisbane office launched the Scientist for a Day program for 2009. A team of 10 from Brother's Brisbane state office, Harvey Norman, Synnex and Bev Gorry's Sewing Machines travelled to North Stradbroke Island to help Dr Kathy Townsend from the University of Queensland find out what is killing our turtles. Anne Ramsay Vanderdrift assisted with recruitment and coordination of participants, which included Brother International (Australia) QLD NT State Manager, Greg Benardos. The Brother team was met at Cleveland Ferry Terminal by Earthwatch representative James Kramer, on the morning of the project and accompanied to the Moreton Bay Research Centre.



The team about to begin

Participants were given a brief overview of the project explaining their involvement for the day – beginning by assisting with a turtle necropsy to analyse gut contents and uncovering the suspected cause of death. In the afternoon the team split in two with one group continuing with the necropsy and the other group moving to the beach for rubbish collection. Both groups rejoined for the beach survey work in the afternoon where the rubbish collected was then returned to the lab for analysis and recording so that findings can be related to what is found within the turtles digestive tracts during the necropsy work.



The team helping out on the turtle necropsy

The day concluded with an overview of the day's findings, an Earthwatch summary and an opportunity for participants to provide feedback via the Earthwatch evaluation form. Through this vital feedback Earthwatch is able to continually improve the volunteer experience and ensure all programs are of the highest standard while ensuring its scientific rigour.



Preparing for beach surveys



Greg Collecting plastic waste



The team after an afternoon of collecting deadly plastic

Improvement Opportunities:

- Earthwatch will provide an enhanced and more detailed project briefing to participants prior to fielding
- Earthwatch will update the project flyer to reflect specific requirements for clothing in the field and rendezvous details
- Earthwatch asks that all Brother participants take heed of the rendezvous time to avoid late arrival, ensuring the team stays within the proposed timeline
- It is imperative that all participants complete their forms **prior to fielding** and simply handed in on the day, so that Anne Vanderdrift and Earthwatch have accurate personal, health and dietary information in advance.

Testimonials:

“Overall I thought this expedition was a beneficial day which opened my eyes to a train of thought I don't usually become involved in.”

Jason Fernandez, Brother Account Manager

“This has reinforced my environmental awareness. I will endeavour to make a more concerted effort to reduce (drastically) my personal plastic waste.”

Sandra Golda, Client, Harvey Norman