

ISLAND EXPERIENCES



NOVEMBER 2015

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

HIGH SCHOOL CLASS TRIP TO NORTHWEST ISLAND, CAPRICORNIA CAYS, THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

2015

- 30 hours study of reef and island ecology and biology
- Study of issues impacting on the reef and its global significance as world heritage
- 8 days self-sufficient and minimum impact camping on a remote island
- Cooperative group work to establish and maintain camp
- Snorkeling in rock pools and at deep water drop off to observe coral and fish inter-relationships
- Kayaking
- Island walks including observation of sunrise and sunset
- Tidal reef walks: identifying creatures
- Observation of Turtle egg laying and study of turtle breeding cycle
- Observation and study of Shearwaters and Noddies; bird life on the island
- Identifying vegetation on the island and cycle of growth and decay
- cross section of deep water, reef, tidal flats, beach, island to indicate overall relationship between island and sea
- courage walk across the island, singly at night, through the Pisonia forest
- participation in artistic and reflective sharing sessions
- compilation of island fieldwork journal - the study of island life and interrelationships



I shine the sun on this coral... Because it is like a hand reaching for something to hold, its fingers delicate and small. It is like a small tree brave and strong through the toughest of storms... Its branches sturdy and broad to catch and hold anyone that falls. It is like a friend supporting its friends on either side through the tough and uneasy times. This coral I shine the sun upon is a part of everything if you look closely.

In this place... Shady, breezy, peaceful and calm. I feel like the ocean is trying to tell me a secret but I am not listening closely enough... It crashes and breaks, rolls and tumbles getting impatient as I struggle to understand. The ocean is like a friend changing with the tide but always there for you. I want to capture the sounds it leaves behind in a painting but I know that is impossible... So I just sit here and listen and hope I will be able to hear its calming voice forever. Ella







This place pushes me to my limits and beyond but still supports me with small waves, soft sand and calm rock pools. This place is beautiful yet harsh, calm yet frantic and is forever changing and moving. This place is forever breathing in and breathing out in the calmest of ways. This place supports itself and everything around it making it a home for so many animals. This place is inviting and homely. The trees and the birds work together and so do many other animals here. My body and my mind feels pushed but I still crave that feeling of scaring yourself. I cannot describe how nice it is to look in the sky and not see a plane or hear a boat, it's just me and North West Island. Sashka



Is there such a place that lifts you up, higher than anything? Where you can almost see the curvature of the earth? And float dreamily, aloft in a cloud of imagination? Just imagine a place of hard softness and desolate closeness, where billows are sent up in your shirt and through translucent barriers of warmth, making coolness upon your skin. Whispers echo through the breeze, all the while sitting aloof, alone, and away... Olive





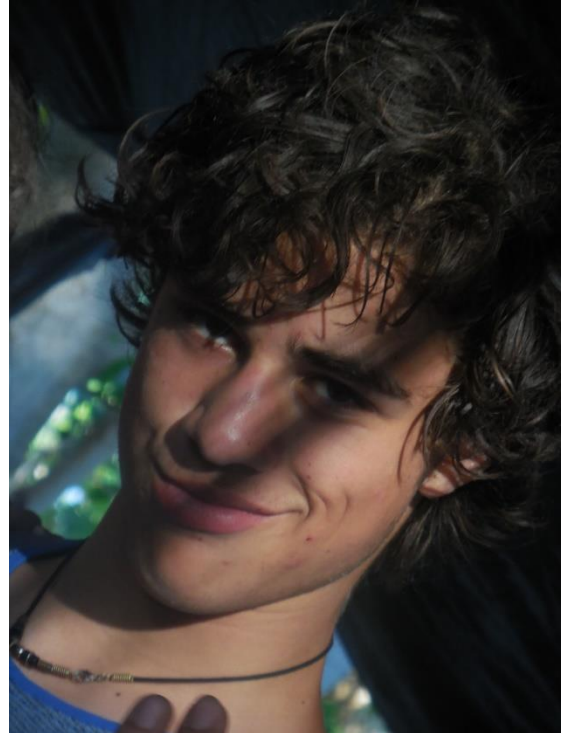
Home. Not the place where you sleep every night but the places that make you feel peaceful, comfortable and relaxed. I have changed and grown and so has the island. Little things I notice. Very low tides, different branches and new growth. The ripples carry a salty tang, shells rolling off their wings. Bird cries create a lovely resounding listening track. No need to plug in here, create your own music or listen to the music of North West Island. The island with birds, reef, sunsets and a blue view. The white fine sand is scattered with white shells, perfect for mermaid jewellery, or maybe just hippie jewellery. The sun seems so bright and strong, but as the evening draws near it becomes cooler and the breeze sweeps back your hair and grabs seeds as it passes so it can get you all tangled up. Voices drift; people laughing, playing, chatting and listening. This place, this North West Island, is a home for me. Just like Kindlehill will always be a home.

Bella





This place is hot, sunny and relaxing with the waves gently splashing your feet, the sound of the ocean singing you to sleep and a world of blue for you to observe at your leisure. Beneath the surface is a new universe to explore. It is a place of powerful currents and sharp edges. and creatures thrive here, navigating their way between the rocks with a grace that suggests no effort at all. This underwater place is one that I can never fully be part of just as it can't easily be in my world, but what happens to one will inevitably effect the other.-Lem.





This coral has a nice mix of colours and blends really well. It is hollow and on the inside it has a darker colour to one side and then a small thin line of brown on the other side. It is very small so it must've broken off something bigger. It almost looks like a really small piece of elbow but not quite as bent. I think it has a lot to tell.

“I shine the sun on this coral
the darkness on the inside shines in the light.
Holding it out towards the sea
it almost blends in at certain angles
I can see its done its time in the ocean
and now it’s time is to rest in the sand.”

Willow



An island rising from the sea
The tide is coming in,
Most birds are trapped but some are free,
And so the night begins,
The breeze is gentle on my face,
The atmosphere is calm,
The sun releases warm embrace,
And sunburn on my arm,
And as this journey doth begin,
Adds to the stubble on my chin,
So does my poem come to la fin,
I hope it will be approved by Lynn.

Gali



i write submissions
and sign petitions
and use less plastic when I'm in the kitchen
and don't waste when I go fishin'
and inform people so they know what they're missing
so they know what to do
and what not to use
and when they're on the reef they wear reef shoes
(but that's more for self protection
and stinger deflections)
and when they say something wrong i will correct them
and stand up to the people
whose excuses are feeble
and visit the places
that the guvo disgraces

Oscar





ISLAND STORY

High school trip to North West Island, Great Barrier Reef

November 2015



Waves have eloquence. They bring to shore the stories of faraway lands and depths of ocean. They are whisperers of news while they wash the shore. The tide brings tidings to this island, 75 kilometres from her mainland neighbours though only a turtle swim to nearby masthead.

You might think, being an island in the midst of big seas that it would be a quiet existence but days are bustling with the come and go of noddies, pairing and nest building, raising their chicks. And under the pearly light of moon, the shearwaters nourish their young, calling comfort to each other in ethereal cries. And turtles heave themselves shoreward, sighing heavily with the labour of digging a safe haven in which to leave their eggs.

Then there are the visitors to the island. Firstly Ella, graceful and slender as the beach Casuarina. She is the ARTIST, painting the ever changing dance of light on the water. She turns a walk into a work of art and wearing a dress into an occasion.

Then there is Bella, the ADVENTURER, whether



setting off solely around the island at sunrise or in writing a pithy song. There is a love of life in Bella and a craving for experience to match the boldest pirate of long ago.

Sashka is the NURTURER and CELEBRATOR of life. Gentle, generous soul. The footprints she leaves on this island will linger, a memory of one who came and opened her mind and heart.

Olive is the POET, navigator of rich inner worlds. She invites her companions to ride with her the highs and lows of her island “wuthering”. Watch out! I have heard her cackle in the moonlight!

Gali is the PROBLEM SOLVER. Every group needs one. He is the human version of the swiss army knife. His mind is the gadget for every tricky situation, physical and emotional. He builds friendship bridges and when they are tested by storms he builds them again.

Oscar is the COMEDIAN. Spontaneous, playful and always sharpening his wit on the funny side of life. Like any comedian worth his salt! He is a little bit wise beneath the waves of humour.So is that what it means to be a “wise crack”?

Lem is the SHAMAN. He names what he sees going on, not always tactfully. Charming, unpredictable and sometimes a little scary, he demands respect. And he is the one you go to when there is serious heavy lifting to be done.

Willow is the DEVOTEE of life. She is the amazed, wonder filled exclamer of life. “OH MY LORD!” she says. She is also braveheart – facing her fears and standing up adamantly for herself.

And then there is Dan, the MAGICIAN. Player of cards and man of tricks, revealer of nature’s treasures and dissolver of boundaries. Man of many guises, man with Frisbee, man with a sea star in his hand, man with the child alive in his whole being.

Then there is me, pull and tug like a tide, insistent as a sunrise, believer in mermaids, sharing the wisdom from the book of nature, lifting the veil on that which is beholden in the heart’s eye.

The island has been generous host to us all. We guests leave her table, appetites sated. We have



experienced her boundless beauty and the rich intricacy of life on the reef. We are in deep gratitude for her existence. We leave the island with a clearer understanding amongst each other, 8 days on an island has its challenges; from the isolation, minimalist camping, facing fears, to the social cohesion of the group.

As for me, the island has become a friend to call up when I need some nourishing. I'm leaving her my number, one day she may have need of it and I will without hesitation, be there for her.

Lynn



