

## Connectivity Tour

**Demonstrating the link between healthy catchments and productive fish stocks**

**Catchment to Coast Tour – May 2008**

[Tide to Table – Burdekin Dry Tropics](#) and the Queensland Wetlands Programme



Tide to Table – Burdekin Dry Tropics and the Queensland Wetlands carried out a Catchment to Coast tour to demonstrate the link between catchment activities, healthy wetlands and the downstream effect on fish stocks and fisheries.

The tour visited various wetlands in the lower Burdekin and Townsville to talk to farmers, fishers, researchers, Traditional Owners, community groups and government about the importance of wetlands, threats to wetland health and what landowners and land managers are doing to manage and protect wetlands.

The tour commenced at the site of a fishway at [Sheepstation Creek](#), near Brandon, to discuss barriers to fish passage in the lower Burdekin, such as bunds, culverts and drop boards. At [Collinsons Lagoon](#), the tour participants learnt that weeds can also be a barrier to fish passage, by degrading water quality.

The tour visited [Horseshoe Lagoon](#), where local farmers, a community group and local Traditional Owner talked about the threats to wetlands in the area and the work that they are doing to address these threats and manage on-farm wetlands.



A delicious lunch of locally caught seafood, was held on board the Goondooloo, whilst cruising in Ross Creek and learning about management of the marine environment.



Lunch was followed by a trip to the fishing wharves to talk to a commercial fisher about the fishing industry. Tour participants learnt about the various regulations on gear and fishing activities to minimise bycatch and sustainably manage fish stocks.

The tour concluded at the wetland exhibit at Reef HQ, where a Townsville City Council councillor summarised the values and threats to wetlands in the region and spoke about ways to address the threats.

Fifty people attended the tour, including farmers, fishers, primary industry representatives, government officers and community groups. Attendees found the tour enjoyable and informative and particularly enjoyed the talks on the commercial fishing industry, aquatic weeds and fish passage.

#### **Burdekin Christian College Connectivity tour – November 2008**

Students from the Burdekin Christian College followed the lifecycle of barramundi by visiting the various wetland habitats that barramundi use at different times of their life. The students visited a freshwater wetland at Kalamia and a saltwater wetland near Alva Beach to learn about why these wetlands are important to fish and how activities in the catchment can affect the health and productivity of wetlands in the lower Burdekin.



John Byers, a commercial fisher from Alva Beach spoke about commercial fishing and how healthy wetlands are vital for his livelihood. John showed the students some of the mud crabs he recently caught and the gear he uses.

The students also experienced, hands-on, how different catchment land uses and actions can affect downstream wetlands and animals such as fish, turtles and dugongs, through a catchment game run by Donna Audas from the Queensland Wetlands Programme.

The students left the tour knowing a little more about the things that they and their family can do to help keep wetlands healthy and productive.