

MEDIA RELEASE

July 6, 2018

Marine world comes to life on Gladstone Library Square big screen

A window into the world's largest living coral reef aquarium will open at Gladstone Library Square next Tuesday (July 10).

Images from the Townsville's Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium will be streamed live to the library square's big screen on Goondoon Street from 10am-11am as part of the International Year of the Reef celebrations.

The aquarium, which doubles as the National Education Centre for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), is home to thousands of marine creatures and showcases the reef's rare and extraordinary features.

Those attending the broadcast will have the chance to interact with a diver speaking from inside the aquarium and be part of the first such broadcast from Reef HQ to the Gladstone Region.

GBRMPA Assistant Director of Regional Engagement Rebecca Allen said the broadcast was an exciting chance for communities in the Great Barrier Reef's southern region to experience coral reefs and diving without getting wet.

"We've arranged for five venues to screen the diver presenting from underwater; to share facts about the Great Barrier Reef and its wonderful creatures," she said.

"At the venues you can learn about the reef ecosystem through the eyes of a diver and also about ways to protect it through every day actions."

Gladstone Region Deputy Mayor Chris Trevor said the event, hosted during school holidays, presented a great opportunity for young viewers to learn more about the reef and its enormous environmental and economic value.

"Being able to ask a diver and reef ecosystem expert questions during the broadcast provides an excellent learning experience for youngsters attending the event," Councillor Trevor said.

"Viewers will be taken on a virtual coral reef dive and learn more about the fascinating creatures that inhabit this underwater world about which we still have so much to learn."

Cr Trevor said the Gladstone Regional Art Gallery and Museum, to mark the broadcast event, hosted the first of two fully booked International Year of the Reef Hands on Activities workshops for youngsters aged 6-12 years yesterday (July 3), with the second to follow next Tuesday (July 10).

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“The first workshop was a great success with 14 participants and the Gallery and Museum is looking forwarding to hosting the Reef HQ live stream during the second workshop,” he said.

Gladstone City Library is housing a display of reef related items and books about reefs including a bale of paper turtles which can be coloured in by library visitors and added to the presentation.

The display will then progress to other libraries within the region over the following two months.

Reef HQ's live stream school holiday project, conducted in partnership with Reef Guardian Councils and the Fitzroy Basin Association, will also be screened at Yeppoon, Rockhampton, Emerald and Bundaberg.

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