

Get up close and personal with creatures in your Wild Backyard

Queensland Minister for the Arts, Ms Rachel Nolan, today encouraged Queenslanders to get up close and personal with the animals in their backyards for the sake of science.

“The *Wild Backyards* citizen science initiative, conducted by the Queensland Museum, Quest Newspapers and the Atlas of Living Australia is an online portal that will help people to easily identify species in their backyard,” Ms Nolan said.

“The site at wildbackyards.net.au encourages people to take a photo and upload details of their sighting.

“This information will then be fed through to the Atlas of Living Australia – a world first interactive online encyclopaedia of Australia’s biodiversity.

“The Atlas of Living Australia is a collaborative research tool using the latest technology to pull together information held in biological collections around Australia, as well as diverse sightings from the general public.

“Having the public involved in this initiative means that scientists can now explore and analyse information about our biodiversity in new ways, making a difference in areas such as conservation and the impact of environmental change on habitat and species.

“This is one of many citizen science projects the Queensland Museum is involved in to enhance community understanding and engagement with the natural world at the same time as increasing scientific knowledge.

“For example, the Museum’s Backyard Explorer program takes science to regional Queensland, providing face to face workshops and tools for school students to assess biodiversity through the world of insects.

“Also, dinosaur discoveries made in partnership with the Outback Gondwana Foundation and the Australia Age of Dinosaurs enhance scientific capability and discovery and are unlike those anywhere else unique in the world due to the degree of community participation.”

The Wild Backyards online portal can be found at: wildbackyards.net.au

Media contact: Minister’s office