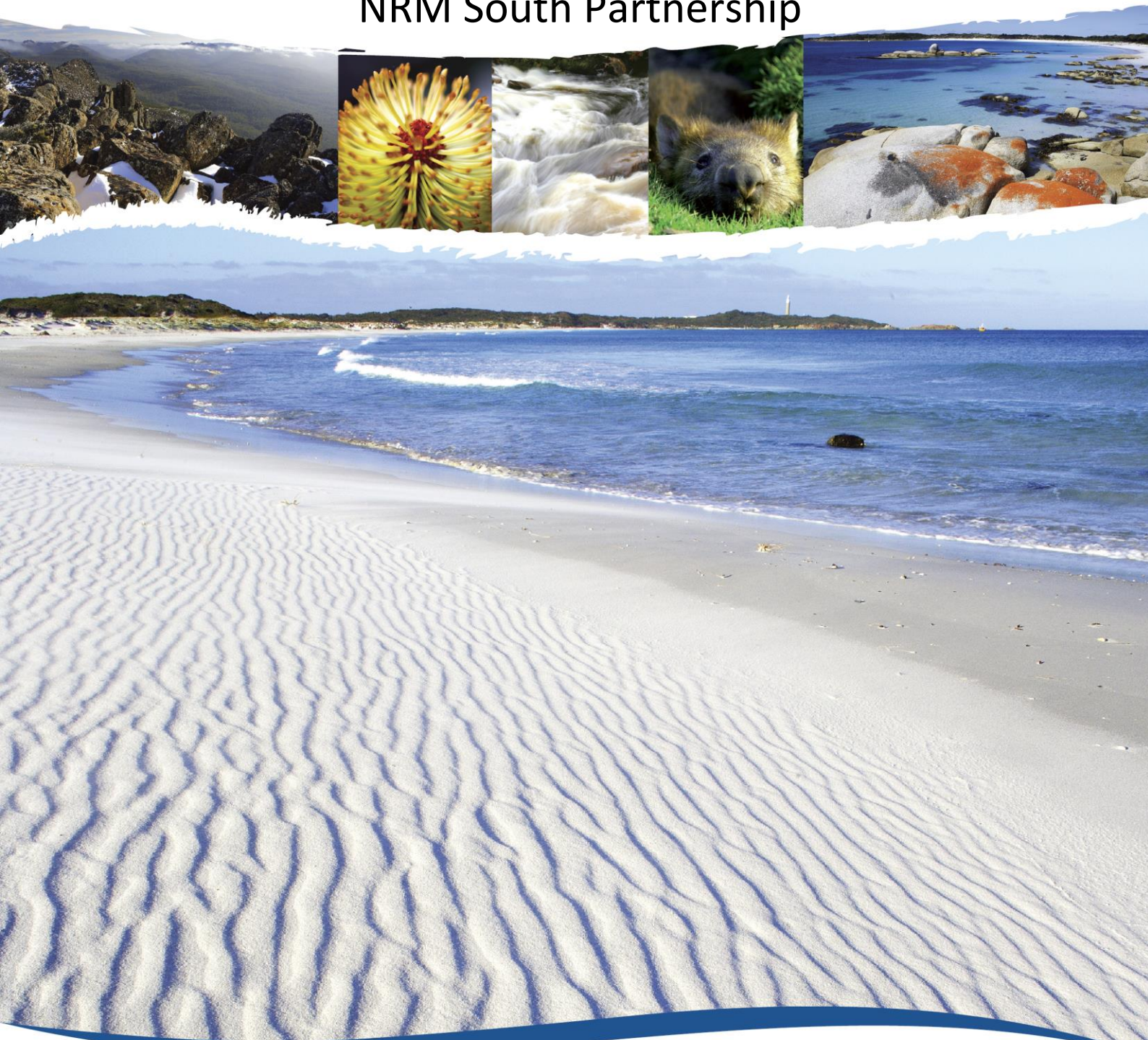


Report 2016-17



Discovery Ranger Program

NRM South Partnership



Report 2016-17
NRM South Partnership
Cultural Awareness

Discovery Ranger Program
2016-2017



Tasmanian Aboriginal educator Trish Hodge inspiring participants on a bush tucker walk on the east coast during the 2016-17 Discovery Ranger Program.

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Trish teaching some weaving to a group of eager participants

1. Discovery Ranger Summer Program Summary

This report provides an account of educational activities undertaken in the Discovery Ranger Program during the summer of 2016-2017 under a partnership agreement between the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) and NRM South.

As with previous years, the 2016-2017 Discovery Ranger Program reached out to the Tasmanian community and visitors to the state through public events and interactions both on and off PWS managed lands. Our highly skilled Discovery Rangers added value to the experience of visitors through their personal interpretive interactions, enhanced by their extensive knowledge of Tasmania's natural and cultural values.

By the end of the summer season Discovery Rangers encouraged a total of 26,293 visitors to look more closely and discover the natural and cultural features of the place that they were visiting with their involvement in 599 activities or roves (Table 1.1).

Summer 2016-17	Activities		Roves		Total #
	# Activities	# participants	# Roves	# participants	participants
	327	11,362	272	9,626	26,293

Table 1.1 Summary of total contact numbers from the Discovery Ranger summer program 2016-17.

Please note: The total participant number exceeds the combined total from activities and roves as it also includes participants involved in the penguin and shearwater program.

Fourteen Discovery Rangers were employed at twelve locations over the summer. Locations included:

- national parks such as Narawntapu, Mount Field, Mt William, Freycinet, Maria Island, Rocky Cape and Tasman;
- conservation areas such as Lillico Beach, Arthur-Pieman and the Bay of Fires;
- other north-east and north-west reserves and local towns;
- the Neck Game Reserve and other locations on Bruny Island

The primary objectives of this 38th consecutive Discovery Ranger summer program were:

- Reserves are full of life
 - With high biodiversity, incredible wilderness and interactive opportunities
- Reserves are good for people
 - The health and well-being benefits that being in reserves provide to the mind, body and soul through activities such as yoga, meditation and exercise
- Reserves inspire imagination and creativity
 - Through art, photography, poetry, music and storytelling
- Tasmania's reserves are of global significance
 - World Heritage status, high rates of endemism, high rates of protected land
- Reserves are fun
 - Quiz nights, laughter workshops, tug-of-war, children's games
- Reserves are for everyone
 - Cultural inclusion excursions, organised pram walks, targeting disadvantaged groups, running activities for people with disabilities
- Discovery Rangers provide opportunities for local communities to have a voice
 - Community partnerships, community run activities, volunteering days, supporting community events.

These objectives highlight that reserves are for more than just bushwalking and the summer program is more than just conservation-themed presentations. Although both these traditional activities are vital to the identity of the PWS, it is paramount that we can also provide a diversity of opportunities and messages to the diversity of people in the Tasmanian community.

2. NRM South and PWS Partnership Summary

This NRM South and PWS Discovery Ranger Program partnership was formed to offer a mutually beneficial approach to educational services aiming to increase awareness of Tasmanian Aboriginal heritage and culture in the southern and south-eastern part of the state. Over recent years, Discovery Rangers have teamed up with Tasmanian Aboriginal elders and educators in an ad-hoc manner to co-run cultural activities together.

Through this partnership with NRM South, the Discovery Ranger Program has been able to employ three Aboriginal educators on a contractual basis this season, to co-run cultural awareness activities in a more strategic, robust and far reaching way. Trish Hodge and Dewayne Everettsmith are Managing Directors, and Sheldon Thomas a Traditional Healer, of the educational consultancy business *mina nina tourism*. This new Tasmanian business has already developed a strong reputation in educating the community about Tasmanian Aboriginal culture. As the Discovery Ranger Program wanted to work with Tasmanian Aboriginal people who had the necessary experience and skills to deliver at a high level, Trish, Dewayne and Sheldon were chosen for this partnership.

2.1 Objectives

NRM South was to contribute to the Discovery Ranger Program to develop a mutually beneficial partnership, with a focus on providing employment to a person/people in the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. The partnership will build on the previous activity of Discovery Rangers - and through this initiative, educating and inspiring the general community, and visitors to the state, on Tasmanian Aboriginal history and cultural heritage through the PWS Discovery Ranger Program.

Activities were to be developed in conjunction with the Aboriginal people employed to participate and deliver cultural awareness activities.

Activities were to include:

- structured and advertised one-hour activities such as bush tucker walks, kelp-bowl making or twinning workshops
- roving around towns or campsites engaging the public with a cultural prop and chatting about Aboriginal heritage
- and, setting up Discovery Tables at trail heads or popular locations to enjoy quick chats with large volumes of people

Activities were to be located inside popular reserves as well as in towns of the southern region, these may be held in any of the following locations:

- National parks such as Freycinet, Maria, Tasman, South Bruny and Mount Field
- Towns such as Bicheno, Coles Bay, Swansea, Triabunna, Orford, Dunalley, Nubeena, Adventure Bay, New Norfolk, as well as locations in Greater Hobart such as Kingston Beach and the Taste of Tasmania

2.2 Outcomes

The outcomes sought were:

- Provide employment (through a contractual basis) for a person/people in the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, as well as mentoring opportunities for other Aboriginal people.
- Contribute towards specific Tasmanian Aboriginal-themed activities in the south of the state, both inside and outside of PWS managed reserves
- Encourage local understanding of and advocacy for, Aboriginal values at these sites through authentic education delivered by a Tasmanian Aboriginal person/people and facilitated by Discovery Rangers

2.3 Outputs Planned

There were no set targets for outputs identified at the outset of this partnership, as it was a new initiative. The expected outputs were:

- Engagement events conducted (based on staffing and scheduling)
- Aboriginal people employed (contracted)
- Community members engaged through the program
- Aboriginal people mentored through the program (as relevant)
- Any testimonials/feedback from participants (where able)
- Photos/evidence of activities (where possible)



A group of participants proudly showing off their woven masterpieces during a cultural activity in the Freycinet visitor Centre

2.4 Outputs Delivered

The locations, dates and details for the co-run Aboriginal activities are listed in the table below:

Date	Location	Aboriginal Educator	No of Ppl	Activity or Rove Name	Topic and Key Messages	Comments by the Discovery Rangers
6/1	Triabunna	Trish Hodge	80	Aboriginal	Traditional lifestyle of	Highly successful – repeat if possible.
	Maria Island National Park		40	Workshop & Cultural Conversations	Tasmania's first people and how today Tasmanian Aboriginal people are keeping the oldest culture on Earth alive and strong.	
7/1	Dunalley		150+	Dunalley Aboriginal Cultural Workshop – part of the Discovery Day		Mainly Tas locals. Incredibly popular.
8/1	Adventure Bay, Bruny Island		180+	Weaving and cultural conversations		This event was highly successful. All elements of the day (paddle boarding, my games, BBQ, reptile show, Trish's activities, my discovery table, Friends of Adventure Bay table) were well received. Many locals attended. Bruny Island Boat Club published an album and "What a fantastic day! Well done to Ranger Jess!"
9/1	Dru Point, Margate		62	Bush Tucker and Cultural Life	The bush provides a supermarket, chemist and hardware store for the Palawa people	I roved around the adults in the playground before the activity and most people I spoke to joined in the activity. Trish and Uncle Bill led a bush tucker walk and helped people make kelp water carriers and other items.
14/1	Fortescue Bay, Tasman Peninsula		50+	Aboriginal Cultural Workshop	Aboriginal history, weaving, bushtucker	Lots of interest. As usual, Trish was awesome.
15/1	Conningham		100+			
20/1	Freycinet National Park	Trish and Sheldon Thomas	12	Mina Nina at Freycinet	Bush tucker, Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture, traditional healing, rope making	It was raining really hard on this day so the activity ended up being primarily inside, and we didn't get the turnout we otherwise might have
21/1	Coles Bay		15	Mina Nina in Coles Bay		
22/1	Maria Island		50	Aboriginal		Sheldon Thomas is a proud palawa

	National Park			Workshop and Cultural Conversations		(Tasmanian Aboriginal) man. His expertise is Traditional Healing and he is also an expert Traditional Canoe builder. Join Sheldon for an hour of healing with his Traditional songs and healing techniques.
23/1	Orford		6			Bush Tucker & Traditional Healing Meet two palawa (Tasmanian Aboriginal) people, Trish Hodge and Sheldon Thomas, for an exciting insight into how Tasmania's First Nations flourished in the Tasmanian Country prior to the arrival of the British. Trish is a Tasmanian Bush Tucker expert and Sheldon is a renowned Traditional Healer. It was the first time running any activity in Orford. Need to partner with a local organisation to get more engagement.
26/1	Mount Field National Park	Dewayne Evertsmith	32	Bush Tucker and Cultural Conversations		The Bush tucker and cultural conversations had a lot of people along and expanded some people's understanding of aboriginal culture in Tasmania
28/1	Adventure Bay, Bruny Island		33	Music and Cultural Conversations	Contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal culture	Great verbal feedback after both events
29/1	Conningham Beach		22			

All up, 14 activities were delivered to a total of 832 people in a range of locations across the southern and south-eastern parts of Tasmania, both inside and out of reserves. It is worth noting that some of these 14 activities went for more than one hour. For example the activities in Triabunna, Dunally and Conningham were part of the two – four hour Discovery Day events. Also, a number of the other activities went for 1.5 hours where one person presented, or two hours where both Trish and Sheldon both delivered.

Discovery Ranger Jess who was based on Bruny Island/Channel coast had this to say:

“The major benefit of this partnership was having Aboriginal cultural heritage activities being run by Trish and Dewayne. I think having members of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community delivering activities on Aboriginal culture is a great element of the Discovery Program. I definitely recommend maintaining this partnership.”

Discovery Ranger Rachel who was based at Freycinet National Park had this to say:

“Trish is incredibly knowledgeable and a great presenter. It was great to have these events at Freycinet. I think these events would be worth repeating next year, with more advertising as special events on top of normal Discovery Ranger advertising.”

Discovery Ranger Rob who was based on the Tasman Peninsula had this to say:

The “Bush tucker and Cultural Stories” session run in partnership with Trish Hodge had a marked effect on many participants with several people remarking that it had definitely “opened their eyes” to a understanding the complex and rich history and contemporary issues around this subject. A huge “thank you” to Trish Hodge, for her enthusiasm, knowledge, passion and willingness to help and give her all.



A big crowd awaiting Trish’s activity at Conningham, 2017



Discovery Ranger Rob getting into the activity with a big mob at Fortescue Bay

5. Recommendations

Considering the success of the partnership this summer, the following is recommended:

- That PWS and NRM South continue this mutually beneficial partnership next summer season,
- NRM South to provide flags to PWS so they receive more public exposure through this partnership.
- Both parties continue to seek additional Tasmanian Aboriginal educators to work within the program.

6. Conclusion

In its inaugural season, this partnership proved both successful and mutually beneficial. As previously stated, the Trish, Dewyane and Sheldon in partnership with the Discovery Rangers ran 14 sessions to 832 people at an outstanding average of 60. Many of the participants who were engaged in this outreach program were local Tasmanians enjoying a local town or reserve. These people have been educated and inspired by Tasmania's rich Aboriginal history and cultural heritage.

We hope that we can continue to work together to connect with the local community, celebrate Tasmania's Aboriginal heritage, and support the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

We sincerely thank NRM South for their support, and look forward to continuing our partnership into the future.



More fun at Fortescue Bay



Happy participants learning about Tasmania's Aboriginal history and heritage