



Fraser Island Launches New Environmental Hub

Official opening of K'gari World Heritage Discovery Centre

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A new Interpretation Centre is being launched on K'gari (Fraser Island), to enhance environmental awareness and conservation efforts on the world's largest sand island.

Located within Kingfisher Bay Resort, the K'gari World Heritage Discovery Centre, officially opening on March 1st, will be free for all visitors to the island.

Next week's launch event will commence with a Butchulla Welcome to Country, joined by University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) representatives, with the official opening led by Fraser Coast Mayor, George Seymour.

This initiative has been funded by USC and SeaLink Fraser Island; with Group General Manager David Hay saying it was a collective cultural endorsement for the destination, acknowledging support from the Butchulla Aboriginal Corporation and Fraser Coast Council.

"We took it upon ourselves to develop this centre, ensuring visitors could have a greater understanding of Fraser Island's profound environmental significance, and in turn, encouraging those to champion its preservation", Mr Hay said.

"We have a long-standing relationship with USC, as the majority of our Resort Rangers are graduates of the university; therefore, this project presents opportunities for further research", he added.

The Discovery Centre comprises a series of informative panels were designed and curated by USC staff and students, detailing the complex ecosystems of this natural phenomena, that led to the island's World Heritage listing back in 1992.

Visitors can learn about the vegetation, such as rainforests growing from sand and pristine freshwater lakes, paired with the unique wildlife that inhabit this diverse landscape.

The centre comprises content sourced from USC's Research Archives, as well as imagery from the island's resident photographer and tour guide, Peter Meyer.

Having lived and worked on Fraser for over two decades, he has seen the island in many states and forms. Following the recent bushfire devastation, Peter ventured out to capture some images of the regeneration in the fire-affected areas.

"I witnessed Mother Nature come alive, and her ability to tolerate, and even thrive after fire. Ferns emerging through the ash-covered leaves and new shoots sprouting from the charred Eucalypts is a remarkable sight", said Mr Meyer.

Following a challenging year for the island destination, Monday's launch marks the exciting completion of Phase One of the Discovery Centre, with an additional four-step expansion planned. Mr Hay said the team are actively seeking funding to further develop the facility, with features including a range of interactive and immersive digital displays.

Not only will the Discovery Centre provide high quality interpretation for guests, it will offer an educational resource and versatile space for visiting schools or leisure groups.

For media wishing to attend Monday's launch, for interview opportunities, or stories/famil opportunities relating to Kingfisher Bay Resort, Eurong Beach Resort, Fraser Explorer Tours or Fraser Island Ferries contact:

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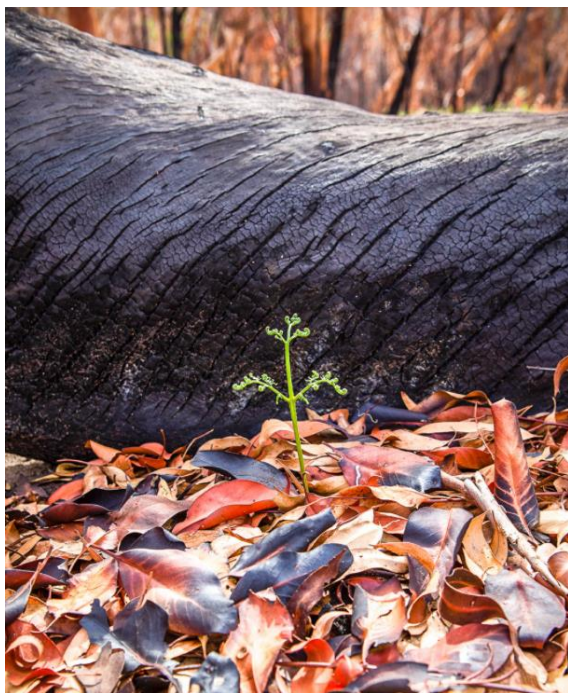
Ready for the official opening:

Kingfisher Bay Resort staff at the entrance to the new K'gari World Heritage Discovery Centre



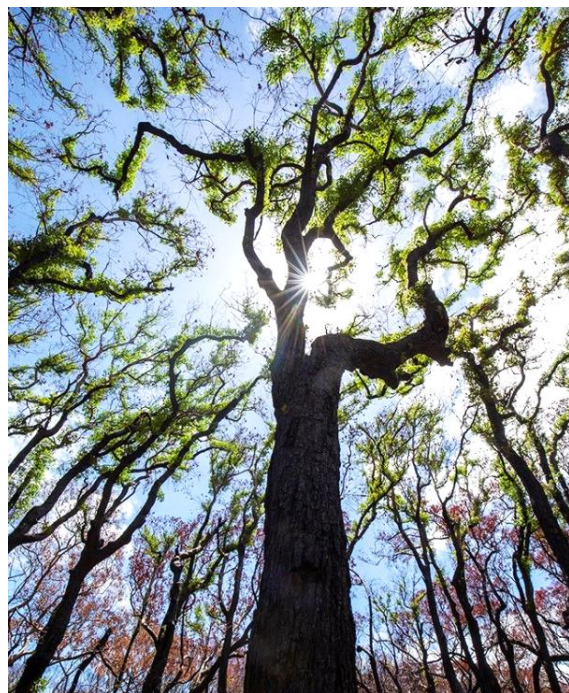
Environmental awareness:

SeaLink Fraser Island Group General Manager David Hay showcases the series of interpretive panels compiled by USC staff and students.



New growth on Fraser Island:

A bracken fern emerges before a blackened eucalypt - Peter Meyer.



Remarkable sights:

Mother Nature comes alive, amongst Fraser Island's devastated landscapes, captured by resident photographer Peter Meyer.