



DOLPHIN  
WATCH

*Dolphin Watch is a project  
of the Swan River Trust and  
is delivered in collaboration with  
Murdoch and Curtin Universities.*

More information about *Dolphin Watch* is available at  
[www.riverguardians.com/partneringopportunities](http://www.riverguardians.com/partneringopportunities)

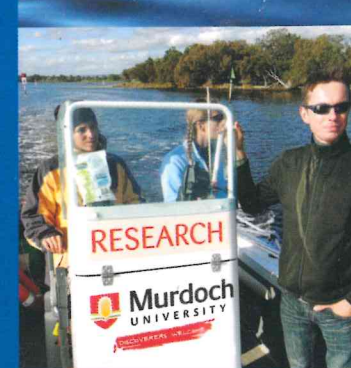
# *Dolphin Watch*

has captured the hearts and minds  
of the Perth community



*"Dolphin Watch is one of the world's most progressive citizen science models. It engages the community to monitor and protect the iconic Perth river dolphins, while providing invaluable data to inform broader dolphin research."*

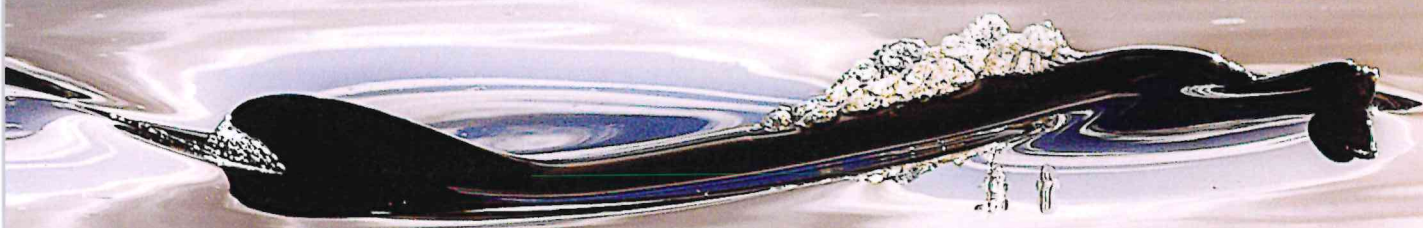
**Professor Lyn Beazley**  
Chief Scientist of Western Australia  
2009-2013







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*About*  
Dolphin Watch



*"One of the world's  
leading 'citizen science'  
research models... that  
really is an eye on the  
dolphin world."*

**Professor Lyn Beazley**  
Chief Scientist of Western Australia  
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## Aim

Citizen scientists and researchers working together to monitor dolphins in the Swan Canning Riverpark.

The aim of *Dolphin Watch* is to ensure that dolphins remain an iconic species of the Swan Canning Riverpark into the future.

We believe this goal can be achieved through an integrated program of scientific research, community involvement, and strategic partnerships linking the management efforts of industry, government, and community.

Our collaborations with Murdoch University, Curtin University and our community engagement program bring together eminent scientists and trained 'citizen scientists' to achieve this.

Specifically, *Dolphin Watch* engages with the Perth community through media, education and training, leading to a dedicated and rapidly growing team of 'citizen scientists' who provide monitoring information about Riverpark dolphins.

## Background

"Since it began in 2009, *Dolphin Watch* has captured the hearts and minds of the Perth community."

The internationally acclaimed *Dolphin Watch* project is designed to monitor the community of iconic Indo-Pacific Bottlenose dolphins in the Swan Canning Riverpark. It is among the most progressive 'Citizen Science' cetacean research project in a major world capital city.

Each year the project culminates in the popular calendar event, *Dolphin Watch Day*. This annual event acknowledges the contribution public volunteers make to river dolphins in the Riverpark. *Dolphin Watchers* help to increase our knowledge of the Riverpark's dolphins and inform current research, both in WA and globally.

On 20 February 2014, the Trust launched the *Dolphin Watch App*. Simplifying the data collection process, using the latest smartphone technology, will significantly improve the quality and flow of information and it will help researchers track dolphin movements, identify individual animals, determine key behaviour patterns and provide an early warning system for dolphin entanglements.





# About Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphins

- Perth's natural heroes
- 22 resident dolphins in the Swan Canning Riverpark
- More than 20 visiting dolphins
- A unique ecology linked to the Riverpark.

*Dolphin Watch* recognises the importance of dolphins as an iconic 'local hero' and an integral part of the river ecosystem. *Dolphin Watch* aims to provide a better understanding of dolphin ecology and the dolphins' interactions with the Perth community, celebrating their unique and vibrant personalities.





## Environmental Outcomes

- Over 10,000 records of dolphin behaviour in the Swan Canning Riverpark since 2009
- Identification and profiling of 22 resident Riverpark dolphins and visiting dolphins
- Vital information about issues affecting dolphins including entanglement and changes in water quality
- Volunteer information has led to assistance with dolphin incidents such as the disentanglement of Gizmo in 2013
- *Dolphin Watch* data is highly beneficial to the wider study of cetaceans by Murdoch and Curtin Universities
- Information received by the Swan River Trust also plays a role in monitoring river health.

## Community Outcomes

- Highly acclaimed 'citizen science' initiative, providing real opportunities for the community to help protect and enhance the iconic Riverpark dolphin
- Worldwide innovation, including the *Dolphin Watch* mobile phone App
- More than 600 volunteers
- Over 10,000 logged volunteer hours, worth over \$60,000
- Engages the indigenous community to share knowledge.

## Strategic Outcomes

- Expansive network of industry and community stakeholders
- Collaborative partnerships with Murdoch and Curtin Universities
- Meaningful connections with high-profile project ambassadors.

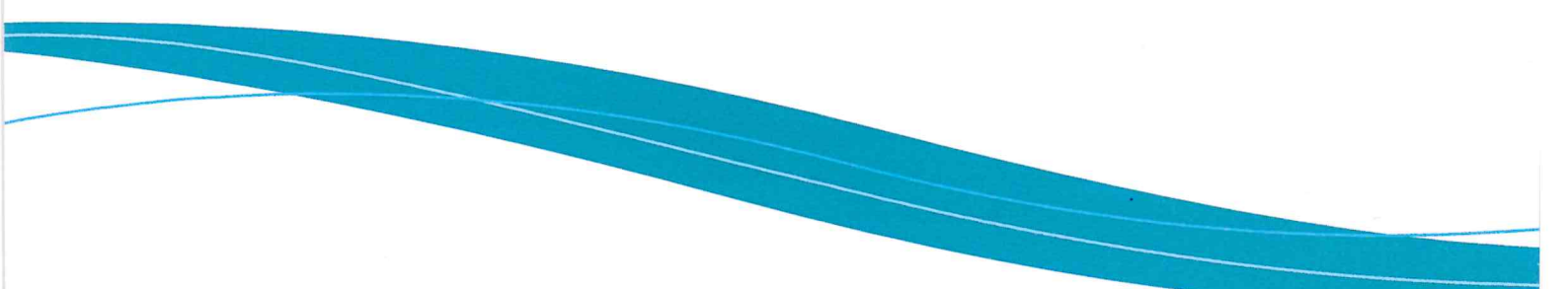
## Media Outcomes

- \$3.5million value in media coverage since 2009
- Full suite of DVD, YouTube, social media, press and online media resources
- Dedicated media management team coordinating significant media interest.

## Annual Special Events

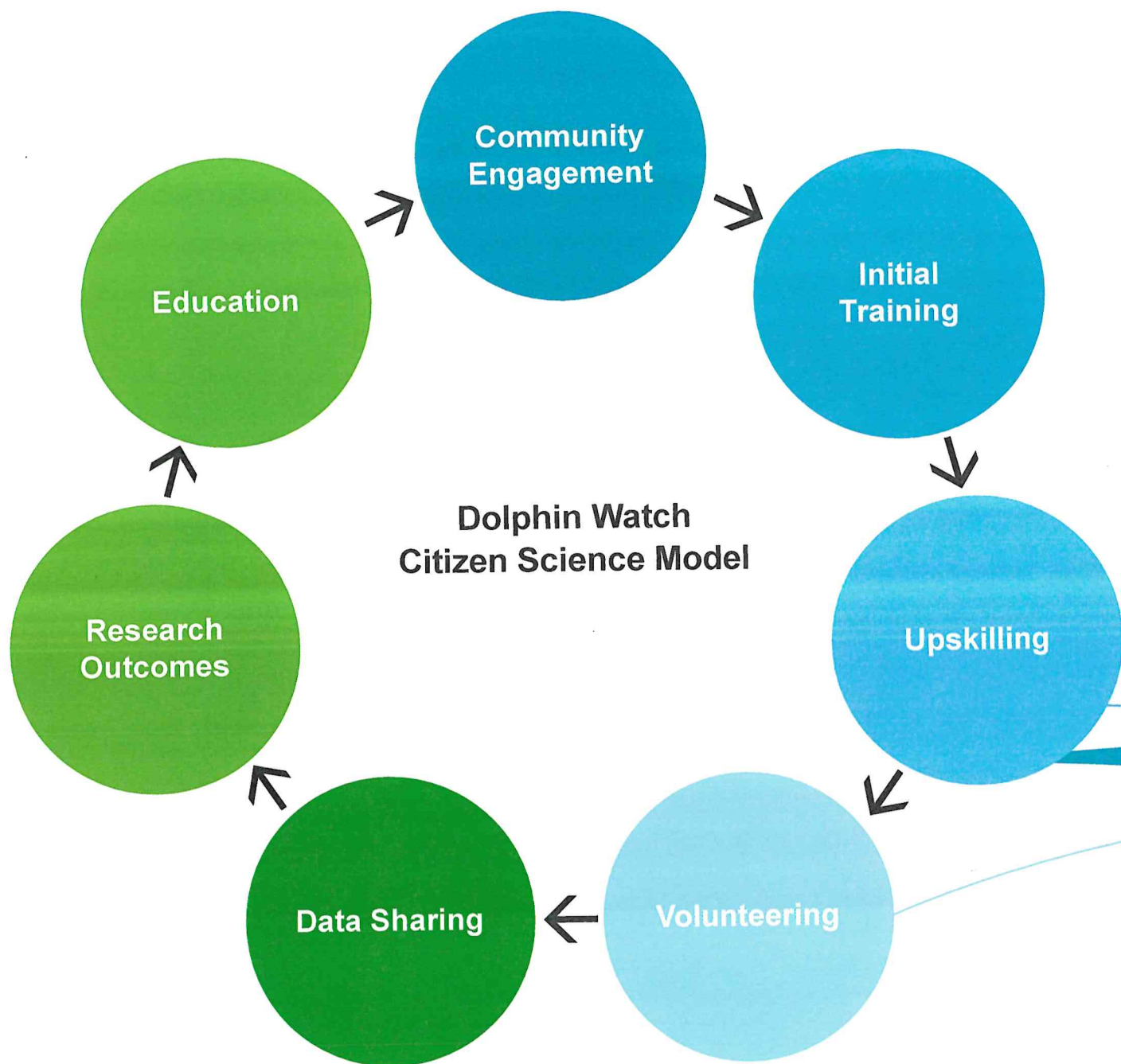
- *Dolphin Watch Day* – more than 600 guests
- Four annual training events
- *Dolphin Watch* displays at significant community events including Royal Show, Perth Skyworks, Autumn River Festival, Kings Park Festival, Blessing of the Rivers, Rivers Symposium and ongoing displays at Scitech – more than 300,000 visitors.

## Audience

- There are currently over 2,000 *River Guardians*, of whom 600 are trained *Dolphin Watchers*
  - *Dolphin Watch Junior* forms part of a student environmental education program that reaches over 10,000 students each year.
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## *How Dolphin Watch works*

A continuous cycle of engagement, training, education, participation, research and celebration.





Activity	Specifics
<b>Community Engagement</b>	The Swan River Trust delivers <i>Dolphin Watch</i> through its <i>River Guardians</i> program. 2,000+ active <i>River Guardians</i> and wider network of 20,000 registered wildlife volunteers.
<b>Training</b>	The Trust works together with Murdoch University and Curtin University to provide training for new volunteers, giving them the skills to meaningfully observe and report dolphin behaviour.
<b>Up-skilling</b>	Annual 'up-skilling' events are delivered to develop and enhance the skills of trained <i>Dolphin Watchers</i> .
<b>Volunteering</b>	More than 100 volunteers per year become registered <i>Dolphin Watchers</i> . These volunteers spend an average of 2,000 hours each year observing and recording dolphin behaviour from monitored zones around the Swan Canning Riverpark.
<b>Data Sharing</b>	Online monitoring forms. "Dolphin Watch Mobile App" enables <i>Dolphin Watchers</i> to upload data and photos in real time.
<b>Research</b>	Data is used by the Trust to further educate the community, industry and river-users. Data is used by Murdoch and Curtin Universities to build a profile of the river dolphin community in the context of dedicated wider research.
<b>Celebration</b>	<i>Dolphin Watch</i> activities culminate in <i>Dolphin Watch Day</i> . <i>Dolphin Watch Day</i> hosts more than 600 guests and presents the results of the annual data collection and research. <i>Dolphin Watch Day</i> also presents the latest edition of 'FinBook' (the <i>Dolphin Watch</i> identification guide), plus research insights and stories of interest. <i>Dolphin Watch Day</i> acknowledges the successes of <i>Dolphin Watch</i> volunteers through award presentations.





More information about *Dolphin Watch* is available at  
[www.riverguardians.com/projects/dolphin-watch](http://www.riverguardians.com/projects/dolphin-watch)

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