



ClimateWatch comes to the Pilbara

World Environment Day has been celebrated with the launch of ClimateWatch trails in Pannawonica, Paraburdoo, Tom Price and Wickham primary schools.

The project was carried out in partnership with Rio Tinto.

ClimateWatch program manager Rich Weatherill said the trails would help educate children and their families to understand the value of native plants and animals and contribute data to a national program monitoring the impacts of climate change on biodiversity.

"The trails have been developed in consultation with Rio Tinto environmental advisors and the schools," he said.

"Plants and animals that

are easy to identify and can be found across the Pilbara are included."

ClimateWatch is an Australia-wide Earthwatch initiative involving over 100 different species from plants, to birds, frogs, mammals and reptiles.

People taking part record their observations online and help scientists to better understand how climate change is affecting the natural environment.

Bureau of Meteorology senior researcher and ClimateWatch advisor Dr Lynda Chambers said variants in rainfall and temperature across Australia were already triggering changes in the established flowering times, breeding cycles, migrations and distributions of the country's

flora and fauna, both native and introduced.

"Citizen scientists play a very important role as we do not have enough dedicated scientists to monitor different areas," Dr Chambers said.

Rio Tinto Community Investment manager Trisha Comerford said the company was proud to be the founding sponsor of this pioneering project.

"ClimateWatch provides all members of the community with the opportunity to learn and engage with their local environments, and this supports our strategy of putting sustainable development at the heart of everything we do," she said.

World environment Day was held on June 5.



• Macey Burgon, Jaimee Hunter, Erin Greaves and Hannah Hornby

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