

# Media Release

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## Beautiful Butterflies bring deeper message

*Museum display a journey from boyhood fun to environmental champion*

**Some of the most beautiful butterflies from Australia, Asia and South America will be featured at Tweed Regional Museum Murwillumbah when Greg Newland is the next collector to be showcased in the Museum's Collector's Cabinet display.**

Twelve cases of colourful butterflies will be on display from Tuesday 27 September until February 2017.

"I first became interested in butterflies when I was in primary school, and by chance. I hung out for a while with the wrong crowd – the rough boys who fought, swore and spat on the ground to show everyone how tough they were," Greg said.

"As it happened, a couple of them collected butterflies."

Collecting butterflies soon became what Greg did to "make your own fun" - a requisite of his childhood in Murwillumbah – and his boyhood pursuit was soon supported by his father and grandfather.

"To catch the butterflies, I used a collecting net which my father helped me put together," he said.

"I stored my first butterflies in discarded shirt boxes, much to the delight of the carpet beetles and cockroaches which set up residence in my room and devoured most of my precious specimens. I then acquired an old insect storage box which belonged to my grandfather; it helped to keep out the pests."

Today, Greg's interest in collecting is sustained by the environmental messages his collection represents. Butterfly numbers have declined over the decades since Greg first started collecting and the biggest threat to their future survival in the Northern Rivers is loss of habitat caused by activities such as land clearing.

While habitat loss can be alleviated by growing plant species that butterflies rely on, they are also threatened by exotic weed invasion and excessive use of pesticides. Butterflies are an important part of the natural ecosystem and perform many roles, including pollination.

Tweed Regional Museum's Acting Director Kate Gahan said it was thrilling to display Greg's collection in the Museum.

"The vibrant and diverse patterns of the butterflies are the elements that first draw you to look at the display. The careful arrangement of the butterflies in their wooden cases demonstrates Greg's dedication to his collection," Ms Gahan said.

Greg will speak at the Museum on Saturday 8 October at 11am about his journey collecting butterflies and the stories the exhibit reveals.

The Museum will hold a series of fun and imaginative children's programs while Beautiful Butterflies is on display. For more information, visit [museum.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://museum.tweed.nsw.gov.au/MediaCentre/MediaCentre.aspx) or contact the Museum on (02) 6670 2493.

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