

# Tree-kangaroo and bats provide a spectacle at school

*By Ceinwen Edwards*

**Chris Doyle from Rhode Island's Roger Williams Park Zoo recently visited Herberton State School as part of the tree-kangaroo conservation education program. With her was Jenny Maclean from the Tolga Bat Hospital and three TKMG members; Tania Simmons, Ceinwen Edwards and Rhonda Winger.**

Years 5, 6 & 7 were treated to an afternoon of games and activities and the chance to see a tree-kangaroo and bats close up.



To the children's obvious delight, Geoffrey, a young Lumholtz's tree-kangaroo (on loan for the day from his carer, Margit), accompanied Tania (left) as she talked about tree kangaroos in north Queensland.

Activities for the children followed. Classes were broken up into 3 groups, with all children spending time at each activity. Chris talked about bats, tree-kangaroos and other fauna of Papua New Guinea, encouraging the children (below) to put on bat and tree kangaroo masks to illustrate the point more vividly. Rhonda entertained the children by reading them stories about bats and their importance in the forests. Ceinwen supervised a board game where bats replaced snakes & ladders, with conservation issues highlighted.

Jenny had brought in a Spectacled Flying-fox to demonstrate her talk on their importance in the rainforest. Jenny also had a microbat for comparison which, despite its shyness, attracted much interest.

The children were already well versed on bats and tree kangaroos, thanks to Gloria Anderson's teaching skills and passion for wildlife, and a previous visit by Chris Doyle. They were keen to ask questions and see the animals up close. The ongoing artwork exchange between students at Herberton State School and several of the schools in PNG and the USA has further broadened the education and horizons of students from all three countries

It was a great day for the kids and another chance for tree-kangaroos and bats to promote their cause.

