



national science week 2016

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From Tassie Devils to Climate Change to Antarctica

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Peering into the jaws of Tasmanian devils, catching seals with giant butterfly nets, and simulating climate change ... these are just some of the weird and wonderful experiences I have had as a young scientist!

For as long as I can remember, I have always been happiest outside in the bush. Through many bushwalking and camping adventures I became fascinated by the complex and often crazy ways in which plants and animals interact with each other and their environment – a scientific field called ecology.

Unfortunately, today our environment faces many challenges. The climate is warming, sea levels are rising, and many plants and animals are threatened with extinction. In response, I chose to study ecology to do my best to help protect our environment from these challenges. By learning as much as we can about the science behind environmental problems, we can make good decisions about how to tackle and overcome them.

So here I am, studying a Masters of Applied (Biological Science) at the University of Tasmania, which has been the best adventure of all! I have researched Tasmanian devils, trying to understand how the deadly Devil Facial Tumour Disease affects the behaviour of devils in the long-term so that we can save these amazing animals from extinction. I am currently investigating how climate change affects nutrient cycling in soil, which is so important because plants need soil nutrients to grow, and we all need plants to survive!

And for my next adventure, I am heading to Antarctica with 77 other female scientists from around the world on an expedition called Homeward Bound. On this trip, we'll collaborate on leadership and action for a sustainable future for our planet. I am excited to see what we are able to create together, and grateful for this incredible opportunity.

Find out more: <http://homewardboundprojects.com.au>

