



Dr Len McKenzie on Roebuck Bay's mudflats with seagrass monitoring project volunteers last week.

Expert passes on knowledge

BEN JONES

BARDI Jawi ranger Chris Sampi was in Broome last week taking part in a training workshop for seagrass monitoring which his ranger group at One Arm Point has been undertaking for the last 12 months.

"The seagrass is important to us," he said. "The dugong eat it, it's a habitat for fish and we eat the dugong and the fish. It's an important part of the food chain."

The training workshop was attended by 30 Broome residents including Bardi Jawi, Nyul Nyul and Djarindjin rangers from communities on the Dampier Peninsula.

The workshop was delivered by Dr Len McKenzie, one of Australia's leading experts on seagrass and principal scientist with Seagrass Watch, the world's largest scientific seagrass monitoring and assessment program.

Dr McKenzie said seagrass monitoring was restricted in Western Australia compared to Queensland,

He said it was good to see community interest in the seagrass project, which is managed locally through the Department of Environment and Conservation and Environs Kimberley.

Mr McKenzie said there was a huge amount of information not known about seagrass in the Kimberley, however, Broome and One Arm Point monitoring projects were providing valuable data on the health of the important seagrass meadows.

"The data these projects gather will be used to help inform government agencies on managing seagrass," he said. Mr Sampi said the seagrass monitoring tied in well with the Bardi Jawi rangers' turtle and dugong monitoring projects around One Arm Point.

Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project co-ordinator Fiona Bishop said Mr Sampi and fellow ranger Kevin George were taking part in a level two course which covered, among other subjects, information on data collection and