

A REFLECTION
NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK
18-26 AUGUST, 2007

National Science Week was inaugurated to raise the profile and increase the public's understanding and appreciation of the role of science, technology and innovation in maintaining and improving our society, economy and the environment.

All too often scientific and religious worldviews have been at loggerheads – each asserting absolute authority in the interpretation of reality. In relation to the natural world, one such uncompromising division has been between scientists who claim the dogma of evolution, and fundamental religionists who claim the dogma of creationism.

In a recent article, Stephen Kellert writes: 'All humans possess some degree of yearning to connect and unite with nature. This yearning is revealed in at least two basic ways – first, through discerning commonalities that emerge through empirical and systematic observation; second, through a more intuitive, a priori, and subjective judgment on the unity of creation. In society these expressions and spiritual relation to nature are expressed through the cultural institutions of science and religion.'*

He goes on to advocate that the two approaches are not incompatible but complementary. Each approach sees the natural world through a different lens; each holds something, but not all, of the truth; each can learn much from the other.

* Kellert, Stephen R. *Connecting with Creation: The Convergence of Nature, Religion, Science and Culture* in 'Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture'. Vol 1.1, 2007: 26.

Maybe starting in Science Week, each of us can explore with some other cohabitators of this one planet - even with those who might hold quite different views from our own - the wealth of seeking together the multi-dimensional richness and truth of that yearning to connect and unite with nature that we all share.

*Blessed be you, impenetrable matter: you who, interposed
between our minds and the world of essences, cause us to languish
with the desire to pierce through the seamless veil of phenomena.*

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, priest/scientist