

Enviroschools NORTHLAND

NEWSLETTER
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Enviroschools and CoastCare work together for Seaweed

About 1300 Northlanders have pitched in to clean up the region's beaches as part of Seaweed 2015.

Seaweed is an annual nationwide series of events dedicated to marine education, action and awareness, hosted by the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education.

A total of 30 beach clean-ups, involving 19 schools and one kindergarten, were held during February and March at locations including Bland Bay, Coopers Beach, Herewaka, Hihi, Horeke/Maungungu, Houhora Heads, Kawarua, Marsden Bay, Matauri Bay, Ngunguru Sandspit, Oakura, Opito Bay, Opononi Beach, Oruru, Paihia, Parua Bay, Portland Estuary, Ripiro,

Ruakaka, Shipwreck Bay, Tauranga Bay, Uretiti Beach and Waipu Cove.

Northland Regional Council was one of the contributors to the Northland response which included events such as a marine-themed pechakucha (quick-fire presentations) night with speakers from council's Biosecurity and Land Management departments, beach clean-up kits for community groups and schools provided by CoastCare and Enviroschools, community guided kayak and snorkel days facilitated by the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust, Seaweed preschool library fun-times assisted by the Department of Conservation and Butler Point Whaling Museum experiences organised by Kiwi North.



A Seaweed clean-up at Bland Bay

Two Silver, three Bronze for Northland in 2014

Two Northland schools – Dargaville Intermediate and Otaika Valley – achieved Enviroschools Silver status in 2014, while Peria and Poroti Schools, and Portland Kindergarten, achieved Bronze.

Meanwhile, Mangakahia Area School – which first received Green-Gold status in 2011 – also had a successful outcome to its three-yearly review.

Dargaville Intermediate – one of 2014's Silver recipients – has become a leader in growing, selling, planting and maintaining riparian plants, thanks to its WaiNursery. The school has ongoing relationships with the Bayliss Beach CoastCare group and Integrated Kaipara Harbour Management Group.

Otaika Valley School (also a Silver recipient in 2014) plans much of its curriculum around environmental topics, regularly eating and selling from school vegetable gardens and a long-running enterprise with its chickens 'The Cluckdashions'. The school is also planning to grow riparian plants for its wetland and neighbouring river.

Far North Bronze recipient Peria School has received national attention for its use of solar power technology. Gardens (both edible and native) are child-centred and flourishing at the school, which also has a citrus orchard. Planting of a heritage apple orchard is also underway.

Fellow Bronze school Poroti also has an intensive involvement with gardening, cooking and eating

as well as raising chickens. 'Mini-men' (scarecrows) protect the wildlife habitats.

Meanwhile, last year's youngest Bronze recipients were from Portland Kindergarten, which has a variety of sustainable practices including possum trapping, worm farming, composting, gardening and recycling and are keen conservers of water.



Northland Regional Council chairman Bill Shepherd joins staff and students of Mangakahia Area School and the Enviroschools Northland team to celebrate the school's Green-Gold review.

Introducing Jacque Knight

ENVIROSCHOOLS FACILITATOR (SECONDARY)

Kia ora koutou

FROM THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Welcome to the first Enviroschools Northland newsletter for 2015!

A BIG thank you to all those who took part in the first ever nationwide Enviroschools Census. The response rate was 70%, providing meaningful data. A summary of the Northland statistics on environmental outcomes and community connections will be included in the next issue of this newsletter.

In January, the Enviroschools Northland team enjoyed great professional development via a two-day visit with Jan Cox, national manager for the Enviroschools Programme.

Remember to check out 'Dates to diary' on the back page for Enviroschools events throughout 2015. WaiRestoration and Project Possum events are fast approaching.

If you have a story to share in the next newsletter, please contact me. It's a well-known fact that schools are most inspired by what they see (and read!) about what other schools are doing.

Enjoy your well-earned break over the April holidays.

"The environment is where we all meet; where all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share." – Lady Bird Johnson



Nga mihi nui

Susan Karels
Enviroschools Regional
Co-ordinator



Jacque Knight has joined the Enviroschools Northland team.

A former secondary school teacher, Jacque later trained in

native plant design and restoration and spent six years at the Kaipatiki Project (a

sustainability centre in Auckland's North Shore) as restoration and nursery manager and teacher, working with community groups, Forest & Bird and the Auckland Council to restore urban bush reserves.

For the past 18 months, she has been part of the WaiRestoration team, helping schools out with their plant nursery set-up and maintenance, eco-sourcing, sowing seeds, making cuttings, potting on and local bush engagement.

Problem-solving their way to the USA

Congratulations go to Hukerenui School for first place at the Future Problem Solving National Finals in Auckland. This earned them the right to represent New Zealand at the international finals in the United States.

The Hukerenui team spent more than a year working to develop the school's land space. The school's 4.5 hectares of land had not previously been used effectively and one of the first challenges was to attract the support of a contractor by leasing another five hectares.



Hukerenui School's winning problem-solving team with their trophies.

With help from wonderful sponsors and experts, the students learned to farm maize (six hectares of it) and grow lavender, reclaimed their native bush as a learning area and made natural remedies, used the wax and honey from existing beehives to produce balms, planted an orchard, and created a paddock for alpacas.

As a result, the school managed to develop 71% of the land space effectively for education. They bought a still from their maize profit to extract essential oils and are continuing to learn to be self-sufficient.

The team took on a teaching role, delivering lesson plans and creating resources and games.

Hukerenui School's teachers have already planned an exciting rotation using each initiative as part of their curriculum plan for 2015.

The problem-solving team is enhancing real-life education in science, technology and maths.

Summer goodness in Tangowahine



Tangowahine School has enjoyed a productive summer, with its veggie gardens providing enough food for students and their families. The school's Monarch butterfly gardens have produced many butterflies and also swan plant seedlings which have been sold to the local community.

A working bee in March tackled fencing around the orchard and creating paddocks for livestock – all on the path to sustainability.



Out and about

Ahipara's massive mural



It was the homework assignment that grew and grew – a vibrant mural on a fence at Ahipara School had its beginnings in a homework assignment that asked students what they valued about their community.

The environment was a common theme and is now captured in the mural created by the whole school.

Key features include the school itself with the local maunga, Whangatauatia, rising behind and adorned with the kowhaiwhai design depicting the hammerhead shark that also appears on the school uniform shirts. The phoenix palm is also an important image as a local landmark and one which has historical significance for the school.

Making an appearance is "Long John Silver", a one-legged seagull who became a part of the school many years ago and who has a place on the school logo.

The mural traverses from forest landscape to the beach, which is home to protected dotterels (who have significance to the school as part of a partnership to care for protected areas for nesting).

On another panel, detailed shells decorate the fence leading to a myriad of fish – both the shells and fish are familiar to the students and commonly found on and around the local beach.

New arrival at Kerikeri Kindergarten



Kerikeri Kindergarten – which has set its sights on Enviroschools Bronze status this year – has recently redesigned its playground to give the children more upper-body strengthening activities, a native planted area, gazebo and a fire pit with rounds of wood for sitting on.

Climbing plants have been planted around the gazebo and as they grow, they will create quiet space for reflection.

The kindergarten's turtles produced fertile eggs that were incubated. Enraptured children watched as the first of the batch, named Tahī, emerged from his egg. He lives in the office awaiting the arrival of his siblings and a new turtle tank for baby turtles.

The kindergarten is proud that children have daily opportunities to eat additive-free food from its garden, a local community garden and whanau.

Bream Bay College looks ahead to Bronze

Bream Bay College has lots of great environmental ventures and programmes, including an on-site native plant nursery and vegetable gardens run by students studying horticulture. Fruit trees have also recently gone in and every year the students help out with local community plantings.

Electricity costs have been slashed by changing over to ecobulbs and there are amenity gardens and murals throughout the school.

Plans are also afoot to build a new entrance that will connect the school with its local history and community and create a welcoming entry point.

Students have started an Envirogroup with the intention of answering the question, 'where to now?' and to get an overview of where they are currently as they aim for Enviroschools Bronze later this year. The group discussed global issues and then settled into the process of understanding what has been achieved so far and what was already in place around the school and in their local environment.



Bream Bay College students mapping 'their place'.

Dates to diary

For more details about these events, and to find out what else is coming up, visit www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools

Apr
22,23
or24

**WAIRESTORATION
WaiFencing – skills workshops**
Trefoil Park, near Kaikohe

Jul
9-10

**SECONDARY ENVIROSCHOOLS
HUI** (during school holidays)
**National professional
development**
Wellington

Sept
1 & 3

**PROJECT POSSUM Stage Two
Controlled substance licence**
Trefoil Park

Apr
28

**Northland Regional Council 2015
Environmental Curriculum Awards**
Funding application deadline

Jul
28
or
29
or
30

**PROJECT POSSUM Stage One
Assessment workshops**
Trefoil Park

Sept
2

**PREPARATION FOR FIREARMS
LICENCE TRAINING**
Trefoil Park

May
5

**WAIRESTORATION
Professional development day for
school communities**
Trefoil Park

Term
4

**ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE, SILVER
AND GREEN-GOLD REFLECTIONS**
Sharing and decision-making
sessions, and celebrations

May
19-20
or
21-22
or
25-26

**PROJECT POSSUM Stage One
Skills camps**
Trefoil Park

Aug
16
June
17,18

**WAIRESTORATION
WaiFencing – assessment
workshops**
August 16 at NRC property at
Flyger Road, Whangarei
June 17 or 18 at a mid-north
location

Nov
3 & 5

ENVIROSCHOOLS EXPOS
Hands-on environmental action
stations.

ENVIROSCHOOLS NORTHLAND TEAM

www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools



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