Enviroschools and CoastCare work together for Seaweek

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

Seaweek 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, Seaweek preschool library fun-times assisted by the Department of Conservation and Butler Point Whaling Museum experiences organised by Kiwi North.

Two Silver, three Bronze for Northland in 2014


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 Baylys 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.
**Introducing Jacque Knight**

**ENVIROSCOLDS FACILITATOR (SECONDARY)**

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.

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 vege 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.

"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
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.

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.

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 Tahi, 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 students mapping “their place”.

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

**Dates to diary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECONDARY ENVIROSCHOOLS</strong></td>
<td>HUI (during school holidays) National professional development</td>
<td>Jul 9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT POSSUM Stage One</strong></td>
<td>Assessment workshops</td>
<td>Jul 28 or 29 or 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROJECT POSSUM Stage Two</strong></td>
<td>Controlled substance licence</td>
<td>Sept 1 &amp; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREPARATION FOR FIREARMS LICENCE TRAINING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sept 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRSOCHOLS BRONZE, SILVER AND GREEN-GOLD REFLECTIONS</strong></td>
<td>Sharing and decision-making sessions, and celebrations</td>
<td>Term 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENVIRSOCHOLS EXPOS</strong></td>
<td>Hands-on environmental action stations.</td>
<td>Nov 3 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DATES TO Diary (SECONDARY)**

- **WAIRESTORATION**
  - WaiFencing – skills workshops
    - Trefoil Park, near Kaikohe
    - Apr 22, 23 or 24
  - Northland Regional Council 2015 Environmental Curriculum Awards
    - Funding application deadline
    - Apr 28
  - Professional development day for school communities
    - Trefoil Park
    - May 5
  - PROJECT POSSUM Stage One Skills camps
    - Trefoil Park
    - May 19-20 or 21-22 or 25-26
  - PROJECT POSSUM Stage One Assessment workshops
    - Trefoil Park
    - Jul 28 or 29 or 30
- **WAIRESTORATION**
  - WaiFencing – assessment workshops
    - August 16 at NRC property at Flyger Road, Whangarei
    - June 17 or 18 at a mid-north location
  - Aug 16
  - June 17, 18
  - Aug 16

**DATEs TO Diary (PRIMARY)**

- **ENVIRSOCHOLS SIlVER-AND GREEN-GOLD REFLECTIONS**
  - Sharing and decision-making sessions, and celebrations
  - Term 4

**DATEs TO Diary (SCHOOL)**

- **PREPARED FOR FIREARMS LICENCE TRAINING**
  - Trefoil Park
  - Sept 2

**DATEs TO Diary (KEY)**

- ** projects POSSUM Stage Two**
  - Controlled substance licence
  - Trefoil Park
  - Sept 1 & 3

**DATEs TO Diary (OTHER)**

- **Waifencing – skills workshops**
  - Trefoil Park, near Kaikohe
  - Apr 22, 23 or 24

**DATEs TO Diary (OTHER)**

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

**DATEs TO Diary (OTHER)**

- **Waifencing – skills workshops**
  - Trefoil Park, near Kaikohe
  - Apr 22, 23 or 24

**DATEs TO Diary (OTHER)**

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