

Enviroschools NORTHLAND

NEWSLETTER
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WaiRestoration pilot kicks off

WaiRestoration is an exciting new project that's all about supporting farmers and engaging young people and local communities to get involved in restoring our waterways and biodiversity.

The Enviroschools project, which kicks off this year, is being piloted in Northland. If successful WaiRestoration will likely be rolled out nationally.

It brings together a range of initiatives for improving freshwater and preserving the region's native species. The programme has seven key elements – fencing, nurseries, planting, maintenance, monitoring, enterprise and 'Save a Species'.

Enviroschools Facilitator (Secondary) Marty Taylor, who has been the driving force behind the WaiRestoration programme, says 10-20

schools will be involved in the initial pilot.

"One of our first steps was a professional development workshop, which was held on March 14, to introduce interested schools to the different elements of the programme and bring some schools on board for the pilot," says Marty.

Regional Enviroschools Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the WaiRestoration pilot project aligns with the council's strong focus on freshwater quality through its Waiora Northland Water programme.

"As well as being a valuable education tool, school and community involvement with WaiRestoration can make a real difference to the quality of our waterways – we all have a part to play," she says.

Marty says WaiRestoration also encompasses the restoration of the region's biodiversity, and some great 'Save a Species' work starting to happen around the region.

"Schools like Ruawai and Northland colleges are already making real inroads with 'Save a Species'."

Marty recently gave a talk on 'Save a Species' at a recent the Te Uri o Hau Taumata Kaunihera (tribal council) meeting in Maungaturoto, which was well received he says.

"Interest in the programme is spreading – it's really exciting to see that momentum building."

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1:

WaiRestoration pilot kicks off

PAGE 2:

Kia Ora Koutou
Partnership in action
Green-Gold for Whangarei Heads
Discovering wetlands at Lake Ngatu

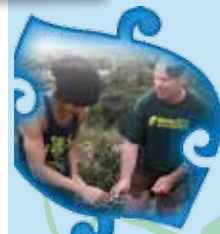
PAGE 3:

Out and about

PAGE 4:

Recommended resource
Dates to diary

WAIORA
NORTHLAND
WATER



WaiFencing
fencing stock out of waterways

WaiNurseries
growing riparian plants



WaiPlanting
planting beside waterways



WaiMonitoring
testing and tracking water quality



WaiMaintenance
weeding and maintaining



WaiEnterprise
making money by fencing, selling, planting and maintaining riparian plants



Save a species
restoring endangered plants and animals



Kia ora koutou FROM THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Welcome to the first Enviroschools Northland newsletter for 2013!

And welcome to our newest Enviroschools community – Horeke!

If you'd like to keep up-to-date with environmental education news snippets from around Northland and New Zealand – sign up to our free subscription service at www.nrc.govt.nz/eenews

Youth Parliament 2013 offers senior students (aged 16-18) the opportunity to represent their communities and help shape the future of New

Zealand. The selection process for Youth MPs and the Youth Press Gallery is now open – find out more at www.youthparliament.govt.nz

I look forward to working with you and yours throughout 2013.

He taura whiri kotahi mai an te kopunga tai no i te pu au
From the source to the mouth of the sea all things are joined together as one



Noho ora mai,
Susan Karels
Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator

Green-Gold for Whangarei Heads

Congratulations to Whangarei Heads School, which recently became just the second school in Northland to achieve prestigious Enviroschools 'Green-Gold' status!

The Green-Gold – officially presented during a ceremony at the school on Monday 3 December – is a huge milestone in Whangarei Heads' journey as an Enviroschool, which began in 2007.

Regional Enviroschools Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says one of Whangarei Heads School's key strengths is the strong connection between the school and the local community.

She says its principal, Lil Ruffell, has led from the top, ensuring the Enviroschools' kaupapa (philosophy) is woven into all aspects of school life.

"They've really embraced the wellbeing of the whole school community and the surrounding ecosystems."

Lead Enviroschools teacher Sally Prince – together with other teachers, families and the wider community – has also been instrumental in driving the school's evolving vision.

"Their combined energy and passion is really supporting the students to create positive change," says Susan.



The event included a workshop on creating wetlands with Enviroschools Facilitator Julie Holt and a session on wetland plant life from the regional council's Biodiversity Specialist Lisa Forester.

For those unable to be there, LEARNZ also offered a real-time virtual field trip from Lake Ngatu, so teachers could take their students into the field without leaving the classroom.

Discovering wetlands at Lake Ngatu

Northland students discovered the wonders of wetlands at a recent workshop at Lake Ngatu, near Kaitiāia, as part of World Wetlands Day celebrations organised by the Department of Conservation and Ngai Takato.

The two-day workshop, held on 26 and 27 February, helped teachers and students get up close and personal with the creatures, plants and ecosystems that make up our wetlands.

Partnership in action

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust

The Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust was formed in 2002 as an umbrella organisation for the Whitebait Connection (WBC) and Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) programmes.

Both programmes are now offered nationally and frequently partner with Enviroschools on programme delivery and events. One example is the great work being done at Otamatea High School, says EMR and WBC Programme Co-ordinator Kim Jones.

"We've worked with Otamatea High School on both programmes and recently bumped into a past student, Hayden Lupton.

"After doing the EMR programme in 2009, he'd decided to take action for his local environment by planting trees next to his waterway on his family farm.



"The Whitebait Connection gifted the plants to Hayden from the community nursery He Kakano. The trees are now bigger than him!

"Hayden says he really enjoyed doing the programme and thinks it's

important that other students get the same opportunity to learn about their freshwater and marine environments and how they can help them. Kia kaha Hayden!"

Check out www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz or www.emr.org.nz



Out and about

Enviroschools Facilitators Julie Holt and Marty Taylor have been checking out some of the great learning and action going on in Northland's Enviroschools.



Estuary monitoring also means checking out the upper reaches including the vegetation and the wildlife – and being surprised when a fern bird was so close!

New finds for 'estuary watchdogs'

The 'estuary watchdogs' group of Whananaki School has some new recruits this year to help monitor what's happening with the estuary on their doorstep.

Their end of year survey unearthed an interesting finding – their sediment plate, used to measure sediment depth, showed a greater depth of sediment in the estuary.

The students have also discovered a small patch of eel grass (nana), which they'll be measuring and monitoring this year. The students' research has shown that it's an exciting find as eel grass is known for being able to support over 30 kinds of creatures!

Green fingers



Students check out the watering regime for developing plants in one of the greenhouses at Auckland Botanic Gardens.

Ruawai College's Year 11 classes recently took a field trip to the Auckland Botanic Gardens to build their knowledge of plant propagation techniques and help save endangered plants.

During the trip students heard how 85 000 plants are propagated each year for Auckland regional parks. A trip highlight was the endangered plants' garden, which gave the students an opportunity to see many plants that are under threat of extinction in the wild.

Once the students have completed their NCEA assessment they will be in the potting shed using their knowledge to 'Save a species'.

Our special place

Taipa Area School is continuing to marry up learning opportunities with its natural surroundings. Term one's topic will look at the big picture – 'what's living under, on and above our earth' – to identify the current situation around them.

During terms one and two the school will be diving deeper into specific topics, looking at 'mini-beasts' (insects and other small creatures), birds and gardening. The school was also one of the first to embrace 'Save a Species' with an endangered hibiscus (*Hibiscus Richardsonii*) and a rare lizard living in the nearby sand dunes.

A new type of plant holder at Taipa Area School!



Environmental inspiration!

Okaihau School's journey towards sustainability has seen a raft of new initiatives popping up around the school.

Their new raised garden and fruit trees bring them a step closer towards growing to eat, which could eventually extend to kitchen development. They also have a new shade house, plus a state of the art composting system.

Another new addition to the school is a paper mulching invention – the mulch can then be used to make paper bricks.

There are plenty more plans in the pipeline including extending the butterfly garden.

New planting is also planned for near the playground and around the pool fence, continuing the theme of 'telling stories with plants' as in their waka garden.

Teachers Lesley Standish-Wing (right) and Natalie Snow with the new paper mulching invention at Okaihau School.



Recommended resource



Green Ideas Magazine

Green Ideas is a bi-monthly magazine packed full of practical ideas for kiwis who want to live more sustainably.

The February-March 2013 edition had a great article on what you need to know to start a green school programme. It mentions the Enviroschools network and includes some useful green tips from Northland's own Mangakahia Area School.

Find out more about Green Ideas magazine, including where to buy it, at www.greenideas.co.nz

Dates to diary

Pencil in these dates for 2013! More information will be coming soon – keep an eye on our website for event details: www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools

Apr
3-5

PROJECT POSSUM STAGE ONE – skills workshops

May
17

ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting

May
21-24

WAI RESTORATION - fencing skills workshops

Jun
18-25

PROJECT POSSUM STAGE ONE – assessment camps

Jul
1-12

ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER REFLECTIONS – primary

Aug
6-15

WAI RESTORATION – fencing skills assessment camps

Aug
19-30

ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER CELEBRATIONS – primary

Sept
3-6

PROJECT POSSUM STAGE TWO – controlled substance license

Sept
13

ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting

Sept
16-27

ENVIROSCHOOLS GREEN-GOLD reflections

Nov
5, 7

ENVIROSCHOOLS EXPOS – Down on the farm. 5 November Whāngārei, 7 November Far North

Nov
11-22

ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER REFLECTIONS – secondary

Nov
25-29

ENVIROSCHOOLS GREEN-GOLD celebrations

Dec
06

ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting



ENVIROSCHOOLS NORTHLAND TEAM www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools

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