

# Enviroschools NORTHLAND

NEWSLETTER  
Issue 12 | Term 3, 2012

## Starlight, starbright - Matariki

Matariki is a constellation of stars that is also known as the seven sisters, or Pleiades. We can see it nearly all year round in New Zealand, but it disappears from our skies in late April. The constellation is visible again in winter, and when the new moon has risen, it is the beginning of the Māori New Year.

Many Northland Enviroschools celebrated Matariki this year – here's how Riverview and Oromahoe schools saw in the Māori New Year. Matariki was celebrated at Riverview School with a fun-filled day devoted to traditional Māori crafts, games, and entertainment. Students across the school were put in whanau groups, with all ages in each group and with siblings together.

Classes tried a range of activities including painting, weaving, bone carving, making musical instruments, and rākau (stick games). The children and teachers were able to view everyone's achievements later in the day on a school trail.

The school also held an assembly focused on the environment, with three senior students from Ōpua School as guest presenters. They shared their successful approach to sustainability which has won them a national award. A kaumatua also blessed the school and the special celebration. The day was declared a total success and Riverview plans to officially celebrate Matariki every year.

Oromahoe School celebrated with a night of fire and light at its Light Festival on Thursday 28 June. The night included fire poi, a lantern parade, flying Chinese lanterns, kapa haka, live music, food and mulled wine.

The school's 55 Year 1-8 students made lanterns to sell on the night for the lantern parade.

The event was a fundraiser for the school as well as a celebration of its unique character – its inclusive family atmosphere and the Enviroschools programme, school gardens and orchard.



Riverview School



Oromahoe School

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## On the bus

Learning how to make money from action projects – and then sharing what's been learnt – was the name of the game on the 2012 Sustainable Business Bus Tours.

Business-based bus tours were run in Whāngārei and Kaitiāia on 19 and 21 June with more than 120 students and teachers visiting a number of school-based and commercial sustainable businesses.

Northland Enviroschools Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the bus tours focused on the economy and the environment growing together.

"Sharing knowledge is an essential part of the Enviroschools process and the bus tours provided opportunities for all participants to learn from each other," says Susan. Whāngārei participants visited Whāngārei Heads School, which trades in eggs, runs a quality second-hand shop, sells hand-designed tea towels and is just moving into the possum fur trade.

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## Kia ora koutou FROM THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Welcome to the Term 3, 2012  
Enviroschools Northland Newsletter!

A BIG welcome to our new Enviroschools communities! Arapohue, Kokopu, Maungaturoto, Parua Bay and Whāngārei Boys High schools have recently joined the Enviroschools whanau (we'll be telling you about them in our next newsletter).

What action, learning, net-working and FUN we all had, last term, at the Project Possum training workshops and assessment camps, on board the Sustainable Business Bus Tours and at the financial literacy-focused cluster meetings – keep joining in!

Our world-famous, (in NZ!), Enviroschools Expos are coming up in Term 4, with this year's theme 'Gone bush'. This year we plan to introduce a secondary arm to these hands-on extravaganzas, so be sure to mark Tuesday 30 October (Whāngārei) or Thursday 1 November (Far North) in your planners.

"Empowered students...sustainable communities!"

Noho ora mai, Susan Karels  
Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator



## On the bus

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They also visited St Francis Xavier Catholic School to view its hand-made business-card production line and checked out Mangakāhia Area School's 'Trash to Treasure' products and EcoSolutions' sustainable wares.

"Tour participants also visited Re-claim, an established local business which recycles waste plastic, cans, paper, cardboard and glass," says Susan.

In Kaitiāia, participants visited the CBEC Resource Recovery Centre, Healthy Homes Tai Tokerau and a number of school-based businesses at Oturu School.



"Oturu runs several businesses including an olive-based business producing oil, pickles and soap, a rongoa-based business using school-produced honey, aloe vera and kawakawa and a third business producing varieties of honey."

Participants said they learnt a lot about the ways to make things for free and sell them without hurting the environment and the trips provided lots of ideas to take back to their schools.

## Money spinners

Many Enviroschools teachers have taken part in their local group clusters to share ideas about what has been happening at their place, as well as contribute to discussions about Financial Literacy – and what this looks like in a sustainable school.

This often includes selling garden produce and preserves, eggs, honey, native and vegetable seedlings and seeds, and medicinal (rongoa) and beauty products.

The ideas continue to roll – and in many schools making money out of sustainable learning (which includes cultural, economic, environmental and social aspects) and action is a reality.

In some cases it's a daily reality and schools are developing programmes that encompass the real world of money – how to become financially savvy – weaving these into their numeracy and literacy teaching and learning.

Cluster meetings provide the opportunity for teachers to get together with others committed to a Sustainable Journey. Each meeting was held at a school, so teachers had the opportunity to look around the school, how the systems worked, the successes, the challenges and the shared dedication and passion to promote this real learning for their students.

## Recommended resources



### FANTAIL'S QUILT

*Fantail's Quilt* by Gay Hay  
[Reviewed by Jan, for the National Library of New Zealand: <http://schools.natlib.govt.nz/>]

Will rat steal fantail's eggs a second time? A fantail on a nest, a rat approaching; "... scurrying from nest to nest, snooping, sniffing, hungry thief." Suddenly fantail's eggs are gone. This beautiful new picture book tells the story of the dangers faced by our small native fantail, trying to raise a family in the New Zealand bush.

At the end of the story sketches help identify the plants and animals included in the book, and also useful information relating to fantails.

Available from all good bookstores nationwide or online at [www.discoverytime.co.nz](http://www.discoverytime.co.nz)  
Recommended retail: \$25.



### A GOOD HARVEST

*Good Harvest - Recipes From The Gardens Of Rural Women New Zealand.* Random House NZ, 2012.

In A Good Harvest, Rural Women New Zealand members

have gathered over 300 tried-and-true recipes for seasonal produce, as well as handy tips for preserving food.

From delicious jams, preserves, chutneys and pickles, to cakes, sauces and more, A Good Harvest is the perfect recipe collection for schools looking to use the produce they're growing.

The book is available in all good book stores nationwide or online at [www.fishpond.co.nz](http://www.fishpond.co.nz)  
Recommended retail \$34.99.

## Out and about with Julie Holt

Check out some of the great learning and action going on in Northland's Enviroschools.



### Wet and Wild

Water, water and more water – and not just from the rain! This year has been a water learning experience that students from Room 3 at Kamo Intermediate School, soaked into. Term 1 began with the students checking out local waterways and included the Cream Trip in the Bay of Islands, sailing on Lake Manuwai, water safety skills and survival at the pools.

Term 2 has been about investigating the importance of wetlands, their well-being and value for recreation and the environment. The students had a hands-on learning experience at the Hurupaki Primary School wetland and discovered that even man-made wetlands can quickly develop into an ecosystem that supports a range of biodiversity as well as benefitting the environment.

A visit to the Jack Bisset Wetland at Whatatiri continued the learning. The wetland is managed by the Fish and Game Council and supported by their community. The wetland is a huge man-made area with systems including the river, lakes, ponds, weirs, stopbanks and vegetation that supports the varied wildlife.

Students said they had an awesome day and realised that water and land care are actually more their responsibility, now and in the future. Watch this space as in Term 3 the students will check out the harbour and in Term 4 they'll take part in the Experiencing Marine Reserves programme as well as looking into ways to save water.

### Environmental action

Rubbish is a thing of the past after Junior Eco Leaders at Tauraroa Area School implemented their action plan – the plan made revamping the school's recycling system and development of the native area priorities.



The Eco Team has been busy again making the vision happen.

Gone are the days when rubbish was just put in bins without a thought to how much, which bin or where the rubbish would ultimately end up. Now the systems have purpose and the goal is to reduce the amount of rubbish going to landfill.

Planting in the school grounds in a once bare native area – that includes several existing large trees – has created inviting pathways and plantings.

The school's environmental focus continues to grow, not just in adding to the biodiversity of the grounds. A team of teachers from both primary and secondary areas are keen to promote the value of caring for our environment and sustainable learning and action.



### Beyond the school gates

There's action happening outside the gates of Paparore School, north of Kaitiāia. Students have been involved in projects with the wider community including taking responsibility for cleaning up the roadside near where the school is located, West Coast Rd, four times a year.

The road is a main access route to Oneroa-a-Tōhe (90 Mile Beach) for tour buses on their way to or from Cape Rēinga. The kaupapa for the school was to give tourists a good first impression of the area and that the 'whenua' is important. The project began with just the students but this has now evolved to include parents.

On Arbour Day this year, students from across the school took part in a planting session around Lake Ngatu, for which they have the role of kaitiaki. There were 36 students, 12 parents and staff involved, planting 800 plants around the western shore.

The school's senior class – Te Kauru – also went to Oneroa-a-Tōhe for a 10km beach clean up as part of their 'oceans' topic. Term 2 was celebrated with a disco that supported their ocean theme with students coming dressed as all sorts of interesting beach and ocean characters and creatures.

## Fur Flying

Project Possum is sending fur flying with more students gaining the skills to skin and pluck these perennial pests. Three Project Possum events have been held this year, each of which included a training workshop and assessment camp.

The students and community members involved were trained and assessed on their skills and knowledge related to possum trapping, skinning, fur and pelt recovery, possum biology and their environmental impact.

Enviroschools Secondary Facilitator, Marty Taylor says it was very pleasing to see all the students pass the course. So what did the students have to say about the project?

"Project Possum benefits the community heaps because the youth know how to kill, skin and pluck possums."

"I would recommend Project Possum to friends because you can start up a small job with possum hunting."

"I've had a positive impact on the environment by killing pests and saving trees and birds."

"Keep this project going for other people to learn how to look after the forest."

"The (Northland Regional Council and the Department of Conservation) Biosecurity guys were helpful in every way – they were the best."

## Save a Species

*Save a Species* sounds like a big ask – but that's exactly what the Northland Regional Council is encouraging the region's Enviroschools to do.

Northland Enviroschools Secondary Facilitator Marty Taylor says the region has 28 "Nationally Critical" (the highest ranking for threat of extinction) plant species with some species having as few as one remaining plant growing in its original natural habitat.

"So how can you, your students and your schools *Save a Species*?" asks Marty. "The idea is that students investigate the most threatened plant species close to their school. The school delivers teaching and learning programmes about the threats to species, personal responsibility and growing and caring for plants," he says.

Northland Regional Council's Enviroschools facilitators will then help schools eco-source

seeds or cuttings gathered by accredited nurseries and collectors.

"Students propagate and grow as many seedlings as they can with the ultimate goal of growing a seedling for every student in the school," says Marty.

"As students graduate from one year to the next the school will give each student a precious gift of a critically threatened life. The student then brings the seedling home, plants it in their garden and cares for it."

Marty says that after several years the hope is that enough seedlings will have survived in close proximity to each other that the natural processes of pollination will take over and small self-sustaining populations will develop, associated with *Save a Species* Enviroschools.

In our next newsletter we will look at three secondary schools trialling *Save a Species*.



*Tecomanthe speciosa*



*Hibiscus richardsonii*



*Clianthus*

These three plants are all threatened species that the regional council and Enviroschools Northland hope will be saved through *Save a Species*.

Photos © Marty Taylor

## Dates to remember

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

Aug  
14

**CARETAKER WORKSHOP**  
Onerahi School, Whāngārei

Sept  
4-7

**PROJECT POSSUM – Level 2 (CSL)**  
Trefoil Park, 10km from Kaikohe

Sept  
14

**MOTHER EARTH REWARD 2012**  
deadline for entries

Sept  
20-22

**TE AHO TU ROA – WHAKANGUNGU**  
Te Mauri Tau, Whaingaroa (Raglan)

Sept  
21

**THE OUTLOOK FOR SOMEDAY - FILM CHALLENGE**  
deadline for entries

Oct  
30  
Nov  
1

**GONE BUSH EXPOS**  
30 October, Whāngārei  
1 November, Far North

Nov  
2

**FARMLANDS/RURAL WOMEN - FRUIT & VEGETABLE GARDEN GRANTS**  
deadline for entries



## ENVIROSCHOOLS NORTHLAND TEAM [www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools](http://www.nrc.govt.nz/enviroschools)

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