

Enviroschools Northland



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Putting a lid on mustelids

For six years Project Possum has been teaching senior secondary students to humanely combat a national pest problem. Now, Project Mustelid seeks to expand on Project Possum's foundation.

During the first of two workshops, 40 students learned to effectively trap and kill mustelids. Like Project Possum, Project Mustelid uses practical principles to help our youth combat the pests. Mustelids – that is, stoats, ferrets and weasels – count among New Zealand's most dangerous invaders. Stoats in particular are a concern in Northland, regularly killing young kiwi and other native wildlife.

The workshops taught the skills needed to successfully trap mustelids, including knowledge of various traps, toxins and the impact of mustelids on our native ecosystems.



Steve Henderson, Northland Regional Council Biosecurity Officer, keeping a watchful eye on students as they practise setting traps.

Apply for funding now!

Applications are open for a grant of up to \$2000 for environmental projects in Northland. Until 5pm on Friday 27 May schools can apply online to fund hands-on projects in their local area with a positive impact on Northland's environment.

Northland Regional Council has previously funded environmental projects by Northland schools through the Environmental Curriculum Awards (ECA). These funds will now be managed through the Environmental Leaders Fund (ELF) and applications submitted online.

To find out how your school can benefit, visit:
www.nrc.govt.nz/elf

WaiRestoration professional development day



Ratana Weavers, Kokopu School teacher, identifies a short fin eel (baby tuna/eel)

More than 40 teachers, community members and students joined the WaiRestoration Professional Development Day at Trefoil Park, in Kaikohe. The day included five practical workshops covering several of the WaiRestoration themes.

The objective of the day was to further integrate the WaiRestoration project into schools, as well as drawing attention to Māori perspectives, and empowering students to take action.

All workshops were well received, in particular the WaiMonitoring workshop

which included weighing and identifying elvers (baby tuna/eels), and the WaiRestoration Connection – Rongoā Māori workshop, where participants learned the different medicinal uses of plants and the Māori stories connecting them.

Students from Kamo Intermediate took on the role of teacher for the day in the WaiMaintenance workshop: setting traps, making lures and skinning possums.

In another workshop, Dargaville Intermediate School built a bridge between WaiPlanting and WaiEnterprise, explaining in detail how schools can grow, sell, plant and maintain riparian plants – all for a profit.

Enviroschools facilitator, Jackie Knight led the ever-popular WaiNurseries workshop, where participants learned how to eco-source and propagate riparian species.



Recommended resource

Discover the journey of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rawhitiroa with the Waitaua Awa restoration project (2003-2010). 'Te Ara i Takahia' captures kōrero, videos, photos and community connections in a step-by-step bilingual format, available online at: www.tearaitakahia.teahoturoa.org.nz

Toiora te Moana, Toiora te Tangata - Healthy Seas, Healthy People

This year's Seaweed included a whole range of events aimed at showing how we need healthy seas to have healthy communities. Among guided snorkel and kayak tours, whale workshops, and preschool fun-times was the big beach clean-up. This year a fabulous 2000 people participated – that's nearly double last year's number!



Matauri Bay School's winning photo.

Enviroschools and CoastCare kitted out schools and community groups with free clean up kits and together they cleaned up Northland beaches from Te Hapua to Mangawhai. A big thank you to everyone who participated, and to the Far North, Kaipara and Whangarei district councils for providing free waste disposal.

This year, participants were asked to complete a waste audit on one bag of rubbish collected.

Sophia Clark, Northland Regional Council Environmental Monitoring Officer, says the information is extremely helpful for figuring out what type of rubbish is entering our waterways and how it may be getting there. "This information, in turn, helps us keep our waterways clean," she says.

"The most interesting finds this year were a car bumper and a couch found by Bayliss Beach Society, and hundreds of cigarette butts reported by Russell School."

A big congratulations goes to our Seaweed photo competition winners: Matauri Bay School and Opononi Area School, plus the winner of the waste audit prize draw: Christopher and Robin Early Childhood Centre!



Welcome Eden!

Eden Hakaraia joined the Enviroschools Northland team as a facilitator earlier this year, having previously been Otaika Valley School's Enviroschools lead teacher.

Her most recent claim to fame is the Primary Science Teacher Fellowship Alumni Award achieved in 2015.

Eden's passion for supporting schools in creating environmental awareness among students and teachers is obvious.

"I love seeing the different approaches schools take – even something as simple as a veggie garden can be developed in different ways, with various outcomes," she says.

"One school makes and sells chutneys, while another sends the veggies home for students' families."



Kia ora koutou

It is with great sadness that we acknowledge the passing of Jan Cox, Enviroschools National Manager. We mihi to Jan and her amazing energy, strength and passion for the kaupapa of Enviroschools, and the support she gave to the Enviroschools Northland team.

On a happier note, we extend a big welcome to the Enviroschools whanau for Kaitiā's Anne West Kindergarten and Ruawai Kindergarten! I'm looking forward to visiting both this term.

You don't have to wait until the end of the year to move to Bronze, Silver, or Green-Gold. Contact your Enviroschools facilitator now and book a time for your sharing and decision-making session – at any time during the year.

Remember to pencil the learning opportunities in the 'Dates to diary' section into your calendar.

Two dates we're looking forward to are the annual primary sector Enviroschools Expos on 1 and 3 November! This year's theme is: "Art for Earth's Sake". Together with talented Northland artists, we'll be creating useful art out of recycled materials and donating it to good causes.

"He taura whiri kotahi mai anō te kopunga tae noa ki te pu au."

From the source to the mouth of the sea all things are joined together as one.



Nga mihi nui
Susan Karels
Enviroschools
Regional
Co-ordinator

Connect!



Be the first to know about Enviroschools news! Follow Northland Regional Council on Facebook for updates: www.facebook.com/NorthlandRegionalCouncil

Out and about

Buy-in for sustainability

As many schools will know, getting staff buy-in can be challenging. Through several staff and focus group meetings, Whangarei Intermediate came up with its own definition of what sustainability looks like and what forms it could take at their place.

A result was a sign marking the entrance to a number of student directed environmental projects – composting area, orchard, shade house and worm farm. Staff are pleased to see something they contributed towards displayed proudly, and the sign has sparked conversations with students about what sustainability is and what it means to them.



"Sustainability is about creating and preserving the tikanga, taiao and rawa for future generations."

Exhausting, enjoyable, exploration-education



Mangawhai Beach School students sampling pond life.

A noise meter has determined who can scream the loudest, and a UV meter has helped figure out under what conditions they'll need sunscreen. Before the year is over they'll have measured and discussed dissolved oxygen, investigated sand, and visited the beach, ponds and the local sewage plant.

Getting your hands dirty is nothing new to students at Mangawhai Beach School.

John Dickie, a local, not-quite-retired environmental engineer is leading practical environmental science sessions. The sessions are all about using your senses to explore ecosystems: discovering fish, invertebrates, aquatic plants – and mud! Thrown into the mix are scientific principles such as measuring accurately.



Tauraroa Area School students swimming at a waterfall on the Tangihua Lions Lodge property.

The 75 students, teachers and parents had a great time exploring the stunning wilderness surrounding the lodge.

Into the wild

In the midst of the Department of Conservation monitored native bush in the Tangihua Ranges lies the Tangihua Lions Lodge. Tauraroa Area School's Year 11s spent the better part of a week tramping to a waterfall, spending a night in bivouacs, team-building and competing in 'The Amazing Race'.

The excursion allowed students to spend a few nights in the wild, learning essential skills like orienteering and testing their limits in a controlled environment.



All in a day's work

A group of hard-working staff, parents and children from Paparoa School used the sunny school holidays to paint walls, prepare and weed gardens, and even construct a sandpit.

This extra bit of work has allowed a smooth start into Term 2, where students are creating thriving food gardens and a complementary butterfly garden. The working bee was a great opportunity for everyone to get involved and see what the school is doing, and allowed everyone to share their thoughts on the development of the school.



A Paparoa community member working hard in the autumn sun.

Enviroschools Northland



A flourishing start to 2016!

Reaching the next milestone in an Enviroschools journey is a big step for everyone involved, and we're happy to have started 2016 with five Northland schools and two kindergartens with Bronze or Silver milestones.

In March, Bream Bay College's successful sharing and decision-making session also resulted in Enviroschools Bronze status.

Congratulations!

Bronze: Bream Bay College, Kerikeri Kindergarten and Taipa Area School.

Silver: Comrie Park Kindergarten, Kamo Primary, Kokopu, Parua Bay and Riverview schools.



Two years after achieving Bronze status, Comrie Park Kindergarten has again cause for celebration!

Dates to diary

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

PROJECT MUSTELID

MAY 24

Assessment workshop

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS FUND

MAY 27

Applications close

PROJECT POSSUM

JUN 14-15, or 16-17, or 20-21

Stage 1 skills camps

OUTLOOK FOR SOMEDAY

JUN 21 Kaitiāia | JUN 30 Dargaville

Film-making workshops

WAIFENCING

JUL 5, 6, 7

Assessment workshops

WISE UP TO WEEDS

JUL 25, 26, 27, 29, 30

Workshops at various locations by Sara Brill, Northland Regional Council Biosecurity Officer



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