



Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the expos provided hands-on workshops in a wide range of water-themed areas.

Highlights included - live eel and seahorse display, environmental puppetry, whale bone lego, investigating stream invertebrates under a microscope, building model wetlands and creating a water catchment.

Some of the written feedback received highlighted one of the aims of the expos perfectly, 'we could educate mums and dads and the rest of the school'.

Kōtuia!

Standing strong in who we are, exploring the history, stories and importance of kai, and the relationship between these two goals was discovered by students who attended three-day hui run by Te Aho Tu Roa – Kōtuia! in August.

Kōtuia is the Enviroschools Foundation's total immersion, reo Māori, youth development programme that helps senior wharekura students grow stronger through connection to their people, place and identity.

Te Rawhitiroa Bosch, National Manager, Te Aho Tu Roa – Kōtuia! says the two Northland hui encouraged students from three wharekura to connect with their people and their place and to bring together their histories around the theme of kai, with the goal of sharing these stories through performance with their peers.

"We use performance-based activities to enable the students to overcome their shyness and embarrassment and lower personal boundaries," says Te Rawhitiroa.

The students at both Otiria Marae in Moerewa and Te Ōhākī Marae in Ahipara started off their three-day hui by brainstorming their group culture before writing their kōrero o nehe, or ancient history.

"The result of this led to the discussion of the rituals around kai, traditional and contemporary cultivation and preservation methods, and later the significance of kai to their people and their place," says Te Rawhitiroa.

"Once the students have a solid understanding of their kōrero we explore a wide range of creative mediums of expression and challenge them to communicate these stories through performance, which in turn strengthens their confidence and their cultural identity."

"Interestingly the common theme that developed was to 'overcome the shame and embarrassment' and all the evaluations by students, teachers and tuakana – Kōtuia! crew youth facilitators – centred on the enormous gain in students' self confidence."

Recommended resource



Turning Trash Into Treasure For Young Children
by Adam Buckingham

One man's rubbish is definitely another's treasure in this resource for early learners. This book has hundreds of different ideas to use 'trash', all recorded in clear, colourful photographs.

What's interesting is how inventive you can be with materials that would normally end up in the dump.

The author – Adam Buckingham – explores the need for young children to use real equipment and materials, how to ensure safety in using 'trash', where to source materials, and how to store them.

To order:
email reusethetrash@gmail.com
with your address and contact phone number. The book costs \$40 including postage within New Zealand.

Te Aho Tū Roa – Kōtuia! Hui ā-Rohe at Otiria Marae, Moerewa.



Cluster meetings a hit!



Enviroschools have been appreciating the opportunity to get together during a series of new cluster meetings that have been held around Northland.

Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the meetings have been successful with lots of ideas and skills-sharing between participating schools.

"These cluster meetings are a new experience for us but all those who have taken part have been delighted," says Susan.

"People are building supportive relationships in their local areas and are keen to meet, share and learn more, once a term."

The first mid-north Enviroschools cluster meeting with teachers from primary Enviroschools was held at Tautoro School in Kaikohe at the end of August.

"The tour of the school provided a great opportunity to see how they have successfully incorporated Māori perspectives into learning and action," Julie Holt, Enviroschools Facilitator, says.



Teachers involved at the first Whāngārei cluster meeting held at the Whāngārei Heads School.

Lead teachers in Enviroschools and Principals also gathered for cluster meetings in Waiharara and Peria Schools near Kaitiāia, and at Whāngārei Heads School.

"These meetings provided an opportunity to share ideas and action and for lead teachers to gain some professional development with a view to being able to expand their Enviroschools involvement," says Julie.

Topics covered at the meetings ranged from Māori perspectives, edible gardens, food forests and sustainable practices to a range of Enviroschools processes, including reflection and awards, guiding principles and the whole-school approach.



Marty Taylor - Enviroschools Facilitator

Filming orangutans in Borneo, flying gliders alongside world-record breaking glider pilot Steve Fossett and sailing through the Southern Ocean's Roaring Forties – it's all in a day's work for Enviroschools Northland Facilitator Marty Taylor.

Marty has a unique combination of skills with a Master of Science (Nutrition) and Physical Education, teaching at different levels and a love of adventure and the environment.

Throw in years of writing for NZ Geographic magazine, photography and filming wildlife in various remote locations and you've got an Enviroschools facilitator with an approach that can only be described as anything but traditional.

"I suppose what I bring to Enviroschools is a fun, practical approach – I show kids what can be done," he says.

Marty cites a pig hunting project he worked on with one student as an example of this approach. The student caught a pig, using the project to illustrate ways to reduce damage to the environment and live sustainably.

"He caught 17 pigs, shared the meat out around his community and we put one on a spit at school to feed his fellow students – he not only got credits for it but the project helped him get into university," he says.

His first foray into environmental education was when he trialled the Education for

Sustainability standards between 2007 and 2009. He was also involved in setting up a programme to target Māori boys who were failing in mainstream education.

"The boys built traps and set three different trap lines, in a 600 hectare kauri forest and a wetland and they set up their own business selling the fur. We ran it for three years and proved that it was a good way to engage Year Nine and 10 students who may otherwise have dropped out of school."

Marty says his approach is certainly not traditional but it is effective learning – "and that's what sustainability is all about."

Celebrating Green-Gold

Northland's first Green-Gold Enviroschool celebrated its success with a formal presentation ceremony in September.

Local MP and Cabinet Minister the Honourable Phil Heatley presented the award to Mangakāhia Area School in a hall transformed by trees, plants and flags, and a table of mouth-watering green and gold iced cupcakes.

Principal Ann Stead says the day provided an opportunity for the whole school to celebrate its success and reflect on the journey.

"Changing a place and changing the people that live in that place is one of the most incredible taonga we can take from our Enviroschools journey," says Ann.

"As a school strives for Green-Gold its students and staff receive a high level of support from local and national organisations and friends of the school. At our Green-Gold day we welcomed and thanked those who have been instrumental in making our journey happen."



Savouring Green-Gold success.

These included Northland Regional Council's Enviroschools Coordinator Susan Karels, Chairman Craig Brown and the team at the regional council; Enviroschools Facilitators Marty Taylor and Julie Holt; Whāngārei

District Councillor Sharon Morgan who made the school's kerbside recycling come true; past Education for Sustainability advisors at TEAM Solutions; David and Catherine Davies-Colley for establishing the edible forest and plant beds; Bob and Kaye Jameson at Northland Plants; the Adams whanau at Waimarie Nurseries; and all the local enthusiasts for their generous support.



MP the Honourable Phil Heatley (right) celebrates Green-Gold success with current Mangakāhia Area School Deputy Head Girl Shelly Neilsen (left) and past student Rangimarie Kelly (centre).

Ōtamatea High's Silver journey

Students and staff at Ōtamatea High School have continued their Enviroschools journey this year adopting a Whole School Approach as they push to move to achieve Silver status.

Northland Enviroschools Facilitator Marty Taylor has visited the school several times through the year to help staff and students work on actions identified as they move towards achieving their goal.

"During term two I met with the Envirogroup students and got their views on how the school rated as an Enviroschool," says Marty.

"Teachers had previously rated the same aspects using the same method and the two were compared before teachers developed an action list to do with the aspect of the school identified."

As a result of this the school decided on a range of activities including:

- Holding an Enviroweek in the second week of each term where students and staff met to discuss the progress of their actions;

- Improving the voice for the work being done and planned;
- Setting up an Enviro KnowledgeNet Forum for the school and community;
- Building practical seating; and
- Creating a swap shed.

"The school is adopting a whole school approach, incorporating four key areas of school life that have an effect on sustainability and learning," says Marty.

"The work being done involves a number of projects including setting up KnowledgeNet, continuing work on an extensive walkway, and a range of planting including vegetables and flowering plants."

Marty says one of the outcomes has been staff reaction to the process.

"Many of the staff members were surprised how aligned and compatible the journey toward the Silver Award is with their delivery of the curriculum."

ENVIROSCHOOLS TEAM



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