

Enviroschools NORTHLAND

NEWSLETTER
Issue 11 | Term 2, 2012

Kindergarten joins Enviroschools

Whāngārei-based Comrie Park Kindergarten became the first pre-school in Northland to join the Enviroschools family with a new year-long pilot programme, launched last term.

Susan Karels, Regional Enviroschools Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, says the programme – Dubbed 'Enviroschools in the Early Years' – has been customised for very young children (aged two to six years), their families and wider community.

She says the Early Years' pilot will include a lot of enjoyable hands-on activity, with exploration and discovery the key components.

Aspects of the pilot programme were showcased at Enviroschools Northland's 'Me in My Environment' Expo that was hosted at Comrie Park Kindergarten, as part of Seaweed, in early March.

About 65 children, their teachers and members of their families attended, including around 20 new entrants from nearby Matarau School.

Eight community partners provided hands-on activities exhibiting sustainable actions including earth building, native fauna, water quality, native planting, sea creatures, paper-making and energy conservation.

Earthbuilder Raymond Lawton helps out Comrie Park's Head Teacher Anna Thorpe and students at the Earthbuilding Action Station.



Northland Regional Councillor Bronwyn Hunt helping with a sea anemone in the Rocky Reef Magic Carpet Action Station with the Magic Playhouse team. Cr Hunt says the children taking part in this 'Enviroschools in the Early Years' programme are very much environmental trailblazers for Northland and the Northland Regional Council is thrilled to be associated with such a worthwhile project.

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Garden for the senses

Okaihau College senior special needs students have led the development of the school's new garden of peace and harmony that also tickles the senses.

Over the past 18 months more than 50 students have been involved in planning, developing and maintaining the new outdoor living learning area, known as the Sensory Garden.

Theresa Nicolson, Specialist Teacher in the Special Needs Department says the school's senior special needs students have taken on a lead role throughout the process of creating the garden.

"The Sensory Garden provides an area where students with special learning needs can explore, gain knowledge and understanding by engaging in a living, growing environment while enhancing the physical aspect of our classrooms," says Theresa.

"It has allowed everyone in our school to develop an awareness and sensitivity of how people learn in different ways and has provided authentic learning from first-hand experience in the environment and to enhance classroom based work."



The finished garden.

Kia ora koutou FROM THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Welcome to the Term 2, 2012
Enviroschools Northland Newsletter!

Julie and Marty have been touching base with Enviroschools – in their place and space – and it has been wonderful to hear of all the great teaching, learning and action happening throughout Northland. Keep up the impressive mahi!

I encourage you to get involved in the exciting events listed in 'Dates to remember'. Take a Sustainable Business Bus Tour, join in a cluster

meeting, register for Te Aho Tu Roa Whakangungu or be a part of Project Possum. Engage students, teachers and community members alike.

If you'd like to share a story in this newsletter please email me.

"The world is mud-lucious and puddle-wonderful." - E.E. Cummings

Noho ora mai, Susan Karels
Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator



Seaweed Event

Julie Holt, Primary Enviroschools Facilitator, leads the See Food workshop at the Kiwi North Seaweed event held at One Tree Point School on 15 March 2012. Five schools attended the event and the Enviroschools workshop, entitled See Food, covered the marine food web. Students learnt about the impacts of the destruction of animal species on the food chain and possible solutions.



Showcasing Enviroschools

This year, as part of its 'Back to Basics' exhibition, the Northland Regional Council included an Enviroschools Project Possum display and an Enviroschools Community Garden.

Six of the 60 Northland Enviroschools shared an example of their gardening prowess with the public. Te Kura o Kohukohu displayed a native garden in a recycled native timber planter, Kamō Intermediate a pizza garden, Otaika Valley School a gumboot garden, Dargaville Intermediate School a medicinal garden, Whāngārei Heads a 'grow for profit' garden and Okaihau College a sensory garden and garden sculpture.



World Wetlands Day



Students from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Rangiawhia School making mini-wetlands with Julie Holt, Primary Enviroschools Facilitator, at World Wetlands Day, Lake Ngatu on 17 February 2012 – 100 students from eight schools took part.

Te Aho Tu Roa Whakangungu

Whakangungu is a total immersion (in Te Reo Māori) professional development course offered to kaiako/ school teachers, tumuaki/ principals and other interested whanau and community members.

Over three days, participants will learn about tukanga/ the process and the content of the Kete Taiao: Ko Au Ko Koe. Ko Koe Ko Au exploring the Māori world view in relation to sustainability.

The courses are held at Te Mauri Tau, Whaingaroa (Raglan), in partnership with the Enviroschools Foundation. Kura are able to teach through Māori pedagogy (styles of learning) and fulfill Ministry of Education requirements.

For more information contact:

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Recommended resource

BATTLE AGAINST PREDATORS



This Starters & Strategies online teaching resource explores the work community groups are doing throughout New Zealand to help protect native species, alongside the Department of Conservation and councils.

The resource is available online from www.starters.co.nz



Helping hands

Last term, members of a local church provided Hurupaki School with some much needed help in its wonderful wetland environment.

The volunteers helped fix the bridges across the stream, weed the wetlands and regenerate the butterfly gardens. It all looks wonderful and Hurupaki School is very grateful to its new friends.

Out and about

Check out some of the great action going on in Northland's EnviroSchools.



Growing to save Kaipara

Last year Dargaville Intermediate School grew native plants for the Integrated Kaipara Harbour Management Group as part of its involvement in an ongoing project of riparian management and wetland protection taking place on land near the school.

The school has around 5000 plants – manuka, kanuka, flax and cabbage trees – and plans to grow more species next year.

Here's what Year 8 student Esther Savage says about the project...
"Last year our school planted kanuka, manuka, flax and cabbage tree seeds. We planted them in seed raising mix. Once they germinated in the polyhouse we transferred them into their own pots. After we planted them we watered them for three terms until they were much bigger. It was really cool watching them grow so much!"

Bowl beautiful

Year 4-5 students from Room 10 at Ahipara Primary School have moved mountains of rubbish from a local hollow in the sand dunes – known as The Bowl – with their clean-up campaign.

The students came up with a campaign including letters to the editor of their local newspaper and to the Far North District Council highlighting the mess at the site and what needed to be done to clean it up.

The local community got in behind the students and within two weeks the site was cleared! Reminder notices in the school's newsletter – for people to take their rubbish to the local transfer station rather than dumping it in the dunes behind 90 Mile Beach – have meant the site has stayed clean.



The Bowl before the rubbish was removed.

Dune lake study

Year 12 Environmental Studies students from Bream Bay College went on a field trip to the Ruakaka Dune Lake to investigate fresh water fauna and flora with representatives from the Northland Regional Council and the Whitebait Connection programme.

"As part of our investigation we took temperature, clarity and pH measurements to help us understand the water quality in the dune lake," says Cassidy Potich, one of the students who took part.

Nicki Wakefield from the Whitebait Connection set traps to see what types of freshwater insects and fish live in the lake and Jillian Fulcher, Northland Regional Council Biosecurity Officer, taught students about the various fresh water plant and animal pests that are having a devastating effect on Northland's water ways.



Our harbour

Whāngārei Heads School's biennial Art Exhibition opened in early May with work by local adult artists exhibited alongside student work for the first time, this year.

The exhibition celebrated the school's unique environment, in particular Whāngārei Harbour, which dominates its views and a large part of school life.

The school has a strong connection to the harbour and teachers say there is a responsibility to sustain it for the future children of the school.

The pieces of art work included hebel carvings, prints on handmade paper, paper mosaic pictures, clay sea creatures on timber mounts and hand painted collages on canvas – all beautifully displayed.



National Event For Kōtuia!

More than 200 students, supporters and the Te Aho Tu Roa – Kōtuia! team came together at a national event in March, to share stories of kai through performance.

The event – which was held at Maketu Marae in Kāwhia from 21-25 March – wove together the threads, stories and connections that were established in the pilot year of 2010 and during the 2011 regional cluster events.

Te Rawhitiroa Bosch, National Manager Kōtuia!, says the event saw the students explore stories from the past to help connect them to their place, specifically to significant sources of kai in their area – the gardens, forest, farm, sea or supermarket. "Students were able to cultivate the community connections and feelings of belonging and pride of place, many of which were set in place during the work of the previous two years," he says.

The event aimed to inspire the students to take action and highlighted their growing talents and skills.

"The purpose of Kōtuia! is to support rangatahi Māori from around Aotearoa to Tū Kaha, Tū Māia, Tū Rangatira – to stand strong, to stand confidently, to stand in their power as the rangatira they are – and this purpose was well and truly realised during the week-long event in Kāwhia," says Te Rawhitiroa.

Through workshops, performances, challenges and activities, rangatahi were encouraged and supported to "Patua te Whakamā" – to conquer the fears that often held them back.

"The connections made with their peers, with rangatahi from around the country and

with the Tuākana crew provide long lasting support and encouragement to continue to grow and develop and overcome any challenges that will arise in the future." Feedback from Te Rangi Aniwaniwa – one of the Northland kura that participated in the event – remarked on the level of confidence that many of the students developed as a result of their participation in the event.

"We received feedback from Te Rangi Aniwaniwa about the parents of one boy who was usually extremely shy – they could not believe the same child had returned home or the things he had participated in."



Students performing their final stories of kai on-stage at Te Aho Tu Roa – Kōtuia!



Dates to remember

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

REMAINING PRIMARY & INTERMEDIATE CLUSTER MEETINGS

23 May Te Kura o Kohukohu (1.45 - 3.45pm)

31 May Kaikohe West School (3.30 - 5.30pm)

PROJECT POSSUM ASSESSMENT CAMPS

29-30 May Tangihua Lodge

31 May-1 June Tangihua Lodge

5-6 June Lonsdale Outdoor Education Park

FILM-MAKING WORKSHOP – Outlook For Someday

8 June Northland Regional Council, Whāngārei

WISE UP TO WEEDS WORKSHOPS

13 June Kaitiāia Primary School

14 June Kingston House, Kerikeri

15 and 16 June Northland Regional Council, Whāngārei - 3 hour workshops, morning or afternoon

SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS BUS TOURS

19 June Whāngārei

21 June Kaitiāia

TE AHO TU ROA - WHAKANGUNGU

26 – 28 July Te Mauri Tau, Whaingaroa (Raglan)

CARETAKER WORKSHOP

14 August Whāngārei

TE AHO TU ROA - WHAKANGUNGU

20 – 22 September Te Mauri Tau, Whaingaroa (Raglan)

GONE BUSH EXPOS

30 October Whāngārei

1 November Mid North



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

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