

Enviroschools NORTHLAND

NEWSLETTER
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Going bush! Enviroschools Expo 2012

All things bush-related were in the spotlight at this year's Enviroschools Expos on 30 October and 1 November.

About 200 teachers and students from around Northland took part in the Kaeo and Whāngārei expos, dubbed Going bush...Mahi i te Waonui a Tāne.

The bush-related expos brought together a dozen bush experts and a wide range of hands-on workshops related to the bush environment and how we use and take care of it.

Topics included pest plant and animal identification and control, insect habitats, kauri dieback disease, kiwi and other bush birds and traditional uses for native plants. A special puppet production focussing on bush wildlife was also created.



Expo participants included representatives from the regional council, the Department of Conservation, the Kauri Dieback Programme, KiwiNorth and the Magic Playhouse as well as a number of individual experts.

Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the popular expos were a huge success. "It's the third year we've run these expos, and

I've never seen participants – especially teachers – so animated.

"There's a huge amount to learn about our precious native bush and the life within it – we wanted to bring it all together at these expos and give people ideas and inspiration to take back to their own school communities."



Specialist possum killers

Project Possum's two day poison training workshop has produced eighteen new graduate possum killers.

The October workshop was a new Project Possum initiative to help community members and students over the age of 17 to get a Controlled Substance Licence (CSL).

The specialist poison training enables those who qualify to lay the possum-killing toxin cyanide, equipping them to kill possums in large numbers and potentially make a good income from it.

A combination of classroom assessments and practical experience in laying and retrieving poison out in the bush ensured a good mix



of theory and practical – comments like "it was good sound knowledge and hands-on" showed that the workshops really hit the mark.

Feedback on the workshops was excellent, with all participants saying they would recommend the workshop to a friend.

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Putting Northland first

Kia ora koutou FROM THE REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

Welcome to the final Enviroschools Northland newsletter for 2012!

Julie and Marty are back from a time of professional development in Rotorua. Enviroschools facilitators gathered from around Aotearoa to learn and share on topics including facilitation skills, action competence, Māori perspectives, running effective workshops and global issues.

What feats, discovering, networking and enjoyment we all had last term at the Caretaker Workshop and Project Possum Stage Two, then more recently at the Going Bush...Mahi i te Waonui a Tāne Expos – thanks for your input!

Looking ahead, there are lots of exciting Enviroschools activities already planned for next

year. There's a list on page four so you can start pencilling them into your diaries.

If you're interested in going for Enviroschools Bronze, Silver or the distinguished Green-Gold in 2013, be sure to book in your reflection sessions as per 'dates to diary'.

As we dive headfirst into summer, remember... "All the water in the world...is all the water in the world" – we must take care of what we have.



Noho ora mai,
Susan Karels
Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator

New kids on the block

NORTHLAND'S NEWEST ENVIROSCHOOLS ARE MAKING THEIR MARK.

Kokopu School



Kokopu is really getting into the spirit of Enviroschools with a whole-of-school enthusiasm for sustainability.

A large wall display in the foyer promotes the Enviroschools messages and encourages parents to contribute to the school's vision and goals.

"It will be great having an orchard because we can make fruit salad!"

There's lots of action already in classes, which have all brainstormed what they would like to see happen – students are very much involved in developing their 'enviro-place'.

Raised veggie gardens have been designed, ready to be built and planted. Fruit trees are being studied and planted, and students are involved in designing the school's future gardens to attract bees, butterflies and other wildlife. There are also more activities in the pipelines for this busy new Enviroschool.

Maungaturoto School

A very enthusiastic group of teachers is driving sustainability and reinforcing the values of caring for the earth at Maungaturoto School.

Both in and out of the classroom, environmental topics are being woven into learning and action. Several classes have looked at seed growing and the seedlings are flourishing. Classes are also designing and developing their own gardens – sites have been chosen, materials investigated and the action is now about to begin.

"Learning about the environment helps us to know about looking after things."

Arapohue School

A large area of unused grounds has provided Arapohue School with an ideal blank canvas on which to build their sustainability ideas.

Plans are well underway for adding to the small existing orchard and revamping the old gardens so the school's students each has their own garden area.

The school is keen to teach students about self-sufficiency as an important life skill, plus the responsibility of planting, growing and caring for their own gardens.



Longer-term, plans include getting the students involved in creating a 'food forest' for birds, getting some chooks and perhaps even establishing some beehives.

The school's environmental philosophy is very much focussed on what can we do to make a positive difference. It's about encouraging the students to come up with ideas and set their own goals to work towards. Arapohue School may be small, but we're sure we'll see great things from them!



There's also a large, under-utilised area on which the school plans to build nature paths, plant habitat for native creatures and create a wetland.

Being in an area with a genuine interest in improving the environment, Maungaturoto School hopes also to see its sustainability education being passed on from students into the wider community.

Out and about

Enviroschools facilitators Julie Holt and Marty Taylor share some of the great learning and action going on in two of Northland's Enviroschools.



'Kaitaia College Exterminators'

Look out stoats – the Kaitaia College Exterminators are coming for you! Students from the school's Food and Tree Production programme have initiated a pest-trapping programme in a nearby forest reserve. They're set to continue the trapping next year after winning funding from the World Wide Fund for Nature.

The students have also started up the Enviroschools Save a Species programme, starting with the Bartlett's rata, and have been involved in piloting the Enviroschools Wai Fencing programme, where they help build fences along waterways to exclude stock.

Turning paper into gold



St Francis Xavier Catholic School's fledgling papermaking industry is combining business savvy with environmental

sustainability. Started a couple of years ago, and led by Jillian Cutforth (papermaker

extraordinaire!), the project has now moved into a new phase with Operation Business Card.

The business cards will be printed on paper made by the school. It's been a big learning curve – both in papermaking and financial skills – but the first business cards have now gone to the printers. The students also got to showcase their papermaking business when they played host to the Enviroschools Sustainable Business bus tour earlier this year.

Caretaker workshop

A group of dedicated caretakers came together in August to explore the unique ways in which they can support their schools' Enviroschools journey.

gawk' at some of their sustainable practices and see some of the ways caretakers can get students involved in their work where appropriate.



Enviroschools Primary Facilitator, Julie Holt, says caretakers can play a highly valuable role in helping a school to realise its sustainable community vision.

"Together, we shared some great tips for how caretakers can incorporate some of the ideas children have to enhance school practices and the physical environment.

"It'll be great to see a bit further down the track how much of the inspiration that came from the workshop has turned into positive action."

Participants said it was valuable being able to get together with people that share similar challenges and bounce ideas off each other.

The day-long workshop brought together 27 caretakers from around Northland to look at a range of sustainable practices, and share problems and solutions to school property management.

Host Onerahi School also provided an opportunity for the attendees to 'walk and

Early Years professional development

Following a successful pilot this year with Comrie Park Kindergarten, Enviroschools in the Early Years has started to put down roots in Northland.

Nineteen kindergarten teachers came together during October to gain ideas for bringing sustainability education into early childhood settings.

Enviroschools Regional Co-ordinator for the Northland Regional Council, Susan Karels, says the professional development workshop



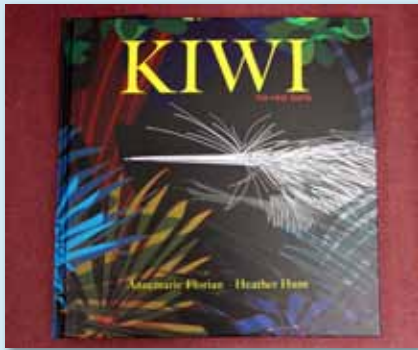
showed that there's a real appetite for the enviro-kindy concept.

"As well as gauging their level of interest for the Early Years programme, we were keen to showcase what had worked well in the Comrie Park Kindergarten pilot," says Susan.

"We wanted to be able to share ideas and provide some inspiration for the teachers to take back to their own kindergartens."

She says feedback from the workshop was very positive, with around half the attendees saying their kindergarten would be interested in joining the programme.

Recommended resource



Kiwi: The real story

Set in the dark of the night-world, this very special book describes the nocturnal habits of the mysterious kiwi, inspired by the successful Whāngārei Heads conservation project 'Backyard Kiwi'.

Heather Hunt, who originally developed the Backyard Kiwi character, has teamed up with writer Annemarie Florian to set rhythmic verse and educational narrative upon a bold, vibrant backdrop against which the North Island brown kiwi comes alive.

Available from good bookstores including Whāngārei's Storytime Books, or order online at www.heatherhunt.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

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| Feb 15 | ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting | Aug 19-30 | ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER CELEBRATIONS – primary |
| Mar 05 | KICKSTART TO ENVIROSCHOOLS WORKSHOP – marine pests | Sept 2-6 | PROJECT POSSUM STAGE TWO – controlled substance license |
| Mar 14-15 | WAI RESTORATION AND SAVE A SPECIES workshops | Sept 13 | ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting |
| Apr 1-5 | PROJECT POSSUM STAGE ONE – skills workshops | Sept 16-27 | ENVIROSCHOOLS GREEN-GOLD reflections |
| Apr 15-19 | WAI RESTORATION – fencing skills workshops | Nov 5, 7 | ENVIROSCHOOLS EXPOS – Whāngārei and Far North |
| May 17 | ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting | Nov 11-22 | ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER REFLECTIONS – secondary |
| June 17-28 | PROJECT POSSUM STAGE ONE – assessment camps | Nov 25-29 | ENVIROSCHOOLS GREEN-GOLD celebrations |
| Jul 1-12 | ENVIROSCHOOLS BRONZE AND SILVER REFLECTIONS – primary | Dec 06 | ENVIROSCHOOLS IN THE EARLY YEARS cluster meeting |
| Aug 5-16 | WAI RESTORATION – fencing skills assessment camps | | |



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

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The Enviroschools Northland team (from left to right): Julie Holt, Susan Karels, Marty Taylor.