



ecoeducation news

Statewide

October 2010 Number 31

2010 International Year of Biodiversity and EcoEducation's 250,000th learner

Hello colleagues,

What a perfect time to bring your students out of classrooms for some hands-on, nature-based learning. We arrange the equipment, lead the session and clear up afterward. Your students will have a great time learning and you are free to learn along with them. As EcoEducation is curriculum-linked, schools can claim the 10 per cent GST when the students return to school.

WA Week Launch

Speaking of magnificent weather, EcoEducation presented activities at the WA Week Launch, along with other DEC programs. Hundreds of children visited our stand to learn about *Western Shield's* monitoring programs, investigate biodiversity and learn about Aboriginal culture.

Perth Royal Show

I visited the Bush Rangers cadets volunteering at the Landcare pavilion at the show recently and found Dale Christian School counting me in. The cadets were checking the popularity of the pavilion and numbers were very impressive for their five minute count. The count was done each half hour.

The cadets had many duties including maintaining the walkways, distributing DEC KABC materials and demonstrating water catchment issues using a catchment model and erosion exhibit. Thanks to Anno Drent for the information.



'Dale Christian School Bush Ranger Cadets'

Quiz on Legs

EcoEducation activities were in high demand by students at Quiz on Legs at Kings Park recently. Our staff were swamped! It is terrific to see such interest and engagement in our DEC program.

EcoEducation Biology Teachers' Seminar

There was a strong group of biology teachers attending *Teaching biology for understanding*, a seminar organised by EcoEducation, Curtin University and STAWA. There were excellent presentations through the morning by Curtin and DEC staff and a show and tell afternoon with a flora walk and discussion of activities using the new biology quadrats.



'Biology teachers enjoying the Perth Hills Seminar' Photo Lisa Ingram.

Curriculum Council visit

Nolene Harris from the Curriculum Council visited PHNPC and worked with staff on what changes were needed for updating for new senior school courses. This work will be done in Term 4 ready for next year. Please see our quick and easy connection to senior school courses on the last page of this newsletter. Any teachers wanting to help please contact me.

Showcasing Sustainability Education Conference

I was privileged to be able to present and chat to teachers at the Showcasing Sustainability Education Conference at Curtin University. It was very productive and more than 100 teachers attended during their holidays.



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Curtin University Sustainability Education Group

A group of teacher educators have formed and are working on incorporating environmental and sustainability principles and activities into their crowded pre-service education program. I was fortunate to have been invited to a couple of meetings and this resulted in the sustainability group, and later a group of Curtin students, visiting our Perth Hills Centre for hands-on, experiential learning in the natural environment.

University education students

Curtin and Murdoch university students recently attended EcoEducation programs at the Perth Hills, organised by their lecturers Dr Catherine Baudains (Murdoch) and Dr Sandra Frid (Curtin). Claire, a student from Curtin University, undertook her practicum at the centre and was also involved in concept-map assessment and research with EcoEducation students.

Trevor Walley joining EcoEducation

Trevor Walley—a spokesperson for the Aboriginal people of the Perth Metropolitan Area and Nyoongar Elder—has now joined EcoEducation permanently. This is great news for us

and for your students as we offer strong Aboriginal programs conducted by highly regarded Aboriginal leaders.



Members of DEC Corporate Executive discussing DEC education programs

The WA government recently launched two major projects: Kimberley Wilderness Parks and the Great Western Woodlands Strategy. Information on both of these projects can be found on the DEC website www.dec.wa.gov.au.

These are tremendous resources for teachers. Please let me know if you are developing worksheets for these.

Best wishes from Elaine Horne

NEWS FROM THE PERTH HILLS

Lisa Ingram

EcoEducation in demand!

Excursion bookings, professional learning symposia and education expos were all in a terms work for the staff at EcoEducation during Term 3. EcoEducation coordinators Lisa Ingram and Juliet Rushton delivered presentations on biodiversity at the 2010 “Wise Eyes” conference held at the Sheraton Hotel for early years educators, the “Quiz on Legs” festival at Kings Park and at a resource expo to our future teachers at Curtin University.



Fire PL with Paul Dunstan DEC officer and Frank Johnson from Kelmscott SHS
Photo Lisa Ingram

Night with Nature PL – Teachers braved the bush!

Perth teachers enjoyed the annual Night with Nature PL held in the Mundaring Weir EcoEducation centre. Setting traps to monitor marsupials, dinner at the historic Mundaring Weir Hotel and sampling activities within some of the Aboriginal culture programs suite, including a smoking ceremony, Dryandra DEC opportunities and other EcoEducation programs, had all who attended very happy indeed.

“Sincerest thanks for the most remarkable and memorable PL of my 13 year career!”

Fire PL

Thankfully it's not everyday you get up close and personal with the DEC fire crew. But for a lucky few that's exactly what happened at the annual EcoEducation Fire – A Force of Life professional development day held at the Perth Hills Centre in Mundaring.

Teachers from Kelmscott Senior High School, Peter Moyes Anglican Community School and All Saints College experienced EcoEducation's Fire program visiting three fire sites and conducting comparisons. DEC District Fire Coordinator Kevin Pollock briefed teachers on the role of fire and its management and the logistics of managing fire in the Perth Hills District.

A deeper respect for fire and the people that manage it was forged. The field trip was the highlight of the day. Although it looks to me like trying out the fire hose was a lot of fun too!



Department of
Environment and Conservation



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'Students at Quiz on Legs learning about Western Shield' Photo Lisa Ingram

NEWS FROM THE SOUTH WEST

John Anderson

As usual September and October have been very busy for EcoEducation, being a great time of year to be out and about in the forest.

Two new programs in the SW

This year we launched two new programs in the South West: Sustainable Forestry, developed to fit the new Geography Unit 2B, and Caring For Places, which looks at the management issues surrounding our national parks and giving students a chance to be involved in rehabilitation of degraded areas.

In 2011 we hope to add a coastal ecosystem program at Leschenault Peninsula to our offerings. This is a great location to see three very distinct ecosystems in a very small area.

Fire at Wellington

During the school holidays we finally managed to schedule a prescribed burn for the Wellington Discovery Forest which will offer some great learning opportunities over the next few years about fire management in the South West. We will be able to see some fantastic new understorey growth next spring.

Good news about Wellington Cottages

Wellington Forest Cottages adjacent to the Wellington Discovery Forest are now under new management. The new lessees, Wendy and Ben Perdon, have been doing a lot of cleaning up and renovating and I have had glowing reports of the improvements from a number of teachers who have brought their classes up to stay overnight this year.

For more information visit their website: www.wfccc.com.au.

Addressing 'Nature Deficit Disorder'

'Nature Deficit Disorder' is a term coined by Richard Louv. It is used to describe the idea that a lack of routine contact with nature can adversely affect the academic and developmental growth in children.

Studies in the USA have shown that nature-based environmental education can have measurable benefits for children, including longer attention spans, more creativity, higher levels of self-confidence, greater academic success and significant improvements in cognitive development, self-discipline, imaginative and creative expression, language skills and social interaction.

EcoEducation excursions can address your curriculum, improve student outcomes and give you a great day out of the classroom, as well as also making your teaching easier and more effective!



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NEWS FROM DEC DRYANDRA

Mathew Harding

2010 is the Year of Biodiversity and there is no better place to experience the importance of maintaining biodiversity than in Dryandra Woodland.

Wandoo Woodlands are restricted to Western Australia and approximately 98 per cent of the woodlands have been cleared for agriculture since European settlement. Dryandra Woodland is one of the largest remaining patches of Wandoo Woodland anywhere in the world. Although the reserve is set aside as a conservation area, it is constantly under pressure from a myriad of threats to its biodiversity including feral animals and pests, disease, fragmentation and land clearing, low population numbers and low genetic diversity, irregular fire regimes and illegal hunting and harvesting and climate change.

Education at Dryandra

Part of DEC's commitment to maintaining biodiversity in the Wheatbelt is to present quality education programs. The EcoEducation programs held at Dryandra Woodland educate students about issues within the Wheatbelt and explain how they are managed.

Dryandra is easily accessible as it is located only two hours from Perth – 30 kilometres north of Narrogin. A tremendous range of nature-based educational material is available at Dryandra Woodland.

Western Shield trapping available

Many schools and educational groups that visit Dryandra Woodland take advantage of the live marsupial trapping activity that is available. Past trapping sessions have seen schools and other education groups capture and release brush-tailed possums, woylies, red-tailed phascogales and, more recently, chuditch.

Other educational programs offered include flora studies, invertebrate investigations and how to monitor animals using radio trackers, scats and tracks. All educational programs have a strong focus on biological investigations and the correct procedures involved. This array of programs enables teachers to design comprehensive, enjoyable and effective education programs for their students to emphasise the importance of biodiversity and the management strategies implemented to protect it.

Mathew Harding, Department of Environment and Conservation's Narrogin Office, 9881 9207.



'Matt and students at Dryandra processing a possum'.

Statewide

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EcoEducation in the South West Region

For enquiries, bookings for excursions or PLs contact DEC Bunbury District Office (ph 9725 5900) and ask for EcoEducation or contact the EcoEducation project officer (ph 9725 5944)
email swecoed@dec.wa.gov.au

Visit DEC's website at www.dec.wa.gov.au/ecoeducation



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Professional Learning symposia

Please contact the Perth Hills Centre or other relevant centres for more information. Prices will be confirmed soon.

Launch - International Year of Forests

The United Nations declared that 2011 is the International Year of Forests to raise awareness of sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for future generations.

DEC is proposing a launch of the International Year of Forests, possibly in February. Information will be available early in 2011. Please contact Elaine Horne for more information.

Exotic Environmental Learning journeys

Kalgoorlie

Join the Chief Scientist, Professor Lyn Beazley in exploring the Great Western Woodlands. Discover surprising things with EcoEducation and DEC regional staff. You can gather ideas for a student camp to Kalgoorlie or have loads of information and a powerpoint to share with your class afterward.

Monday 2 to Wednesday 4 May 2011

Shark Bay

Join EcoEducation in exploring the unique and unforgettable World Heritage Area of Shark Bay. View and discuss formations like those that were the beginnings of life on Earth and examine Project Eden in saving our threatened fauna. See dolphins and maybe dugongs, turtles or sharks on a marine excursion and have a seminar to hear new research and share how to adapt the experiences to your classrooms.

Thursday 4 to Monday 8 August 2011

Long weekends in the forests

"Nights with Nature"

Combat nature deficit and teacher fatigue by joining us in the beautiful forests of WA. Each PL will feature *Western Shield* trapping and monitoring, a night walk, all about fire, Aboriginal culture, threatened species and feral animals, ecosystem diversity, learning and caring about the natural world, forests, forests and forests.

A teacher's comment about A Night with Nature (2010):
"Sincerest thanks for the most remarkable and memorable PL of my 13 year career!"

Friday 16 to Saturday 17 September 2011

Perth Hills Centre

Accommodation own booking and cost.

Friday 2 to Sunday 4 September 2011

Wellington Discovery Forest

Accommodation at the newly refurbished Wellington Forest Cottages.

Dryandra

Join us in the beautiful woodlands of Dryandra, home of the state animal emblem, the numbat. **Dates to be announced.** Contact Matt Harding, DEC, Narrogin, 9881 9207

Valley of the Giants, Walpole and Perup

18, 19 and 20 March 2011

Accommodation at Perup (DEC).

One-day PLs

Free for school teachers and Department of Education, Catholic Education Office, Curriculum Council and Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia officers.

Fire!

What's the difference between wildfire and mosaic prescribed burning for biodiversity? Fire is an important part of several new senior school courses as well as an important part of life for us in WA.

See what's new in EcoEducation that you can use for your classes.

\$100 teacher relief per school.

Thursday 3 November 2011

Perth Hills Centre

Friday 1 April 2011

Wellington Discovery Forest

Catchment Carers' and Leave No Trace PL

Wednesday 6 April 2011

Perth Hills Centre

The Arts teachers' PL (with ARTS Edge)

Thursday 19 May 2011

Perth Hills Centre

South West Sustainable Forestry

Explore the issues involved in using a forest resource sustainably. Brilliant for Geography 2B as well as other senior school and lower school courses.

Friday 3 June 2011

Wellington Discovery Forest

Teaching Biology for Understanding

Join EcoEducation, Curtin University and STAWA in participating in up-to-date research presentations, workshops and hands-on learning about Biology.

\$80 (or \$50 for STAWA members and EcoEducation regulars)

Tuesday 4 October 2011

Perth Hills Centre



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FloraBase Plant of the Month

Petalostylis cassioides

See what's flowering each month

www.dec.wa.gov.au/florabase



EcoEducation curriculum links for senior school courses

A number of DEC's EcoEducation programs have been tailored to meet the outcomes of the 2011 Curricula for Biology, Geography, Integrated Science and Earth and Environmental Science. These programs and associated post-excursion activities also address many assessment criteria including practical skills, fieldwork and extended responses.

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

1ABIO	Discovering Ecosystem Diversity
1BBIO	Biology
2ABIO	Biology
	Investigating Tuart Woodlands
2BBIO	Biology
	Investigating Tuart Woodlands
3ABIO	Fire – A Force of Life
	Sustainable Forestry
	Climate Change – Measuring Baseline
	Biodiversity
3BBIO	Back from the Brink - Senior

INTEGRATED SCIENCE

<i>Preliminary Units</i>	<i>Biodiversity's Base</i>
Stage 1 Units	Catchment Carer's Trail
	Ecosystem Explorers
	Caring for Places
	Climate Change – Measuring Baseline
	Biodiversity
	Our South West
	Sustainable Forestry
Unit 2BISC	Catchment Carer's Trail

GEOGRAPHY

1AGEO	Caring For Places
1BGEO	Geography
2AGEO	Fire – A Force of Life
2BGEO	Sustainable Forestry

EARTH and ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

1AEES	Catchment Carer's Trail
	Our South West
	Marvellous Macroinvertebrates
1BEES	Caring For Places
	Geography
2AEES	Climate Change – Measuring Baseline
	Biodiversity
	Ecosystem Explorers
	Fire – A Force for Life
	Sustainable Forestry
2BEES	Fire – A Force for Life
	Back from the Brink - Senior
3BEES	Climate Change – Measuring Baseline
	Biodiversity
	Back from the Brink – Senior Monitoring
	Marsupials

Sponsors of the *Western Shield* schools program:

