ResourceSmart Teacher Workshops - Gippsland

Three ResourceSmart Schools professional development training days will be held across Gippsland in March 2017 to assist school sustainability coordinators and teachers implement the journey within their school. CRT will be available for one teacher per school for the first 15 registrations for each workshop so get in early to get your CRT paid spot.

The agendas will focus on the topics most frequently selected by respondents to our October ResourceSmart Teacher Training Survey. The sessions will be held at a ResourceSmart School to enable participants to see the ResourceSmart schools program in action.

Dates and topics for the workshops are:

**March 16 – Inverloch Primary School** – Aboriginal Perspectives on Sustainability; Building Sustainability into the Curriculum and a School Tour

**March 23 – Stratford Primary School** – Building Sustainability into the Curriculum; Aboriginal Perspectives on Sustainability and a Waste Reduction Tour of the school

**March 30 – Morwell Central Primary School** – Auditing and Tracking (Waste, Water, Energy, Biodiversity); Building Sustainability into the Curriculum and a School Tour (Sustainability across the curriculum)

Teachers getting a chance to catch up at Koonwarra Village School at our last workshop
Science Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics and Sustainability – Learn how to apply sustainability across the STEAM curriculum and gain ideas for implementation from F-10. Run by Design & Technology Teachers’ Association Vic in partnership with Environmental Education Victoria. **When**: Friday, 24 February – 10am **Where**: National Gallery Victoria. [For more Information click here](#).

**Steps to Sustainability Conference**: The 2017 *Steps to Sustainability Conference* will explore and showcase school sustainability leadership (student, teacher, whole-of-school, community partnerships, curriculum and Early Learning Centres) through presentations and workshops delivered by schools and Early Learning Centres that have recently started on their sustainability journey through to those who have been the leaders for numerous years. **When**: Friday, 24 March - 8:45am **Where**: Melbourne Zoo, Parkville **Cost**: $64.32.

Participants who register before 5 March will be eligible for apply for a **$500 Sustainability School Project grant with funding provided by Bendigo Community Bank**. The link to the short application will be emailed to those who register and the successful schools will be announced at the Conference. [For more Information click here](#).

### Biodiversity at St Brendan’s Primary School

A high biodiversity habitat score of 57 has been recorded by **St Brendon’s Primary School** in Lakes Entrance following an audit by the Environment School Program (ESP) students. The score was contributed to by the “habitat extras” such as new nest boxes, composting area, wetlands, bird bath and by leaving fallen branches/leaf litter under established trees as well as, new vegetable garden beds and an orchard. The school also planted in excess of 100 native seedlings. The students are also building a hot house using recycled plastic bottles.
RCE Gippsland presents

2017 SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS

EXPO

Places still available!
It’s on again ...
‘Food and the Future Eaters’
Thursday, 4 May 2017

9:30am - 2:00pm
St Paul’s Anglican Grammar School
Junior School campus (Gymnasium)
Bowen Street, Warragul

Bookings and expressions of interest can be sent to Jessie Ablett
Jessie.Ablett@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au
For those schools wanting to get certification this year, it’s a great time to review your annual settings in your ResourceSmart Schools online account. We’ve put together a short ‘to-do list’ to help you set up for the year ahead:

1. Update users - do you have any changes to make?
2. Annual School Data – teacher & student numbers; buildings (new or portables removed?).
3. SEMP (School Environment Management Plan) – check progress on previous proposed items; move achieved items across and as a school set new goals/wishes & plan for how, who and when they might be achieved.
4. Biodiversity audit – we have an easy new template for this, ask your facilitator for more information.
5. Billing data – update accounts received over the Christmas period.
6. Schedule a date for the annual biodiversity audit (for those completing Core or Biodiversity).

If you have any trouble updating your details, please contact your facilitator who will be ready to assist you.

With many students back at school from a holiday or a day at the beach or river, this would be an ideal time to focus on pollution they experienced with an inquiry-orientated teaching and learning model.

To assist with lesson plans here is a link to a FREE Tangaroa Blue Education Kit (Tangaroa Blue Foundation is an Australian-wide not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the removal and prevention of marine debris). Available Here

The kit is pitched at three levels, from Foundation to Year 10, and creates awareness about marine environmental and conservation issues (also can be related to river pollution) through exploration of: 'What is marine debris?', 'Why is marine debris a problem?' and 'What can we do about it?'. Concepts of consumption, pollution and resolution are investigated with students developing an understanding that there is an interrelationship between the Earth’s environment and human activities. A range of small local groups are working around Gippsland to reduce marine debris, talk to you ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator about getting involved.
Fighting Extinction Schools

Each year schools work with Zoos Victoria to improve biodiversity and create a safer future for local and international wildlife. In 2017 schools can become a Fighting Extinction School with Zoos Victoria from the classroom to help fight extinction, create a safer future wildlife and improve biodiversity. To get started click here.

Know Your Locally Endangered Species

Gippsland is host to a range of endangered species including the Baw-Baw Frog, Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby, Orange Bellied Parrot and Leadbeater’s Possum. Find out more about I endangered species near you and how students can engage your local community to love your locals.

Schools can support their locally endangered species by learning what habitat they need and planting the right trees and grasses in their school.

Airly Primary School Joins Extinction Fight

Airly PS has joined the wildlife extinction fight. Students donate to the Common Cents Challenge and mark off every donation. Copies of the posters are here to print: Gold Coins Poster Silver Coins Poster

Is your school a wipe for wildlife zone?

Every year thousands of trees are flushed down our toilets. A Wipe for Wildlife Zone is a school that has made the switch to use only recycled toilet paper.

Download the School Support Pack to find out how easy it is to make the switch and become a Wipe for Wildlife Zone.

Connect with Zoos Victoria. Check Zoos Victoria’s calendar of upcoming web conferences to connect directly with conservation experts or to enquire about a web conference for your students. Students can also find great information on endangered species at the Act Wild Website.
Keep fruit stickers out of compost & worm farms

Thanks to Stratford Primary School for this tree idea to keep pesky plastic fruit stickers out of the compost and worm farm bins. Put an outline of a tree on a large piece of paper where students can place their stickers on the branches like the leaves of the trees. It is a way to teach the students that plastic doesn’t break down like organic materials and is persistent in our natural environment. These pesky little stickers contaminate compost reducing its quality and value.

Let your Facilitator know if you would like the template for this tree and we will send it to you.

The start of the year also is a good time to bury a range of items that can be dug up later in the year to identify any difference between the decomposition of organic and man-made materials. This leads to discussion on problems we create when this material is released into the environment as litter or sent to a landfill. Naturally, the spots will need to be well labelled for identification and removal at that later date. Items for consideration include organic material like fruit or vegetables; some cotton and synthetic fabrics; plastic and glass containers and bars of confectionery still in their wrappers.

Subsidised Kitchen Garden Program for Your School

Sign up for the heavily subsidised Victorian Pleasurable Food Education Package to receive a bundle of discounted professional development, educational resources, membership and support. The $550 Package includes over $1500 worth of value in professional development, educational resources and support! Learn More Here

ALL you need to start a kitchen garden program is passion, a few pots and a little help from us!
Grants and Contests

Schools, kindergartens and youth groups are eligible to apply for Junior Landcare Grants to assist with environmental projects. There are 200 grants of $1,000 available through Momentum Energy to undertake projects to enable young people to play an active role in ensuring the safe future of their environment. For details, sign up for the eNewsletter, https://landcareaustralia.org.au/junior-landcare/grants/

Use the Cool Australia Toyota Dream Car Art Design Contest to inspire your students to imagine a car that helps people and the planet. This includes Design and Technologies as well as Visual Arts lesson plans for Foundation to Year 2, Years 3 - 6 and Years 7 - 10.

It’s always a Great Time to do an Audit

Kick off this year with a ResourceSmart Schools resource audit. Understanding your water, electricity or paper use is a great way to set yourselves up with lots of action for the year. Plan actions at your school that are going to help you reduce your resource consumption. Your ResourceSmart Schools Facilitator can help identify and assist you with a variety of audits linked to your School Environment Management Plan and have all the tools and experience to get you going so that you can get the most out of the audit.

Audits allow you to examine what is happening in your school at that moment and will help students work out ways to improve your school activities.

Yinnar South Primary School completed their water audit late last year. Students approached the audit thinking that there probably wasn’t much to do around the school for water, but finished it with a school water plan that included actions such as signage to give information about dual flush toilets and an opportunity to catch rainwater from a shed roof that could be utilised in a water garden at the base of the shed.

All of the actions will now be put into their School Environment Management Plan and ticked off as they are completed.

The school will now regularly monitor their water use over the year and see if they can track any reductions they make.

Marcus (with clipboard), Samuel and Chante helped with Yinnar South Primary School’s water audit late last year.
ResourceSmart School Facilitators are fortunate to see some innovative and inspirational strategies for successful vegetable gardening in schools. Following are some Brad has come across in South Gippsland.

**Slugs and snails:** probably the biggest pests in a veggie garden are slugs and snails, which can decimate seedlings overnight. The use of many snail and slug baits is questionable due to the potential toxicity around children and pets.

Some of the best deterrents I’ve discovered are physical barriers such as copper tape (gives a naturally created small electric shock), crushed egg shells or coarse sand and snail & slug gels. The use of copper tape, either around whole garden beds or creating mini barriers around individual plants, seem to be highly effective, at least in the first year.

Advantages of doing the whole bed is in creating a slug/snail-free zone in the garden, however disadvantages are the expense (tape costs around $2 per metre) and also the effectiveness of the tape reduces when left exposed to the elements for extended periods. Individual barriers can be removed and stored once the plants reach a decent size. (OR [www.allaboutslugs.com/6-step-plan-to-control-slugs/](http://www.allaboutslugs.com/6-step-plan-to-control-slugs/))

**Biodegradable planting pots:** Foster Primary School students made their own biodegradable planting pots out of newspaper. Besides the obvious advantage of not having the expense of purchasing pots, when the seedlings are large enough they are planted out as is, which minimises root disturbance and thus increases survival rate from transplant shock. The paper decomposes naturally in the soil.

**Greenhouses:** The successful raising of seedlings can be greatly enhanced with the use of a sheltered greenhouse, such as the one used by Tarwin Lower Primary School (pictured below left). These are relatively inexpensive and effective options and it is surprising how many trays of seedlings they can accommodate. Alternatively, Koonwarra Village School has retrofitted an older ‘poly-tunnel’, pictured to the right, incorporating both a fernery and hothouse built under the one frame. This provides climate-controlled ‘hang-out’ spaces for students at different times of the year – the fernery in Summer and the hothouse in Winter!
In June 2016, the State Government committed to fight climate change and set a target for Victoria to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

“The world’s major meteorological agencies have declared 2016 the hottest year on record – making it three new highs in as many years – as increases in greenhouse gases drove global warming.” The Age P5 20/1/16.

Learn More About Climate Change

All Victorian Government departments and agencies are required to cut their emissions. A world-leading climate change pledge program – TAKE2 has been established to encourage and support individuals, organisations and schools to voluntarily commit to tackling climate change. http://www.take2.vic.gov.au/ Winters Flat PS, for example, has taken the pledge to “Work through the ResourceSmart Schools framework online”.

Why do we need to act on climate change? Scientists agree that temperatures around the world are rising because of the pollution produced by human activity. In Victoria, we are already experiencing higher temperatures, longer fire seasons and rising sea levels. By taking collective action through TAKE2, schools can help make a difference to climate change. Together we can turn this around, but we must act now. http://www.take2.vic.gov.au/education/

Gettings in Touch with Local Biodiversity

Corymbia Ficifolia commonly known as the red flowering gum burst into flower in February, creating a magnificent display of vivid red, orange and pink and takes centre-stage during the Drouin Ficifolia Festival (February 4 -13).

Perhaps you know similar events and people with knowledge and passion about plants, animals and birds in your neighbourhood or local council that can help students’ grow in knowledge and understanding of the need for biodiversity and in the process help the school meet some of the actions in the ResourceSmart Schools Biodiversity checklist, including (but not limited to):

B1.3 Are your classroom programs linked to practical hands-on activities that encourage excursions to provide students with first-hand experience of their local flora and fauna?

B1.6 Do you have visitors to the school to provide students with knowledge and motivation around biodiversity?

Finally, a reminder to make a calendar entry to undertake your annual biodiversity audit. If required, your ResourceSmart School Facilitator can provide a copy of an audit tool and assistance in conducting the audit in your school grounds. We’re only too happy to help!
Calendar

- 24 February – STEAM and Sustainability Environment Education Victoria and Design and Technology Teachers Association joint PL day in partnership with National Gallery Vic and Trash Puppets
- Friday 3 March Schools Clean Up Day https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/about/about-the-event/clean-up-for-schools
- Friday 24 March – Earth Hour Schools Day https://earthhour.org.au/schools/
- RSS Module Progress Workshop dates and venues:
  - March 16 – Inverloch Primary School
  - March 23 – Stratford Primary School
  - March 30 – Morwell Central Primary School
- 24 March – Steps to Sustainability Conference - Melbourne Zoo, Parkville
- 4 May – Sustainable Schools Expo – Food and the Future Eaters @ St Paul’s Junior Campus, Warragul

ResourceSmart Schools Local Facilitators

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