

# Enviroschools

## OTAGO

July 2017



## Nau mai haere mai

Welcome to the second Enviroschools newsletter for 2017. Puaka Matariki is a time to reflect on the last year and to start planning for the coming year. We hope the stories in this newsletter inspire you as we approach spring. There is so much more happening in Otago than we can showcase here. You will find more great stories and ideas on the Enviroschools website <http://www.enviroschools.org.nz/>

Daniel Jephson joined the Dunedin facilitation team in Term Two. He has been teaching in Sweden for the last seven years so brings some different perspectives on education and sustainability.

Make the most of these short days to rest and to plan for the coming season. Stay warm.

Ngā mihi nui

**Robyn Zink**

Enviroschools Otago Regional Co-ordinator

## Celebrating key teachers

Key teachers play a pivotal role in Enviroschools. Not only are they the contact point for the facilitators, they hold the kaupapa of Enviroschools in their school and enable student action. Jo Hackfath of East Taieri School in Mosgiel shares some of the highlights of being a key teacher and some hot tips for success in this role.

Jo is in her third year as a key teacher for Enviroschools. Her highlights include seeing student-driven practices such as composting and recycling become embedded in the everyday life of the school. Working with another Enviro lead teacher to plan and complete a mural that reflects the ways students care for the school and the world is another highlight.

Some of Jo's hot tips for success as a key teacher and Enviroschools are:

- Work closely with other teachers under the Enviroschools umbrella. You can share ideas and the workload.
- Have environmental studies as an option in club activities

- Involve whanau with such things as *plastic-free lunch boxes* and *walk or wheel* to school
- Have the support of volunteers to help with the edible garden
- Make good use of your facilitator – they are there to support you and the wider school staff to develop your sustainability practices and to integrate this into your teaching inquiry.

We would like to acknowledge all of the great work of key teachers. Without you we could not make Enviroschools happen.



*Jo Hackfath on the right with staff and students involved in the school mural*

## Zero waste

Managing and minimising waste is an ongoing issue for schools. **Clutha Valley School** recently undertook its first waste audit with Steve's help. The audit involved all 121 students sifting through three days of waste. They generated 19.6kg of waste in that time, and found that 90% of it is recyclable. Clutha Valley School is not on kerbside collection so all their waste (excluding organics) currently goes into a skip. Two main projects have come out of this audit. One is to work out ways to separate out the recyclable material from the waste in the school. The second project is to investigate the possibility of extending the Clutha District Council wheelie bin service to Clydevale. The senior students are doing this as part of their term two inquiry. They plan to present their findings to the Council.

The year two students at **Queenstown Primary** also did a waste audit. They collected a week's worth of rubbish and separated it into three streams; recycling, landfill, and food. The food waste stream was easy to sort. But the students were confused about what could be recycled. Juice containers and coffee cups caused the greatest confusion as they have a recycling triangle, yet, due to being made from three different materials, they cannot be recycled in the QLDC area. Simon worked with the students to identify ways to avoid waste. Ideas they came up with included making muesli bars and biscuits at home, using drink bottles, reusable coffee cups, and reusable sandwich wraps.



*Queenstown primary students in the middle of a waste audit*

**Wanaka Preschool** recently took a trip to Wanaka Wastebusters so the tamariki could see what happens to the things they recycle. They saw all sorts of machines needed for recycling. Ben, one of the tamariki, said: "I saw the squishing machine. It squished cans. It squishes them down to make new cans." Xavier said "The machine ate the stuff. It goes in and comes out smaller," describing the machine that deals with polystyrene.

Enviroschools has just updated the Zero Waste Theme book and this has lots of great activity ideas, powerful learning experiences, and ways to design a zero waste future. A copy will be coming your way shortly.

## Living Landscapes

Many schools work on enhancing the biodiversity in their school grounds and local communities. **St. Gerard's School, Clyde Primary School, and Goldfields Primary School** are all working on learning what makes good homes for skinks and geckos. They hope they may be able to develop part of their school grounds as lizard-friendly environments. Grant Norbury, a herpetologist working for Landcare Research, is showing the students how to monitor for skinks and geckos. With Grant's help the students surveyed nearby sites for potential monitoring and explored what makes good lizard habitat. The schools are sharing the data collected from each site so students get a deeper understanding of what skinks and geckos need and how to care for and enhance their habitat.



*Grant Norbury explaining how to set up a pitfall trap with Clyde Primary Enviro-group, and teacher Alistair Banks*

The **Dunedin senior secondary student hui** at Sinclair Wetlands / Te Nohoaka o Tukiauau in early April also had a biodiversity component. The students spent the morning sharing ideas and experiences of driving sustainability projects at their schools. Finn Campbell from Generation Zero talked about how students can engage in the democratic process. In the afternoon we did some planting work with Glen Riley, the coordinator at the wetlands.

### Connect

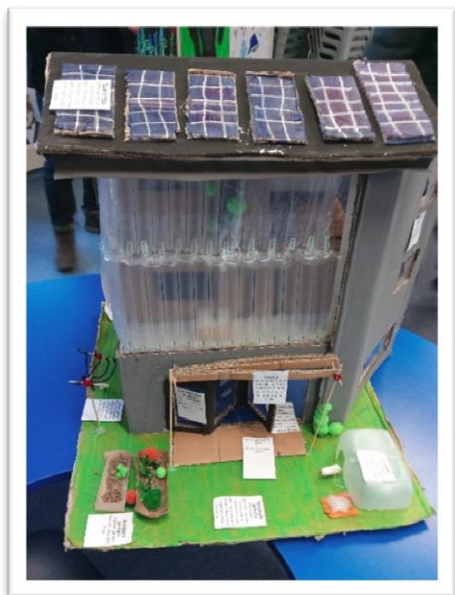
Keep up to date with Enviroschools news and share your questions and ideas  
[Facebook.com/groups/EnviroschoolsOtago/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/EnviroschoolsOtago/)



---

## Sustainable buildings

Room 3 students at St. Leonard's primary school in Dunedin teamed up in small groups with junior students in Room 1 to plan and design sustainable houses. They made models using recycled materials. The children got ideas from a parent that knows a lot about energy neutral homes and they were inspired by a Grand Design episode. This project was part of a school-wide focus on sustainability and the models were entered into a competition organised by Bunnings.



*St. Leonards School students' winning entry in Bunnings' sustainable building competition*

---

## Holistic reflection

Holistic reflection is a process where schools celebrate their achievements and take time to consider the next steps in their sustainability journeys. Celebration is empowering for students and staff. As practices such as recycling or gardening become a routine part of school life, it is easy to forget the hard work that went into making the initial changes.

**St. Gerard's School** in Alexandra, and **Kavanagh College** in Dunedin, did their first holistic reflections earlier this year, identifying themselves as Bronze Enviroschools. **Otago Girls' High School** recently reflected for the third time since they joined Enviroschools and identified themselves as a Green / Gold school.

Each reflection was inspiring and humbling. It is inspiring to hear the ideas and visions enthusiastic and motivated students have for their schools and local communities. It is also humbling to recognise the hard work students and teachers are prepared to put into making these visions happen. Congratulations to all these schools for taking the time to reflect.

We encourage schools to do a holistic reflection every three years. Get in touch with your facilitator to find out more about this process.

*Bill Nagle showing teachers the finer points of propagating eco-sourced seeds*



*Otago Girls' High School students and staff with their Green/Gold certificate*

### New schools joining Enviroschools

Three Dunedin schools have recently joined the Enviroschools programme. A big welcome to **St Peter Chanel, Sawyers Bay** and **Maori Hill** primary schools

---

## Teacher workshops

**Dunedin and Clutha teachers** came to a *Practices and Programmes* workshop in May. We explored Enviroschools' guiding principles and how teachers incorporate these into the practices and programmes at their schools. Lots of great ideas were shared around the tables and we generated a long and rich list of next steps teachers planned to take in their schools.

The **Central Otago and Queenstown Lakes District Enviroschools teacher workshop** in March had a strong emphasis on biodiversity. The day was spent with Bill Nagle, Clair Becker, and Dhana Pillai learning about the indigenous flora around Alexandra and the geological forces that have created this unique landscape. The workshop focused on eco-sourcing seeds; collecting and propagating seeds from the area in which the new plants will be established. Along with sharing a wealth of knowledge and skills, Bill left us with the challenge of making sure all students understand photosynthesis because, as he said, oxygen is fundamental to our existence. You can find some teaching resources at <http://photosynthesiseducation.com/photosynthesis-for-kids/>



# Enviroschools Census

Some of you may remember the Enviroschools census in 2014. This gave us a really good overview of what happens under the Enviroschools banner and the impact Enviroschools has on students, schools and communities. The questionnaire for the next census will be delivered to key teachers early in term 4. Please take the time to fill this in. It is really important that we can tell our funders and the wider community about the difference Enviroschools makes. Information from the census also helps us to keep developing Enviroschools.

# Empowerment Fund

There was an amazing response to the Empowerment fund. Nineteen applications were received but unfortunately, we only had seven grants to give out. Projects ranged from biodiversity, to waste, to gardening, and making school grounds more welcoming. It is exciting to see so many schools with such ambitious projects. We will keep looking for ways to support you in this work.



### Enviroschools website

Want to find out what other schools are doing, looking for inspiration or resources? Don't forget the Enviroschools website. This is a valuable source of information. <http://www.enviroschools.org.nz/>

### Enviroschools staff

<p>Robyn Zink Regional Coordinator, Otago Regional Council P: 03 474 0827, E <a href="mailto:robyn.zink@orc.govt.nz">robyn.zink@orc.govt.nz</a></p>	<p>Anna Hughes Enviroschools facilitator, Dunedin City Council E <a href="mailto:anna.hughes@dcc.govt.nz">anna.hughes@dcc.govt.nz</a></p>	<p>Daniel Jephson Enviroschools facilitator, Dunedin City Council E <a href="mailto:Daniel.jephson@dcc.govt.nz">Daniel.jephson@dcc.govt.nz</a></p>
<p>Steve Clarke Enviroschools facilitator, Clutha District Council E <a href="mailto:steve.clarke@cluthadc.govt.nz">steve.clarke@cluthadc.govt.nz</a></p>	<p>Anna Robinson Enviroschools facilitator, Central Otago Reap Education E <a href="mailto:envirosust@coreap.org.nz">envirosust@coreap.org.nz</a></p>	<p>Simon Williams Enviroschools facilitator, Wanaka Wastebusters E <a href="mailto:simon@wanakawastebusters.co.nz">simon@wanakawastebusters.co.nz</a></p>

# Theme area resources

All of the theme area resources are being redeveloped. *Zero Waste* and *Water of Life* will be coming your way shortly. You can access these from the members section of the Enviroschools website. The *Living Landscapes* will be ready in Term 3 and *Energy* and *Ecological Buildings* theme areas will be out by the end of the year.

