

Waikato ENVIROSCHOOLS



Matariki was a time for us to reflect and celebrate and it was inspiring to see the different school and community celebrations underway across the rohe.

He mihi

Welcome to the Waikato Enviroschools newsletter.

This edition's full of stories, opportunities and resources to inspire you as we move into spring.

Term 2 was action packed! Following on from our second successful secondary school Climate Camp in March, student leaders from Paeroa College, Te Aroha College, Rototuna Senior and Hillcrest High explored [leadership skills](#) together at Wintec in May. Students from six Waikato Enviroschools cooked up a storm in June at our second annual [Māra Kai Challenge](#). With cooks and gardeners from Horotiu, Hukanui, Kio Kio, Rhode Street, St Columba's and St Peter's Catholic schools, all teams shared their passion for growing and cooking healthy, nutritious kai with dishes that they had planned, practised and prepared over Term 1 and 2.

The annual planting season inspired many schools to get involved with community planting initiatives. If you are interested in working towards this for next year, get in touch with your facilitator. They can support your planning and connect you to local opportunities. Congratulations to Waipahihi School, who, at their term 2 Enviro fest celebrated sustainability learning and action as a whole school and received a Bronze Enviroschools certificate honouring their mahi and ethos.

We want to acknowledge your Enviroschools mahi! Have you got a great Enviroschools story to share? Are your ākonga involved in an exciting action project? Add [#Enviroschools](#) to your school's social posts to share with the national network, or email your photos and blurb to your facilitator and we can share on your behalf.

We hope this newsletter offers an engaging read.

Please feel free to forward it on to any interested colleagues.

Ngā mihi,
The Enviroschools team



Tāmātou mahi | What we do

Enviroschools is a nationwide programme supported by Toimata Foundation, founding partner Te Mauri Tau, and a large network of regional partners, like us here at Waikato Regional Council.

It helps support early childhood centres and schools on their long-term sustainability journeys, teaching a generation of young people to value and nurture their natural environment.

Our vision is to create a healthy, peaceful, sustainable world through learning and taking action together.

14 Regional partners

202 Enviroschools

51 ECE centres

151 schools

45,900 tamariki and students

**14% of early childhood
53% of primary and intermediate**

**38% of secondary
63% of composite and other**

3 collaborators

Waikato Enviroschools acknowledge our funding partners. Their ongoing input and funding is essential to the success of the Enviroschool programme throughout our region.



Ngā kaupapa e haere ake nei | Opportunities

Enviroschools Term 3 Ecological Building Professional Development/Term 4 Ecological Building Challenge

We have exciting professional development opportunities coming up in Taupō in Week 6 and Hamilton in Week 7 to explore our Ecological Building theme area. We then introduce the Ecological Building Challenge in Term 4, which is designed to coincide with outdoor classroom day on 2 November.

Please see the [flyer](#) for more information.

Register for **the 22 August event, 1pm-4.30pm, at Waipahihi Botanic Gardens in Taupō** [here](#).

Register for **the 30 August event, 1pm-4.30pm at Marian School in Hamilton** [here](#).



Kauri protection education programme launching in Waikato schools, term 3

Waikato Enviroschools will have the opportunity to experience the [Wētā Workshop kauri model](#) and virtual reality experience [Kauri Pou Kaitiaki](#) as part of the Waikato Regional Council's kauri protection education programme being launched in term 3.

If you are interested in booking this opportunity for your school, please contact your facilitator.

Enviroschools Fund Opens 18 August

The Waikato Regional Council's Enviroschools Fund assists Enviroschools with environmental projects. The fund provides one-off grants to projects that directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education. If you have a project in mind or underway that could use financial support, speak to your facilitator for more details on how to [apply](#).

NZAAE Education Hub Webinar: Mātauranga Māori in Education

17 August 7.30pm-8.30pm

Hosted by The Education Hub, this free webinar with Dr Maia Hetaraka and Dr Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal will explore how schools and teachers should be conceptualising and addressing mātauranga Māori in teaching and learning, along with other key questions and issues. Find out more [here](#).

Conservation Week 14-20 August

This year for Conservation Week, the Department of Conservation is asking the country to take action for nature. The annual celebration acknowledges the incredible conservation work going on across Aotearoa and calls for people to get involved. Find out more [here](#). Get in touch with your facilitator to see what is happening in your area or to organise something special for your school.

Bee Awareness Month September

September is Bee Awareness Month. Your facilitator can help you to consider how you could learn more about native bees, support native bee populations with native flowering plants or even host a hive.

Bee Awesome is a social enterprise passionate about bees and the environment that seeks to teach tamariki about biodiversity, food security and sustainability. It offers a range of flexible programmes for schools, from student groups, to lessons, to hives. Find out more [here](#).

Te wiki o Te Reo Māori 11-17 Hēpetema

The theme of kia kaha te reo Māori – making the language stronger – will continue this year, picking up from where it left off in 2022. The campaign is an essential piece of the puzzle to achieving the goal of 1 million speakers of te reo Māori by 2040.

Keep New Zealand Beautiful Week 16-22 September

Register your school to get involved in clean up week with Keep New Zealand Beautiful.

Find out more [here](#).

School Streets

Waka Kotahi is looking to trial the implementation of a project called School Streets (timed traffic restrictions on streets outside of schools at pick-up and drop-off times) during term 4 in 2023 and term 1 in 2024.

They are interested in working with Enviroschools to identify schools that could be good candidates to be involved in the trial – schools where the location would allow streets to be closed off (i.e. not on a bus route, main artillery route, state highway etc.), and schools that would be open to this road closure happening around their school.

Potential benefits of this project are reduced car traffic around schools, improved air quality, an increase in active travel to school, and greater perceptions of safety.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact your facilitator.



He tīwhiri | Quick sustainability tips

Winter warmers

Tip #1 — Layer up with wool — natural fibres don't create waste at the end of their life cycle.

Tip #2 — Let your house or classroom have some fresh air — ventilation is important, even if it is cold outside, it uses less energy to heat cold dry air than warm damp air. It takes around 15-30 minutes to replace moisture laden air.

Tip #3 — Have fun mending! Winter is a great time to fix holes in socks and clothes and add a bit of creativity as well as more life to what we wear. This is a simple and colourful way to darn a sock, and once you get going with a piece of wool and a needle, you and your students will learn new skills for life to make your clothing fun and more sustainable. [Simple and colorful way to darn a sock.](#)

Homemade kitchen spray

½ bottle water

½ vinegar

20 drops of tea tree oil

Combine ingredients in a glass reusable bottle.

Works a treat, saves money and buying plastic throwaway bottles.

Ngā hua | Our stories



Woodstock worm farm revival

Woodstock School in Hamilton have had a worm farm for a number of years, but it wasn't being used successfully and all the worms had died. Lead Teacher Jo Brooks contacted their facilitator, Anna, about sourcing some worms to revive their worm farm.

Anna collected some worms and took them to Woodstock School. Caretaker Jim Fenner had emptied out the worm farm and given it a good scrub. A few members of the Envirogroup, who were to be in charge of looking after the worm farm, joined in to restart the worm farm.

The Envirogroup layered up shredded paper and soil and dampened it with a hose. Students had collected the food waste bins after break. Anna explained that worms liked to eat apple cores, banana skins and greens, and didn't like to eat citrus, onions, garlic, spicy things or too much bread. A discussion was also had on fruit stickers and how they don't break down in compost, so the team would have to be careful to watch out for those.

The students looked at the worms and they found some worm eggs too! The group talked about what conditions worms need in order to survive, and once everyone had had a look at the worms, they were added to the damp paper, along with the food that had been collected for them, some greens from the garden, and some soil/compost from the old worm farm. The worms were tucked in using a coffee sack that had been donated by Indi's cafe in Raglan.

The students were fascinated by the worms. Some were scared at first, but came closer the longer we talked about them. The worm farm team will be responsible for feeding the worm farm regularly and making sure the worms are happy. It will take a while for the worm population to get large enough to chew through all of the school's suitable food waste, but Woodstock are on the right track. The team are now exploring making signs or posters to educate other students and teachers about what the worms like to eat (and don't like to eat).

Students empowered to lead at Te Kauwhata School



Te Kauwhata School runs regular whanau enviro days with the whole school. In Term 2, it was decided that, rather than teachers leading the activities, the student enviro leaders could take charge. In preparation for this, Waikato Enviroschools facilitators Alex Daniel and Jo Buchan met with students to model three different activities so they could be confident leading them themselves. Teachers supporting the day had asked that the activities link in to Matariki. One of the activities made connections with Tāwhirimātea, making manu tukutuku and wind chimes. This gives reference to the meaning of the name Matariki, coming from the phrase 'Ngā mata o te ariki Tāwhirimātea', or 'the eyes of the god Tāwhirimātea'. The whanau enviro day has given students additional confidence and the aim is for more student leadership opportunities to stem from this.



Foraging with Te Pahu School

On 12 May, Te Pahu students taking part in the Māra Kai challenge went on a fieldtrip with their facilitator Cami to Taitua Arboretum to learn about foraging and harvest some kai for their meals.

The day began with a karakia to acknowledge and respect the whenua that was (hopefully) going to provide the group with some nourishing food on the trip. Following an extensive health and safety briefing, including the number one rule of foraging on this trip — if you aren't 100 per cent sure what it is, don't eat it — co-facilitator Adrienne shared a brief reflection on the history of foraging, pointing out that, for almost the entire history of humankind, we have been foragers. It's a skill largely lost only in the last 50 years, but something we can re-learn.

Te Pahu school discussed foraging etiquette, including the Rule of Thirds:

- take a third
- leave a third for someone else
- leave a third to regenerate.

The students found Taitua Arboretum to be abundant in forageable food, even in winter. They gathered fruits, vegetables, nuts and herbs to incorporate into their meals for the Māra Kai Challenge.

Students, whanau helpers and facilitators learnt together, with different people sharing different knowledge. Several people had a small amount of foraging experience, but between the group it meant a lot of knowledge existed.



Morrinsville College NCEA Geography investigation — waterway health and human impacts

Morrinsville College contacted Waikato Regional Council to access the stream monitoring kit for their Level 1 and 2 geography field trip. Students undertook stream health assessments at two sites along the Waihou River to measure change due to human impacts. They began near the pristine Blue Springs in Putāruru and measured water quality — clarity, temperature, pH and nitrates — and assessed stream habitat, flow and macroinvertebrate communities to get a good picture of the state of the awa. This was repeated at the river in Te Aroha some 60 kilometres downstream, which was in a less pristine condition. This field trip is a great example of exploring our natural environment for engaged learning. It was so valuable for the students to be able to actually see and measure change in a real world context, and they were amazed at the difference in clarity — well over 5 metres at the Blue spring and less than 50 centimetres at the Te Aroha site.

Students will now use their data to complete NCEA assessments and Morrinsville College is now keen to join the Enviroschools kaupapa!



Plastic free July



At Otua School, Plastic Free July prompted the bee group to get enthusiastic about bees wax wraps. They will make these and put one into each new entrant pack along with a welcome note and an explanation of their Para Kore (zero-waste education programme) goal.



At Vardon School, they had a big talk about Plastic Free July. A slideshow was shared with the school, with videos, and each class showed a video at their morning meetings in class. The school's enviro artists made some posters that they shared with classes on how to live plastic free. These will be displayed as a group in front of the school.



He rauemi | Resource spotlight

Wool in Schools

The Wool in Schools initiative aims to help primary school children understand wool's place in our lives, and why it should be part of our future.

They have created lots of fun resources to support the New Zealand curriculum. These resources can be tailored to different primary aged groups and have a range of applications across primary and intermediate classes, including science, technology, mathematics, economics, history, English and art.

Their secondary school programme is currently under development. Stay tuned for the release of the secondary programme in 2024.

Find out more [here](#).

Farmer Time

Farmer Time New Zealand is a free educational programme that connects farmers virtually with New Zealand primary and intermediate school students. It aims to inspire, engage and educate young people about the journey of food from farm to fork in the ever-changing, diverse agricultural industry.

Students taking part in the programme regularly chat live to their matched farmer from their classrooms. In these sessions they discuss ideas, ask questions, share knowledge and gain a 'real-time' understanding of farming across the seasons.

Find out more [here](#).

Ngā ringa hāpai | Enviroschools Waikato schools facilitation team

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Find out more

enviroschools.org.nz

Check out the great selection of national news, resources, and ideas in the team area. To register, head to 'team area login' and click 'register'.

Please note that you will need your school/centre's MoE number to complete the registration process. You can find this here educationcounts.govt.nz.

Waikato Enviroschools Facebook

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Join our friendly and supportive closed forum to share inspiration, thoughts, learnings and more.



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