

# Waikato ENVIROSCHOOLS

## He mihi

Welcome to the Waikato Enviroschools newsletter.

We hope your year has gotten off to a great start. This pānui is packed with events for teachers and students alike, and it gives us the opportunity to share inspiring stories from across our network.

Congratulations to Miller Avenue School on your Bronze reflection, and welcome to Orini Combined School, Mercury Bay Area School, Ngāhinapouri School and Te Akau School!

It's been wonderful to see so many new faces at the Enviroschools 101 professional development sessions online. Recordings will be available on the [Enviroschools Waikato website](#) if you would like to share any of the learnings with colleagues or catch up on demand.

In term 4, we celebrated Outdoor Classroom Day. Thank you Natalie from Forest Lake School in Hamilton for sharing your reflections in this [article](#). And, why not check out this [video](#) on what Marian Catholic Primary School, Mātangi School, Rototuna Primary School and Forest Lake School got up to for their Ecological Building Challenge? Forest Lake will be sharing their experience as a guest presenter in our upcoming Enviroschools 101 sessions and has also captured reflections on their whole-school approach in this [article](#).

We look forward to receiving applications for the [Enviroschools fund](#) which opens again on 6 March and closes on 17 April. These projects can often kickstart deeper enquiries, as was the case for Centennial Park School in Te Kūiti. Read more about their impressive journey reusing, repurposing and rethinking resource use [here](#).

We're pleased to welcome Sara Taylor to our facilitation team. Sara is now supporting schools in Waipā, Matamata-Piako, Waitomo and South Waikato. We wish Cami Carty-Melis all the best. Cami is relocating with family but will still be continuing to support the kaupapa online.

We hope this newsletter offers an engaging read. Please feel free to forward it on to any interested colleagues.

Ngā mihi,  
The Enviroschools team

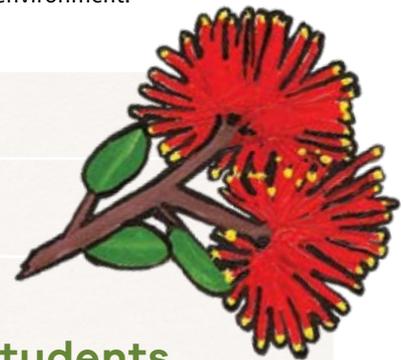


## Tā mātou mahi | What we do

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

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

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.



**14 regional partners**

**210 Enviroschools**

**50 ECE centres**

**160 schools**

**49,600 tamariki and students**

**14% of early childhood  
57% of primary and intermediate**

**43% of secondary  
67% 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

## For students

### Kauri protection experience!

Experience the Wētā Workshop kauri model and virtual reality experience [Kauri Pou Kaitiaki](#) as part of Waikato Regional Council's [kauri protection education programme](#). Contact your facilitator to book your experience.



### Seaweek

**2-10 March**

Seaweek – kaupapa moana – is New Zealand's annual national week celebrating the sea.

Check out the awesome events, community action projects and resources on the [Seaweek page](#). Or find inspiration on the [NZAEE website](#).

Teachers might also be interested in our upcoming [Marine biosecurity webinar](#).

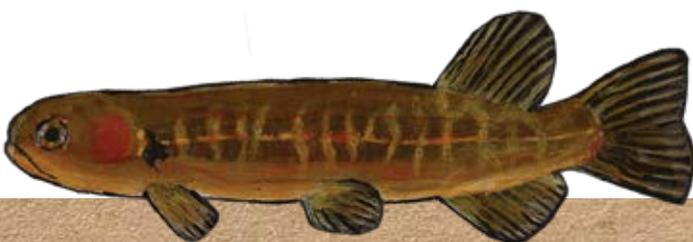


### World Water Day

**22 March**

This year's World Water Day theme is around valuing water – te mana o te wai. Visit the [Watercare website](#) to learn more and find out how you can do your bit to protect this vital resource.

We're looking forward to the Water of Life Encounters event at the National Trout Centre, Tūrangi, on 21 and 22 March, where we'll be focusing on the value of wai in the Waikato. Contact your facilitator if you'd like to explore ideas on how to celebrate World Water Day.



### Junior Landcare

The Bupa Foundation and NZ Landcare Trust are forming a new partnership to champion nature regeneration and address eco-anxiety with New Zealand's youth.

They'll be providing opportunities for young people to actively contribute to solutions through a series of regeneration projects, including planting native trees, ecological monitoring, wetland restoration and pest control. Ten projects are planned to be delivered with the support of schools and communities. Find out more [here](#).



### Māra Kai Challenge – Terms 1 and 2

**27 May, Wintec Hamilton, interschool challenge**

The challenge is for students to use at least five ingredients from their school garden to create a healthy, tasty lunch! Student teams will grow, prepare and present a cooked dish, a salad and a dessert or drink, which will then be judged. If you'd like to get your school involved in 2024, contact your facilitator and start planning your gardens and dishes ahead of the cook-offs in term 2.

Check out the previous event [here](#). And register your interest for the interschool challenge, or an in-school event, [here](#).

### Enviroleaders Climate Summit – Term 2

**6-8 May, Aratiatia/Fairfield College Community Marae**

Following on from the successful [2022](#) and [2023](#) Climate Camps and our [Enviroleaders Skills Day](#), we're combining these kaupapa and hosting an Enviroleaders Climate Summit for secondary school students.

Student enviroleaders will have the opportunity to connect to the Waikato awa on a waka tētē (traditional canoe) with Te Toki Voyaging Trust. There will also be the chance to connect with nature at the Fairfield Project and stay at Aratiatia Community Marae while building leadership skills and developing a deeper understanding of climate change.

Places are limited. Find out more [here](#) and register your interest [here](#) by 28 March.



## For teachers

### Enviroschools fund open

6 March - 17 April

Waikato Regional Council's Enviroschools Fund assists Enviroschools with environmental projects, providing one-off grants to initiatives that directly enhance and/or benefit the environment or provide environmental education.

Applications can be for up to \$5000 for the general grant or up to \$4000 for tree planting projects. Contact your facilitator for advice on the application process or [apply here](#).

### After school online café

14 March 3.30-4.30pm

Topic-themed meetups will be held after school in 2024. Bring a cuppa and connect with other schools for inspiration and problem solving! The first themed meetup cluster will focus on sustainable kai gardens to support the term 2 Māra Kai Challenge. Register [here](#).



### Marine biosecurity webinar

7 March 3.30-5.00pm

Imagine if we could go back in time and stop animal pests like rats and stoats or weeds like gorse from ever coming into New Zealand. When it comes to our coastlines, we still have a chance to do that!

During Seaweek, on 7 March, Waikato Regional Council will be hosting a webinar for teachers to unpack some awesome *Clean Below? Good to Go* resources and provide an opportunity for discussion. Register your interest [here](#).

*Clean Below? Good to Go* is an education campaign designed to help raise awareness of the role biofouling plays in the spread of marine pests. Their website includes [handy resources](#) that make it easy to implement engaging activities in the classroom.

### Waikato Enviroschools Re-energise

13 March, Te Miro Primary School, 9am-3pm

Explore and deepen your connection with nature and improve your ability to support all learners with this informative day of professional development.

Teacher release funding is available. Find out more [here](#) and register [here](#).

### From NZAEE

Para Kore: Te Kauwhata  
Community Compost Hub

21 March, 3.30-4.30pm

NZAEE will host a webinar with Paul Murray from Para Kore, along with kaiako (teachers) and ākonga (students) from Te Kauwhata Primary School, giving a tour of their new community compost hub. Register [here](#).



## He tīwhiri | Quick sustainability tips

### Rhubarb leaf spray for aphids and mildew

Ingredients

- 1.5kg rhubarb
- 5 litres water
- 15g soap flakes

Method

1. Boil chopped rhubarb leaves for 30 minutes in 3.5 litres of the water, then strain.
2. Dissolve the soap flakes in the remaining 1.5 litres.
3. When the rhubarb mixture is cold, combine the two mixtures. Spray as needed.

### Mint idea!

Mint grown in pots and placed among cabbages will repel white butterflies.

### Recycling resources

Check out this handy kerbside [recycling info](#) from the Ministry for the Environment to help students navigate the dos and don'ts.



## Ngā hua | Our stories

### Community kai-way

A green space originally designated as a roadway has been turned into a space for community to grow and harvest kai.

The school-led project at Gudex Court in St Andrews was driven by a collaboration between Hamilton City Council, Te Au o Tamatea St Andrews Middle School and Enviroschools.

The Hamilton City Council-owned reserve is bordered by Kāinga Ora-owned homes and the vision was to turn an under-utilised space into a bright, friendly, welcoming oasis of fresh fruit and vegetables, grown by the community, for the community.



Fruit trees were planted at an opening ceremony in October, with local residents, school students, kaumātua, Hamilton City Council and by Kāinga Ora staff all pitching in.

Since then, Enviroschools facilitator Alex Daniel and teacher Keri Sinclair have been working hard to prepare garden beds, plant seedlings, water, weed and mulch the gardens.

The first vegetables are now being harvested and shared to help fuel the local community.



### Action stations at Vardon



It was all systems go at Vardon Primary's Enviroaction Day as year 3 and 4 students potted over 520 native seedlings! Enviroaction days are fun opportunities to mobilise the whole school around important projects or themes.

The students' efforts made a significant contribution to the Trees for Survival programme, extending the surrounding native area by planting more native trees and mulching them before the long, hot summer set in.

The action day included an art action station that enabled the kids to get creative, painting flowers, insects and other creative cut-outs for a crazy-colourful mural on one of the school fences.

Ākongā (students) also really enjoyed learning how to make putiputi (flowers) from harakeke (flax) with kaiako (teacher) Whaea Celeste.

### When life gives you lemons...

Enviroleaders are creative, innovative, and they do love their interesting sustainability facts. Like, did you know that tiger slugs are good for the garden because they eat the other slugs that feast on veges?

When Enviroleaders at Tirau Primary started preparing for their move up to secondary school during term 4, they knew they needed to make sure the next intake of enviroleaders had relevant interests, skills and fun facts, too.

Evelyn and Isy planned an Enviroleadership Taster Day that covered some of the cool past projects they'd been working on. And it wasn't long before the new recruits were out in the school garden, weeding, planting, harvesting and feeding the chickens.

Most of the harvested produce, including cabbages and mandarins, was taken to the local church sharing shed.

Meanwhile, 60 kilograms of harvested lemons were turned into delicious lemonade and sold at a community working-bee the following week, raising over \$600 for future projects!

Ka pai, Isy and Evelyn, and kia ora to the future enviroleaders at Tirau Primary.



## Waste reduction wonders

Ever wonder how much waste is created at your school in a given day, or week, or what's in it? Waste audits are a wonderful way to rummage, rustle and crunch your way through the numbers – and rangatahi across our rohe have been rolling up their sleeves to get stuck in.

### Kio Kio

Kio Kio School's enviroteam audited a day's worth of school waste. They found there was often no clear separation between landfill and recycling and committed to raising awareness about what should and shouldn't go in the bins. The idea was to make it easy for people to make the right choices, and they planned to put that into practice by labelling the bins, making posters and talking about the audit in assembly.



### Miller Avenue

Miller Avenue School students, meanwhile, discovered that there was a lot of paper getting contaminated by lunch waste that could otherwise have been recycled. They agreed clearer signage for separating rubbish, as well as reminders during assembly and talks in class, were key.



### Reporoa

Reporoa School found some unexpected contamination in the week's-worth-of-waste they reviewed after their centennial celebrations. Although there were processes in place for the collection of containers and guidance to take food wrappers home, the evidence suggested this wasn't being followed. Students and teachers, they decided, could do with a reminder. They also found a lot of paper and cardboard was being recycled, and determined that everyone should follow the lead of the more forward-thinking classrooms by reusing discarded printouts for scrap paper first. Food was seen as the main waste stream that could be improved, with the rangatahi eyeing up composting and a worm farm as workable solutions.



### Te Kauwhata

Te Kauwhata Primary School is further along with their waste reduction journey, having been committed to the kaupapa for several years. They were looking to further reduce waste from paper towels and excess food, so reached out to community experts for inspiration. Their line of enquiry culminated in Pare Kore, CarbonCycle Company, Waikato District Council, the TK Community Garden and Lunch in Schools (Ministry of Education) coming together to support a trial hot compost system that could be used by the whole community. The new system was installed and is now in use. It accommodates food waste, lawn clippings, soft paper, wood ash and plant clippings, producing nutrient-rich compost for the school garden. Find out more about their project at their upcoming [event](#).



## He rauemi | Resource spotlight

### Me and My Environment

Many schools start the year with a 'Ko Au' enquiry. To support this type of enquiry, we encourage you to connect in with the concepts and resources in [Me and My Environment](#). It's a great place to re-engage with the Enviroschools kaupapa after the school break.

The [ecological building theme area](#), for example, could be an interesting one to unpack. [Building expresses people's culture and relationship with nature](#) and this resource contains some great ideas around reconnecting with atua in your built environment (page 34) and visualising your place (pages 36 and 37).

# Ngā ringa hāpai | Enviroschools Waikato schools facilitation team



Back row, left to right, Anna, Michelle, Sara and Adrienne; Front row, left to right, Alex, Jenni and Jo.

**Anna Cunningham**  
Facilitator, Ōtorohanga,  
Waikato and Hamilton  
[anna.cunningham@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:anna.cunningham@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Michelle Daly**  
Waikato regional coordinator  
[michelle.daly@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:michelle.daly@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Sara Taylor**  
Facilitator, South Waikato,  
Waipā,  
Waitomo and Matamata Piako  
[sara.taylor@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:sara.taylor@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Adrienne Grant**  
Lead Facilitator, Waikato,  
Matamata Piako and Hamilton  
[adrienne.grant@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:adrienne.grant@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Alex Daniel**  
Facilitator, Waikato, Waipā,  
Hamilton and Matamata Piako  
[alex.daniel@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:alex.daniel@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Jennifer Scothern-King**  
Facilitator, Taupō, South  
Waikato  
and Rotorua  
[jennifer.scothern-king@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:jennifer.scothern-king@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

**Jo Buchan**  
Facilitator, Hauraki  
and Thames Coromandel  
[jo.buchan@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:jo.buchan@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

## Find out more

[enviroschools.org.nz](https://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 at [educationcounts.govt.nz](https://educationcounts.govt.nz).

### Waikato Enviroschools Facebook

[Waikato Enviroschools | Facebook](#)

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



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

