

Waikato

ENVIROSCHOOLS



Habitat Observation

Animals have homes, just as people have homes. For Maori, the plants, animals and insects which share our environment are the living descendents of the tamariki and mokopuna of Rangi and Papa. Each tree species has its own whakapapa, its own connection through Tāne to Rangi and Papa. Papatūānuku is clothed by the children of Tāne - the forest trees, and she shelters the children of Haumietiketike - the wild fern root. Take a walk to meet the children of Tāne in your backyard or neighbourhood and see if you can see any of his children - the trees and birds or other animals living there. How many native animals and insects can you recognise? Detailed observations of animals (i.e. mini - beasts and birds) in their habitat are used to write a report about how they live and adapt to their environment.

Method:

1. Use a copy of **Habitat Observation Sheet (see over)** to record what each animal eats and how it might be connected to other animals, to trees and, to humans.
2. Once started these journal observations can continue to be used to track gradual changes from one season to another, monitor the progress of a garden, and describe weather events.
3. **When writing your report try imagining** you are this animal. Describe a day in your life as this animal. Include information about what you eat, where you sleep, what your home is like and how you stay safe from predators.

Reflections:

Which members of the whānau of Rangi and Papa could you observe?

<https://teara.govt.nz/en/whakapapa/11430/papatuanukus-children>

Which ones are missing?

How might it feel for creatures that want to live in your backyard or neighbourhood?

How could you help to invite them in?

Resource from **Enviroschools Healthy Homes trial.**

adapted from <https://www.plt.org/educator-tips/ecosystem-activities-elementary-students>



Habitat Observation Sheet

Today's date:

Location:

Describe the weather:

Describe what you see around you:

What do you hear?

What do you smell?

What else do you notice?

Choose an animal that you can see to study. It might be a mini-beast (an insect, worm, spider), bird or something else. Describe it in as much detail as possible and sketch it.

