

newsletter



Autumn 2013

Time of Bunuru and Djeran in the Noongar calendar

This Newsletter is best viewed online so you can make the most of the links to more information!

Stepping up the Networking



Photos taken at the *Little Green Steps- Training for Sustainable Early Childhood Practices* workshop in Perth, 2010

Little Green Steps is about big people too!

Little Green Steps assists early childhood settings to participate in and achieve outcomes for sustainability. Children are encouraged to learn about and interact with the natural world, grow plants, conserve water and resources, appreciate diversity, assist with recycling and understand other elements of sustainability.

To achieve this, we recognise the need to provide support and build capacity in the early childhood settings. The Little Green Steps Project Manager maintains relevant networks, offers advice and assistance, creates opportunities to share stories, engages consultants and providers, and develops resources that help to implement and engage children and adults in sustainability activities.

Little Green Steps values the connections to the wider community, and encourages parents and families to be involved in environmental activities with their children, both in the early years setting and in their home lives. We also connect with councils and environmental agencies, and promote sustainability events, initiatives and family activities available in the local community through the Little Green Steps program.

★ ★ See 'Networks & Events' on page 2 for details of a **FREE Little Green Steps workshop** in Perth! ★ ★

Where we've come from & where we're going!

January marked the half way point of the 12 month, Lotterywest funded pilot of Little Green Steps in Western Australia.

It has been a time to reflect on what's been achieved so far: the networks formed, ideas dreamed and plans made, actions and projects undertaken, and resources sourced and created. Through working with three not-for-profit childcare centres in the Perth area we have learnt a lot about the dynamics of these settings, and the busy roles of their staff and directors. This has helped us plan the best ways to provide support for sustainability initiatives in this setting. We congratulate the centres on their achievements to date, both the tiny steps and the giant leaps!

It has also been a time to look forward and picture the Little Green Steps program that we would like to see in Western Australia, following the pilot. We hope to secure funding and develop the capacity to support many more early learning settings, in alignment with our recently written Strategic Plan. You can help us by promoting Little Green Steps in WA, telling us how you use our current resources, and what your interest is in the future of Little Green Steps.

Recycled Craft

Riverdale Childcare Centre's out of school care group took an excursion to [REmida](#) Creative Reuse Centre in the January school holidays.

The group of 6-12 year olds loved making puppets out of salvaged items, and they are keen to visit again!



Sustainability in Autumn



Indigenous Stories

Look for these Dreamtime and contemporary children's story books by Indigenous authors and artists at your local library or bookshop:

- *My Country*, E. Kwaymullina & S. Morgan (2011)
- *Caterpillar and Butterfly*, A. Kwaymullina (2011)
- *Big Rain Coming*, K. Germein & B. Bancroft (2002)
- *Possum & Wattle: My Big Book of Australian Words*, B. Bancroft (2008)
- *How the Birds Got Their Colours*, Albert & Lofts (2004)



Eat in Season

Summer weather conditions encourage the growth and maturation of a wide range of fruit and vegetables that are ready to enjoy as Autumn takes hold.

What's in season in Autumn?

Fruit: apples, figs, grapes, lemons, limes, kiwi fruit, mangoes, nashi fruits, paw paw, pears, rockmelon, watermelon.

Vegetables: beans, beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, capsicum, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chillies, cucumber, Chinese vegetables, eggplants, garlic, lettuce, leeks, mushrooms, peas, potatoes, pumpkins, rhubarb, parsnips, spring onions, squash, silverbeet, spinach, sweetcorn, tomatoes, zucchinis.



What to Grow in Autumn

In Perth's Mediterranean climate, it's time to plant artichoke, broad beans, climbing beans, beetroot, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, leek, lettuce, parsnip, peas, shallots, silverbeet, spinach, spring onions, garlic, zucchini (early Autumn) and potatoes (late Autumn).

Community Gardens

Community Gardens are 'places where people come together to grow fresh food, to learn, relax and make new friends'. Use the [Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network](#) to find your nearest Garden, then plan a visit to get some ideas for planting your own vegetable patch! Contact the Garden's coordinator first as some are only open to their members.

Likewise, [Perth City Farm](#) is an 'urban community garden (that) promotes environmental awareness and responsible practices by providing information, training and hosting community-based projects'.

You may be able to plan a time to take children to visit a garden when some locals are available to chat! Some Community Gardens (including Perth City Farm) also host public events like twilight markets, film screenings and workshops, so keep an eye out for interesting times to visit!

Networks & Events

Click on the bold text to find out more!



Little Green Steps Workshop

'Day-to-day Sustainability in Early Years Settings'

Limited spaces are available for early childhood educators to attend the workshop **free of charge** on their preferred day (funded through our Lotterywest grant).

Details: Thursday 14 March & Saturday 13 April, 9.30am-2pm at the Canning River Eco Education Centre, Wilson, WA. [Bookings essential](#)



Australian Association for Environmental Education
WA Chapter

Catchments, Corridors and Coasts Course

Among the many interesting presentations and activities in this three day course in January, **Millennium Kids Inc.** was a particularly inspiring example of children engaged in self-directed environmental and social learning.

Earth Day Expo: Friday 12 April

Join a range of interactive activities provided by organisations that are passionate about the future of our planet. The program is aimed at Years 1-7 students and costs \$4 per student/ child.

Details: 9.30am- 2pm, at the Canning River Eco Education Centre, Wilson, WA. Bookings essential.



Seaweed Educator's Expo

Friday 1 March

The Department of Fisheries WA will again host a variety of stalls and activities around this year's theme, '*Sustainable Seas*'.

Details: Naturaliste Marine Discovery Centre, Hillarys Boat Harbour, WA. Registrations essential.



An Evening with Tim Flannery & Great Gardens

Australian of the Year, Tim Flannery and the Great Gardens Celebrity Team will present an inspirational 'sight and sound' adventure exploring the joy of creating vibrant communities to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. Bookings essential.

Details: Thurs. 7 March, 5.30-8.30pm, Perth Zoo.



Early Years in Education Society Conference

Little Green Steps WA will be presenting a session discussing the outcomes of the 12 month pilot, and offering suggestions for incorporating sustainability actions and activities into early childhood settings.

Details: Friday 25- Saturday 26 May, Perth

OUR UNIQUE AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE

Western Australia is one of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. The state is home to 25 mammal species and 187 reptile species that are found nowhere else in the wild on this planet! (Department of Environment & Conservation, WA)

Click on the photos to find out more!



PHOTO: Perth Zoo



PHOTO: WA Museum



PHOTO: S.Sneddon



PHOTO: Australian Government

Involve children in learning about our native wildlife

- Stick up pictures of native animals (e.g. from calendars when you have finished using them). Look for wildlife unique to WA like the [chuditch](#), [dibbler](#), [dugite](#), [woylie](#), & [Carnaby's cockatoo](#)
- Set up a touch table for free play with books, toy animals and natural items
- When buying or replacing toys, look for Australian animals and toys made in Australia
- Use story books that feature Australian animals and landscapes to inspire discussion & craft
- Plan craft activities that focus on the unique features of our native animals
- Find out if a local animal carer or activity provider can bring some native animals to your site
- Look for wildlife in and around your early childhood setting. Involve children in creating a habitat garden to attract native birds, butterflies and other insects, frogs, lizards and small mammals to your yard or surrounds

Ways we can help protect Australia's unique wildlife

Know how to help injured wildlife

- Keep the [Glovebox Guide: Sick, injured or orphaned wildlife](#) (link to PDF) handy in your car so you are familiar with animal first aid and the 24 hour Wildcare Helpline- 9474 9055 (WA)
- Read the information available online from [Kanyana](#) and [Native Animal Rescue](#)
- See the list of [Partner Vets](#) that work with Native Animal Rescue in WA
- Do a Wildlife Carers Course with the Department for Environment & Conservation (WA)

Protect animals and their habitats through your purchasing habits

- Buy recycled toilet paper to help conserve habitat. See [Wipe for Wildlife](#) (Perth Zoo)
- Know the best options when purchasing fresh and tinned seafood. See [Greenpeace Canned Tuna Guide](#) and [Sustainable Seafood Guide](#) (link to PDF)

Help keep habitat clean

Pick up litter when you can. [Clean Up Australia Day](#), [2 Hands Project](#), [Tangaroa Blue](#), [Keep Australia Beautiful](#)

Look, listen and report

- Find out about indicator species, tune in to the environment and record your observations for [ClimateWatch](#)
- Keep your eyes peeled for the oblong turtle and contribute data to the [Turtle Watch Project](#) (WA)

In all environments, let wildlife feed itself

Despite our good intentions, feeding wildlife can result in animals becoming sick, aggressive or developing a reliance on human food sources. It can also contaminate water courses, invite pest species to an area and transfer disease between animals and humans.

Leave it up to the Easter Bilby to deliver your chocolate eggs!

Rabbits were introduced to Australia by European settlers, and they now cause a huge amount of damage to our landscapes, farms and native animal populations.



This Easter, enlist the native bilby to take over the bunny's job!

The [bilby](#) is an Australian marsupial that digs burrows for shelter, and emerges at night to feed on insects, seeds, fruit and fungi. Bilbies have soft fur coats, feathery tails and large ears that help dispel body heat. Once common in the wild, the Greater Bilby is now endangered and exists only in a few desert locations. The smaller, Lesser Bilby, is now thought to be extinct due to the pressures caused by habitat destruction, competition from rabbits, disease and predation by foxes. You can see Greater Bilbies at [Perth Zoo](#) and [Kanyana Wildlife](#).

2013 is the 20 year anniversary of [Haigh's Chocolates'](#) Easter Bilby (pictured). Haigh's have strong partnerships with Rabbit Free Australia & Adelaide Zoo. Cadburys, Darryl Lea and Pink Lady chocolatiers make bilbies too.

Some children's storybooks featuring the Easter Bilby:

- *The Smallest Bilby and the Easter Games* (2008), Nette Hilton & Bruce Whatley
- *Easter Bilby's Secret* (1999) and *Easter Bilby* (1994), Ali Garnett & Kaye Kessing

Also worth finding: *Baby Bilby Where Do You Sleep?* (2011), Narelle Oliver

PHOTO: Perth Zoo



Things to do in Autumn



Local events

Free or low cost children's/ family activities in the cities of Canning, Gosnells and Armadale.

Click on the bold black text for more information!

City of Canning

***Harmony Day**

21 March, Canning River Eco Education Centre, Wilson, 9.30-11.30am, free family event

***Act Belong Commit Friday Night Movies**

8 March (*Tangled*), Canning Vale Oval, 7.30pm

City of Armadale

***Minnawarra Festival**

19 May, Minnawarra Park and Armadale CBD, free family event

City of Gosnells

***Clean Up Australia Day event**

3 March, Homestead Park, Thornlie, 9-11am, free

***Little Scribblers**

16 March, Tom Bateman Reserve, Thornlie, 11am-3pm. Free dance, music & art workshops for children

***Algae Busters**

30 April, Kenwick Library, 10-11am, free activity

Also see event listings on the ***South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL)** website

→ **Look for Clean Up Australia Day, Earth Day, Harmony Day, Earth Hour, Heritage Week, Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week events near you!**

Not so local

***Sculpture by the Sea**

8-25 March, Cottesloe Beach

School Holiday Activities

Canning River Eco Education Centre

***Holiday Programs and Community Events**

Department of Environment & Conservation

***Nearer to Nature** activities at the Canning River Eco Education Centre (Kent St, Wilson) and Perth Hills Centre (Mundaring)

Note: These are paid activities.

Green dates

Click the bold text to find out how to get involved!

Clean Up Australia Days

1 March (schools), 3 March (community)
Organise or join an event near you!

Seaweeek 3-9 March

Click to find resources and ideas from the Marine Education Society of Australasia (MESA)

Harmony Day 21 March

National Close the Gap Day 21 March

World Water Day 22 March

Click to see Water Corporation's resources

Earth Hour 8.30pm, 23 March

Australian Heritage Week 13-21 April

Earth Day 22 April

World Migratory Bird Day 11-12 May

National Volunteer Week 13-19 May

National Families Week 15-21 May

International Biodiversity Day 22 May

Walk Safely to School Day 24 May

National Sorry Day 26 May

National Reconciliation Week 27 May- 3 June

*Find previous Newsletters on our website
Scan the QR code to go there now! →*



More about Little Green Steps WA

www.aaeewa.org.au/littlegreensteps.html

Project Manager
Sally Sneddon

P: 0418 602 281
E: s.sneddon@aaeewa.org.au



Australian Association for Environmental Education, WA Chapter

The WA Chapter is unique, involving a broad cross-section of environmental educators from diverse areas such as schools, government agencies, industry, universities, technical and further education centres, zoos, museums, parks and reserves, environmental education centres and community and conservation groups.