

Waterway and biodiversity education with school communities



These activities and resources are readily adapted to areas of interest for pre-school to tertiary students, their teachers and parents. Merri Creek Management Committee's educators can link several activities in a session to explore a range of concepts.

We can come to your school or explore the amazing outdoor classroom near our waterways with interactive sessions that stimulate the imagination, promote active learning and are fun.



Waterwatch (Pre-school to tertiary level)

Learn about and check the health of local waterways by:
Water bugging – Participants collect, group and identify pollution sensitive aquatic invertebrates (waterbugs).
Physical and/ Chemical Testing – Students use scientific equipment to investigate water quality - not all pollution can be seen.



Learning Grounds (Primary and secondary schools)

Shine a light on local biodiversity and establish school gardens using local native plants of the Merri Creek catchment. We involve students, consider master plans, garden concepts and grant applications. Looking for inspiration? Come with us to visit other school's indigenous gardens.



Fascinating Frogs (Prep to Year 8)

Frog activities include *creating lifecycles* and *talking frogs* (learn the calls of local frogs and play a game to try and remember them). Visit wetlands to see where real frogs hang out or we can bring live frogs to your school.



Five Senses in the Field (Prep to Grade 6)

Use the five senses to thoughtfully observe and explore habitat values in outdoor settings. See tiny animals magnified, regard the tree canopy from below using mirrors and consider the sound, smell and sensation of natural areas in a focussed way to stimulate appreciation and inquiry.



Crafty Creatures (Prep to Grade 6)

Students learn about creek life, consider the special adaptations of frogs and waterbugs and focus on features such as body shape. They use their observations to create similar creatures using a variety of natural and craft materials.



Habitat Surveys (Grade 3 to tertiary)

Students explore elements of a natural area and then score its health using a template to record observations about plants and animals, weeds, litter, soil and water. Students then discuss their views on habitat health and propose ways to improve it.



Plant Prints and Botanic Drawing (Pre-school to VCE)

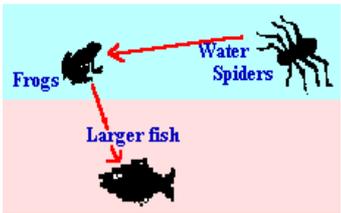
Examine live plants, discuss habitat values and observe distinguishing features such as shape, texture and colour of leaves before sketching them or making prints. Participants learn to identify local (indigenous) plants and consider the impact of introduced plants. A great activity to prepare for or follow up on excursions.





Volcanoes Rock (Prep to Year 8)

Explore the geology of the Merri Creek catchment. Look for evidence and travel back in time erupting model volcanoes to discover the volcanic past dating back 5 million years. See how earlier volcanic activity played a vital role in the development, formation and ecology of today's Merri Creek.



Food Webs (Prep to Year 8)

During this interactive game participants take on the role of a plant or animal in the food web. They discover what lives where and who eats what in the ecosystem. They find out what happens if something interrupts or is lost from the food web. A lesson about the impact of pollution and habitat relationships.



Indigenous cultural heritage (Prep to Year 10)

Indigenous people have long recognised many values in local plants for medicines and to make eel traps and baskets. In this activity participants handle local grasses and consider the traditions and heritage of the Wurundjeri-willam people.



Stormwater Story (Prep to Year 8)

Participants take the roles of characters that live along Merri Creek in various parts of the landscape such as grasslands, farmed land and urban areas. Each character adds a different type of pollution (from grass clippings to oil) into a bowl of water representing the creek to see how human activity impacts water quality.



Picture This (Prep to Year 8)

Students observe and sketch a feature such as a plant before photographing it with a digital camera. In a follow up activity the photos are framed by paper on which they draw an extension of the photograph by recalling their observations of the site.



Kingfishers on Kids (Prep to Grade 6)

Learn about the community's role to restore indigenous habitat through environmental restoration. Consider the impact on animals such as Sacred Kingfishers who visit Merri Creek in spring after a long journey from Indonesia. Create your own clip-on Kingfisher to take home.



Catchment map

In the field or in the classroom our huge map of the Merri Creek catchment brings home many messages about the nature of a catchment and provides an instructive tool for discussions with students about the environment.

For more information:

Please call 9380 8199 or email: jane@mcmc.org.au or angela@mcmc.org.au.

Most programs and activities are offered free of charge as they are funded through a variety of sources. (Sessions not covered by funding can be charged to the school by arrangement). We look forward to hearing from you!

