

PART FOUR – Post-trip Activities

To the teacher

For post-trip activities, focus on students participating and contributing, sharing their findings, discussing what actions to take and then taking action. Encourage your students to further develop their expertise in particular facets of the bush. Encourage the notion of the students as the 'go to' people for their chosen aspect of the bush. Bind the groups of experts and the topics together with a class-based presentation. Encourage students to describe the ways in which all things are connected – how each organism depends on its neighbour. Caption photos and display them. Continue to develop a mural on the classroom wall, capturing the ecology of the New Zealand bush. Offer the following ideas as starters for activities:

Descriptive writing

Write descriptively about the scene at Otari. You could include the vines, the Wilton story, the colours, the sound of the wind and the birds, the smells and the feelings of being there.

The possum-control debate

Check out YouTube for a story about the success of possum control. Regular possum control has been used once every four years to suppress possums in the Otira Forest in the South Island. Ecologist, Dr Gerry McSweeney, highlights the success of a programme started in the 1960s to protect New Zealand's forests. Discuss the pros and cons of using 1080 to kill possums.

(Teachers should handle this issue sensitively and realistically, based on their understanding of their own class)

Northern Rātā – a strangler or not?

The northern rātā has been described as a strangler. Research ideas on this topic. Present the case for and against the rātā being regarded as a strangler. What can be done nowadays to protect the rimu and the rātā?

The importance of biodiversity

Explore the importance of biodiversity and the contribution that plants such as rimu and rātā make to it. Look at the importance of the shade they provide, the food for birds, the home for insects, how one couldn't grow without the other (hint: the rimu probably has to be 200 years old before the rātā seed will be captured in it.)

Report

Prepare to communicate with your audience. Write a report about your trip and the special topic you've chosen. Add in photos, images and text. Publish to share the information you've gathered.

Our nature trail

Make a nature trail in your school grounds. Read the school journal about the Enviro-school, Hukanui, to find out how they did it. Think about your trip to the Otari Nature Trail/Te Ara o te Ngahere and identify the key relevant points. What would you include in your school's nature trail?

Being the difference

We all have a role in bringing the bush back to life. All people do. Everything we do has a consequence. So what action will you take? Discuss what you've learnt. What has your experience motivated you to do? What difference can you make? Think about the links or the contacts you can make. What action are you going to take, as a class/ as an individual? Sometimes it can be as simple as letting nature take its course (ake ake tonu). Start thinking about how your class could apply ideas about conservation at school and at home.

Ask, 'What shall we do now?' and 'How can we make a difference in our area?' Put a plan in place to actually make the difference to the environment in your area.



Actions for students

Google for information	Look for more information about your local native plants. What grows in your area?
Tell the stories	Talk about plants and animals to your friends and family – make sure they know as much as you do about how important it is to have lots of plants and animals in our lives
Explore your environment	Be curious – take the time to stop and look at what is growing <u>on</u> plants, <u>how</u> they are growing and <u>what</u> is growing alongside. Which insects are nearby and what birds are around about? Ask questions and seek answers!
Ask an expert	To learn more, contact, e.g., people at Otari-Wilton's Bush, DoC, the zoo, the Regional Council or your library.
Support our birds	Plant native trees for fruit and nectar to support native birds, lizards and insects and encourage their travel around the city. Find out which plants are best for them.
Provide insects	Create micro environments for insects and lizards in the forgotten corners of your garden and school.
Save and spread seedlings	Save those seedlings that pop up in the wrong place – carefully lift them, pot and 'grow them on' – to be planted at your home or school, or by your local community restoration group.
Make compost	Don't throw that food or plant away – turn it into compost. It can be as easy or complicated as you like. It's all good for improving the health of soil communities.
Spread seeds	Got some native plant seeds? When they are either ripe or dry, gather them up, put them in a bag and label them, saying where they have come from. Give them to your school or a community restoration group. Remember to leave enough on or around the tree for your own seedlings to grow. Remember to leave them alone in native reserves as they are needed there and it is illegal to take them!
Join an environmental organisation	Join an organisation such as the Junior Forest and Bird – the Kiwi Conservation Club (www.forestandbird.org.nz). Your family could look into joining the NZ Plant Conservation Network (www.NZPCN.org.nz), Greenpeace or WWF.
Enjoy your environment and appreciate your efforts	Sit outside and look at the trees, listen to the birds and the cicadas, look out for the lizards and insects. Think how lucky you are and appreciate all the things that you and others have done to make this a better world by protecting the environment.

Resources

Books

John Dawson & Rob Lucas, *Nature Guide to the New Zealand Forest*. A Godwit book, published by Random House, Auckland, 2000.

Janet Hunt & Rob Lucas, *From Weta to Kauri - A Guide to the New Zealand Forest*, Random House, Auckland, 2004.

Ministry of Education, *Plant Life Histories*, Building science concepts series, Book 26, Learning Media, Wellington, 2001.

Ministry of Education, *Making better sense of the living world, levels 1-4*, 2001.

(Information on Darwinian Evolution, p.20; The Modern Theory of Evolution, p.21; Biodiversity, p.21; Parts of a flower and pollination, p.82.)

National Library

You can order books for your classroom from the National Library. There is an online request form. They offer a very good selection on native trees, conservation and ecology.

www.schools.natlib.govt.nz

www.natlib.govt.nz/students

School journals

McGuinness, Jan, *Eating pikopiko*, Article, reading age 9-10 years, Part 02, No. 2, 1990.

Buchler, Marie, *Grow your own ferns*, Article, Part CN, No. 3, 2002.

Alchin, Rupert, *The world of ferns*. Article, Part CN, No. 3, 2002.

Robinson, Melodie, *Black fern*, Article, Reading age 11-13 years, Part 04, No. 1, 2003.

Anderson, K.E., *Seeds*, Connected 1, 1999.

Find journals at Learning Media's catalogue of the school journals:

www.journalsurf.learningmedia.co.nz

Websites

For a historical outline of Otari in the *Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan: 2.2.1* see: www.wellington.govt.nz/plans/policies/otari

www.kennett.co.nz/otariwiltonsbush

www.bushmansfriend.co.nz

www.hikingnewzealand.com/new-zealand-natural-history

www.wellington.govt.nz/services/heritage/trails

www.teara.govt.nz/TheBush/UsesOfTheBush

www.tiritirimatangi.org.nz

www.landcareresearch.co.nz

www.doc.govt.nz

www.forest-bird.org.nz

www.nzpcn.org.nz

Student activities resource

Ministry of Education, *Making better sense of the living world, levels 1-4*, Learning Media, Wellington, 2001.

1. What are plants? (p.30)
2. What makes a tree a tree? (p.31)
3. Wanted poster (p.31)
4. Sorting leaves (p.33)
5. Changing trees (p.33)
6. Imitating winter (p.34)
7. All kinds of birds (p.47)
8. All about beaks (p.48)
9. Home sweet home (birds) (p.52)
10. Observing plants (p.54)
11. Colourful flowers (p.55)
12. Wandering water (p.56)
13. Meandering plants (p.57)
14. Roving roots (p.57)
15. Designer label (p.58)
16. Water supporter (p.63)
17. Sprouting vegetables (p.83)
18. More of the same (p.84)
19. A contract with a plant (p.119)
20. Focus on flowers (p.85)
21. All about pollination (p.86)
22. Seed search (p.87)
23. Plant survival game (p.89)
24. Mosses and ferns (p.106)
25. Where do mosses and ferns grow? (p.108)
26. Growing ferns (p.109)