

La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary Education Experiences

Hands on Habitats

Can you imagine finding 100 animals in a tussock of native grass? How about in a small wetland or an artificial hollow (Nesting box)? The Hands on Habitats program exhibits the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary as the perfect authentic learning environment for your students. In this program your students will investigate three habitats in an Australian River Red Gum Woodland – The Terrestrial (Ground), The Arboreal (Tree tops and hollows) and The Wetland (Aquatic habitats). You and your students will also gain insight into how these environments function and what is required to create your own habitats – at home or back at school!



Your students will feel as if they are deep in the Australian bush at the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary. They will explore our extensive network of wetlands, investigate our lizard lounges and native grasslands, as well as have a 'bird's-eye' view of possums, bats and other animals that live in hollows.

Thick stands of wetland plants protect quiet pools of water teeming with tiny wildlife. Students will be excited to see new and curious creatures that have bizarre shapes and fascinating ways of moving around.

A short walk from our wetlands you will find our native grasslands where large tussocks of grass provide habitat for hundreds of tiny creatures. Students will embark on a search for an ideal lizard home.

Taking a stroll through our sanctuary is the best way to appreciate the diverse nature of Australian habitats. Imagine standing at the base of a 400 year old River Red Gum that is home to over 20 different animals. We will investigate some of these homes and discover the ways we can encourage some of our birds and mammals back into the suburbs of Melbourne. We will look at some of the artificial hollows that have video cameras and can be viewed from the internet (www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife).

Our expert presenters will take full advantage of anything your class might bump into. This could include a mob of kangaroos, an orb weaver spinning an intricate web, a swamp hen with gangly feet, or a flock of ducks landing on the water.

Your educational experience at the Sanctuary is designed to stimulate the imagination and curiosity of your students and provide them with ways to safely explore, learn about, and look after their environment.

Your school ground

The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary is able to assist your school with school ground projects. We have an excellent native plant nursery that can provide plants and tips for developing Australian habitat gardens. For further assistance regarding the development of habitat patches in your school contact the Indigenous Plant Nursery on (03) 9479 2871.

Nesting Boxes, Wetlands, Lizard Lounges, Habitat Gardens and Indigenous plantings...

The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary also provides kits to assist your students in planning their own kid friendly habitat patches. As part of your "hands on habitat" experience, why not engage our expert education staff for a specific habitat construction project at your school or take advantage of our **Sustainable Leaders Experience** – Call Now for details.

La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary

Education Experiences

An Engaging Experience

The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary offers a range of engaging activities to fulfil our Hands on Habitats experience. The two hour program will consist of the following activities:

1. Introduction to the Sanctuary's Habitats
 - Students learn about different wetland species and create a food chain that links wetland animals to animals of other habitats.
 - Leaping lizards are brought to life through an engaging and informative slideshow.
 - An intimate look into the lives of some of Australia's native animals through the Sanctuary's live nest box web feeds.
 - Using microscopes students examine some of our Minibeasts up close
2. Arboreal Habitats
 - Using teamwork students take on the challenge of assembling nest boxes.
 - Students experience what it's like to build a home as a Sugar Glider.
3. Woodland Habitats
 - Students explore both arboreal and terrestrial habitats found in woodlands
 - On a walk through the Sanctuary, students investigate which animals call tree hollows their home.
 - Students identify the habitat needs of lizards and embark on a search for their perfect home.
4. Wetland Walk
 - Students explore the different habitats found in wetlands
 - Students get to act like "sexy" frogs and learn at least 3 frog calls.
 - Understanding the importance of clean & clear wetlands.
 - Investigation into the effects of litter in our waterways.



Multiple Classes

The Hands on Habitat Program can:

- give a general overview of the three main habitats (the standard program – activities listed above)
- focus on a single habitat (if your school focus is on a particular habitat)
- focus on a different type of habitat for each class –
 - Six types to choose from - Wetlands, Grasslands, Lizard Lounges, Parrot Habitats, Possum & Bat Habitats, as well as Habitat Gardens.

Extending your Program

To get the full value of our unique facility why not extend your experience to include extra activities. You could come for the day and include a morning and afternoon component, and create your own mix of activities. You could also inquire about our range of other experiences. Contact our bookings office for details regarding extending or tailoring programs. Some of the activities that could be used to extend your experience are:

1. Whose Habitat Is That?
 - In groups, students use our library resources to create an informative poster on a particular animal and prepare and present a short presentation.
2. Close Encounters I
 - Using a video camera or one of our high quality microscopes, students get 'up-close and personal' with minibeasts.
3. Bee / Ant Game
 - A fun, team-building activity that focuses on the habitats of ants or bees.
4. Habitat 'Slide Show'
 - A show that examines a variety of habitats and the types of animals that live there.

Visit www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife for links to curriculum resources and Victorian Essential Learning Standards.