

La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary

Education Experiences

Minibeasts Wonderland



Your students will explore the amazing world of minibeasts in their natural environment at the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary. The Sanctuary offers a safe environment for your young learners.

On your visit students will be enthralled by the network of wetlands that teem with plant and animal life. Using small nets and buckets students will investigate this weird and wonderful world.

The forests and grasslands ooze with tiny creatures hiding under fallen logs and dangling from leaves and branches. The area is abuzz with flying creatures and things that crawl on and under the soil. They will explore the amazing diversity of life within and around a log or native grass. There are thousands of intriguing tiny animals to satisfy the curiosity of your students.

Our classrooms have video equipment to examine these minibeasts in close-up detail. They will find out how the features on these minibeasts help them to survive in the Australian environment.

Our expert presenters will take full advantage of anything your class might bump into. There might be a mob of kangaroos hopping past, an orb weaver spinning an intricate web or a flock of noisy parrots feeding in the tree above. Along the way students will see how our environment is damaged and they will learn how we can all help to protect our environment.

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 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 - including wetlands. Some of our other experiences can show you how easy it can be to create Australian wildlife habitat in school grounds.

An Engaging Experience

The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary offers a range of engaging activities to fulfill the two hours. A standard Ponding & Minibeasts experience will consist of four 20-25 minute activities.

1. Dip Netting
 - Using dip nets to locate small moving animals.
 - Name and describe some of the animal features.
2. Close Encounters I (Video, Food Webs, Wetland Structure)
 - We use our video microscope to have a really close look at some of the "usual mini-beast suspects".
 - The class is encouraged to construct their own food web and theoretical wetland.
3. Rock 'n' Roll (All Levels)
 - Students roll over logs and rock in the bush and catch the bugs that live underneath

Or Pull-apart-a-Poa, Potting-up-a-Poa

 - An investigation into the hundreds of animals that can be found in a native grass tussock
 - Students use 'bug catchers' to collect a range of tiny creatures
4. Woodlands Walk
 - A walk through the sanctuary to bring together all the above activities.

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Additional Activities

The number of activities is dependant on the number of class groups that attend a single two hour session. For five or more class groups we will run extra activities and shorten the length of time for each activity.

Additional activities that can be included in a Ponding experience are:

5. Close Encounters II (Levels 4+)
 - Using our quality microscopes to allow individual investigation of wetland Minibeasts.
6. Constructing a Frog Bog (Levels 2+)
 - A demonstration of how to construct your own small 'frog bog' or wetland at home or at school.
7. Potting up a Poa (Levels 2+)
 - Students create their own piece of habitat to take back to school / home
8. Lizard Lounging (Levels 2+)
 - A demonstration of how to construct habitat for small land creatures including lizards
9. Ant / Bee Game (All Levels)
 - An engaging game that uses team-work to discover how a bee or ant behaves
10. Who's Habitat (Levels 3+)
 - Group activity to investigate particular wetland animals and prepare a small presentation
 - Students use our library to prepare a short report on a wetland animal.

Program Extension

Engage your students further by extending the education experience to include one or more 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 and give your students the benefit of both our wetland and woodland environments. Contact our bookings office for details regarding extending or tailoring programs.

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

Resources

La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary – www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife

Gould League Victoria – www.gould.edu.au