

La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary Education Experiences

Plants Alive!

In a tussock of native grass lives a hundred or more tiny creatures. In a 400 year old River Red Gum Tree you can find homes for more than 30 animals. Grasslands, Woodlands and Wetlands provide homes for thousands of animals all supported by the wonderful world of plants. Plants Alive! Offers your students a real hands on approach to understanding the exciting and bizarre plant kingdom.

Our unique environment boasts 70 acres of re-created bushland habitat with a network of wetlands flowing through it. This provides you and your students the perfect environment to re-enforce, or introduce, the concepts of plants and their parts.



The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary was once a large farm paddock and through 30 years of re-vegetation we have created the perfect environment for indigenous animals. Students will get an appreciation of this change while gaining an insight into the life cycle of many of our flowering plants. Starting as tiny seeds, no larger than a pin head we will follow the path of our most famous Australian Eucalypt – the River Red Gum.

Students will love 'getting their hands dirty' while potting up their very own micro-habitat. Grasses, like most plants, have classic features that attract certain types of animals and your students will explore a common Australian grass species (*Poa* sp.) and learn the 3 step process in Potting-Up-A-Poa.

In Our Learning Centre you can investigate many of the exciting variations of plant parts including seeds, roots, stems, leaves, flowers, buds and fruit using a video microscope. Older students (Levels 4+) can explore these parts in detail using a range of professional microscopes.

Our expert presenters will take full advantage of anything your class might bump into. There may 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. We might look at some of the artificial hollows (Nesting Boxes) that have video cameras and can be viewed from the internet (www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife – Webcam).

An Engaging Experience

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. The La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary offers a range of engaging activities to fulfil the two hours. A standard Plants Alive! experience will consist of four 20-25 minute activities.

1. The River Red Gum Walk
 - A walk through the sanctuary, with a focus on the life cycle of the River Red Gum.
2. Potting Up A Poa
 - Students get to create their own micro habitat.
3. Propagation of Indigenous Plants
 - An insight into our Native Plant Nursery. Students learn how we propagate some of our indigenous plants
4. Plants Up Close
 - A close up look at a variety of plant parts

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Education Experiences

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 Plants Alive! experience are:

1. Whose Habitat (Levels 3+)
 - Group activity to investigate particular animals and prepare a small presentation
 - Students use our library to prepare a short report on a wetland animal.
2. Close Encounters II (Levels 4+)
 - Using our quality microscopes to allow individual investigation of wetland Minibeasts.
3. Constructing a Frog Bog (Levels 2+)
 - A demonstration of how to construct your own small 'frog bog' or wetland at home or at school.
4. Plant Identification (Level 5+)
 - Students can learn the techniques we use to identify native plants in the sanctuary.
6. Plant Propagation II (Level 4+) – Extension only (1.5 – 2 hours)
 - An extension of the Propagation of Indigenous Plants where students take some mature plants and create their own habitat area in the sanctuary.

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.

Learning Outcomes

The Hands on Habitats experience will help you address many Learning Outcomes from CSF II. These include:

Science Level 1 and 2 Biological Science 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2

SOSE 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3; 3.3 Geography 4.3

Technology: Materials and Movement 1.1, 1.2; 2.1, 2.2

Health and Physical Education: 1.1, 1.2; 2.1, 2.2; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1, 4.2

English: Speaking and Listening 1.1, 1.2; 2.1, 2.2; 3.2; 4.1, 4.2