

Hundreds of animals live inside native grass tussocks. This hands-on activity enables students to investigate the micro-habitat of a poa plant (native tussock), amongst the leaves and roots we'll find a diversity of invertebrates.

Learning Intention	Success Criteria
Students will be able to understand the importance of plants as habitat for 'minibeasts' and investigate what 'minibeasts' live within the poa plant. Students learn that we use counting as a way of estimating the health of an ecosystem.	Students successfully potted up a native grass tussock (Poa). Students can estimate the number of animals they collected (as a class).

Student Activity

Your students will investigate the animals that live within the native grass tussock known as a 'Poa'. As each poa is propagated from pulling it apart from the tussock, we observe the animals that live within the poa as they emerge. Students are provided with the opportunity to pot their own poa plant to take home. Within this investigation we will explore 'minibeasts' that live above ground and the 'minibeasts' that live underground amongst the vital root system that is needed for the poa plant to survive.

Learning Outcomes

Cognitive	Students will understand what a micro-habitat is (i.e. the poa plant). They will inquire about why insects live on the poa plant and how the poa provides suitable habitat. Students will analyse the poa plant for insects.
Affective	Students will start to develop respect towards the plants and animals in the natural environment. Students will enjoy exploring the micro-habitat and begin to understand why plants are important in making up habitat for animals.
Observational Skills	Students will be able to describe features of the poa plant and how that is suitable habitat for invertebrates. Students will be skilled in propagating and potting their own poa plant.



La Trobe University's Outdoor Laboratory

Critical Thinking



Communication



Collaboration



Creativity



Character



Citizenship



Curriculum Links

Year F – 2:

People use science in their daily lives ([VCSSU041](#))

Living things have a variety of external features and live in different places where their basic needs, including food, water and shelter, are met ([VCSSU042](#))

Living things grow, change and have offspring similar to themselves ([VCSSU043](#))

Participate in guided investigations, including making observations using the senses, to explore and answer questions ([VCSIS051](#))

Use informal measurements in the collection and recording of observations ([VCSIS052](#))

Compare observations and predictions with those of others ([VCSIS054](#))

Summary

Throughout this engaging activity, students will begin to understand how plants play an important role providing habitat for invertebrates. Your students will investigate the diversity of invertebrates that live within the poa, above ground and also underground. Through pulling apart and potting the poa plant themselves, students are observing the insects amongst the poa and understanding the critical root system the plant needs to survive.



A New Pedagogy Deep Learning (NPDL)

The LTWS incorporates the work of Michael Fullan and Maria Langworthy into their activities and support resources.

Instructional Model and incorporate a range of activities designed to develop 21st Century Learning Skills.

The Pull-Apart-A-Poa activity provides an authentic link to a pedagogy for Meaning-Oriented (Deep) learning. The ticks below provide an indication of the skills this activity is designed to develop.

Support Materials

The LTWS have (and are) developing a range of support materials that provide additional resources for teachers to explore this NPDL framework.

Visit our Webpage – www.latrobe.edu.au/wildlife

Keep in touch via the sanctuaries Blog, Facebook and Youtube pages to discover more about the sanctuary and the opportunities your students can explore.

<http://bit.ly/1TdbMnN>
<http://on.fb.me/1WeQwfD>
<http://bit.ly/1V4yMTL>



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