

Rumbalara

Environmental Education Centre

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Environmental Education News for Central Coast Teachers

Term 1 Week 4 2013

For distribution by the Environmental Education Contact

*Our email newsletters support environmental education in Central Coast schools by providing succinct information about environmental happenings, resources, events, grants etc. Your contributions are welcome. If you are receiving this newsletter as a paper copy **please consider providing us with your email so that we can send it directly (usually 2 per term).***

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Sustainability Leaders Forum, 8th March at Rumbalara EEC.

This annual meeting of school environmental education coordinators provides the latest information on local initiatives, resources and support so that you can more effectively implement Environmental Education at your school. Share achievements, network with likeminded people, meet Agency and Community EE providers and get practical ideas on teaching outside the classroom. The course is **free** and lunch will be provided. Register on MyPL@DEC **151HCR002** before 5th March.

EVENTS and ACTIONS

Bookings for Rumbalara EEC services are filling fast. Information about our programs and the excursion booking form can be found at <http://www.rumbalara-e.schools.nsw.edu.au/programs> Schools that have booked excursions will soon be receiving confirmations of the booked dates. We welcome your suggestions for adapting or developing new programs to suit your needs.

Have a good YELL! We invite your School Environment Group to meet us for lunch to discuss your interests and projects and meet like-minded students from other schools. YELL stands for Young Environmental Leaders Lunch and this term we'll be YELLing by Video Conference on Fridays 15th March and 5th April. As this is the lead up to Earth hour we'll be putting Energy on the Menu for the first YELL and then we'll have a YELL about Wild Animals in April. Phone Rumbalara on 43247200 to secure your place so that we can accommodate as many schools as possible. The aim is to facilitate discussion between students and to encourage their environmental citizenship.

Clean up Australia Day -1st March Schools Clean Up Day. Last year over 2,600 schools cleaned up the streets, school grounds, parks and waterways. Register at www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/about/about-the-event/clean-up-for-schools and receive your School's Clean up kit containing information and ideas on how to prepare and promote your event.

March 3 – 9 Seaweeek. The theme for 2013 is 'Sustainable Seas'. For information and teaching activities go to; www.mesa.edu.au Other useful resources are available at www.oceanwatch.org.au/kids-stuff/

Schools Earth Day Friday March 22 & Earth Hour Saturday March 23

Host Earth Hour events www.earthhour.org/page/get-involved/join-community

Celebrate with some energy investigations and audits, Switch off behaviour change activities and awareness raising about Global warming. Look for Energy audit resources on the Rumbalara EEC website under both 'Green Schools' and 'Resources' sections.

GRANTS

Schools are invited to apply for up to \$1500 sponsorship from the Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority for educational projects, events or activities that have a focus on improving catchment health eg local biodiversity, reducing litter or improving water quality. If you have a proposal you'd like to discuss contact Liane Corocher on 02 4938 4932 or liane.corocher@cma.nsw.gov.au or go to Hunter-Central Rivers CMA website

Coles Junior Landcare School Garden Grants of up to \$1,000 up to \$1,000 to schools and youth groups to help create gardens in their grounds or community, such as bush tucker gardens, water wise gardens or veggie gardens. These programs encourage students to learn about the environment through "outdoor learning" and interaction in developing their own school gardens.

Round 2 closes: Friday 10th May, Round 3 closes: Friday 2nd August, 5 pm. More information at <http://www.juniorlandcare.com.au/grants-2/coles-grant>

Be prepared for the **Eco-Schools grants** (up to \$2500/school) and the **Food Gardens in Schools** (up to \$3500/school) provided by the NSW Dept. of Environment and Heritage www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/schools.htm that will open on 16 March and close on 17 May.

NRMA Environment Grants are for projects that raise awareness and/or promote actions to combat climate change through activities that directly engage and educate the community about environmental sustainability. More info at <http://www.nrma.com.au/about-us/community-grants/environment>

RESOURCES

The Australian Greenhouse Calculator calculates greenhouse gas emissions based on your own data. Teacher ideas and student activities are provided to develop a deeper understanding of climate change and the impacts that are a result of lifestyle choices. Also some slick animations. <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/AGC/home.html>

The NSW State of Environment Report 2012 A comprehensive review of the state and trends of the NSW environment. It shows that the overall diversity and richness of native species in NSW remain under threat with another 35 species listed as threatened under NSW legislation since 2009. If you want detailed facts about our consumption of water and energy or our waste and pollution this is a good place to start. Go to <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2012/index.htm>

Sustainable Schools NSW is a repository of great information for making your school sustainable. Note that they have a new website www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainableschools

EcoNews <http://econews.com.au> and **EcoTV** provide daily online reports on environmental sustainability topics. Subscribe for free to your email or get the free app. The EcoTV reporters are young and vibrant with a focus on topics that interest the young eg today's report is on sustainability fashion. Go to the 'all videos' section of the site to find a broad range of student friendly topics such as a school recycling soft plastics, kitchen gardens, natural baby care .. any of which could be the catalyst for a rich classroom discussion. <http://ecotv.com.au>

NATUREWATCH

At this time of the year on the Central Coast:

- Little Penguins will be coming ashore to moult on Lion Island. They won't be able to swim for a couple of weeks and have built up a good fat supply in preparation.
- Noisy Channel Billed Cuckoos, Koels and Dollarbirds depart for North Australia and New Guinea.
- Large schools of mature (over 2 years) Sea Mullet starting to leave the estuaries and run the gauntlet of commercial beach haul netting as they 'run up the coast spawning at sea.
- The Red Bloodwoods (*Corymbia gummifera*) are flowering and attracting noisy rainbow lorikeets by day and grey headed flycatchers by night.
- Asparagus Fern is fruiting so now is a good time to dig out the crowns and bag these noxious weeds before the birds spread the seeds far and wide.

Naturewatch Apps. Thanks to smartphone technology it is now possible to carry a field guide with you at all times --- and record your observations directly to an Australian data base.

- The Museum of Victoria **Free Field Guide** app has interesting information on more than 700 animals at the swipe of your finger including: identification, biology, distribution, diet, habitat, scientific classification and endangered status.
- The **ClimateWatch** App targets those species that could be influenced by global warming eg Channel-billed Cuckoos may arrive earlier and Flannel flowers may start to flower earlier in the season. It enables sight recordings back to a data base that can then be analysed by scientists interested in monitoring such change. You can also participate online at www.climatewatch.org.au/ *This is an easy and engaging citizen science project for your students. Make it a class competition to see the first flowering or arrival of a particular species from the list.*
- The **OzAtlas** App can provide lists of species that have been recorded within a radius of your location, photos and information about each species and enables you to record sightings and upload your photos to the data base. This links to the Atlas of Living Australia www.ala.org.au which is a powerful database maintained by the CSIRO and many of the state museums and herbariums.

www.birdsinbackyards.net/ has some good online surveys eg Indian mynah and a schoolyard site to record your observations.

COMPETITIONS

'Wise about Waste' is the theme of Gosford City Council's Primary Schools Program for 2013 Go to www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/environment for more information.

GREEN DATES

2013 Calendar of environment days to assist in your planning.
(more dates at www.environment.gov.au/about/media/events/index.html)

- **2013 International Year of Water Cooperatives**

March

- [Schools Clean Up Day](#) - 1st
- [Sea Week](#) - 3rd to 9th
- [Clean Up Australia Day](#) - 3rd
- [World Water Day](#) - 22nd
- [Ride2School Day](#) - 22nd
- [Earth Hour](#) - 23rd

April

- [International Mother Earth Day](#) - 22nd

May

- [World Migratory Bird Day](#) - 11th to 12th
- [Walk Safely to School Day](#) - 24th

June

- [World Environment Day](#) - 5th
- [World Oceans Day](#) - 8th

July

- [World Population Day](#) - 11th
- [Schools Tree Day](#) - 26th

August

- [International Youth Day](#) - 12th
- [Keep Australia Beautiful Week](#) - 19th to 25th

September

- [National Biodiversity Month](#) - all month
- [National Wattle Day](#) - 1st
- [Sustainable House Day](#) - 8th

October

- [World Habitat Day](#) - first Monday in October
- [National Water Week](#) - third week in October

November

- [National Recycling Week](#) - 11th to 17th
- [World Fisheries Day](#) - 21st