

# Little Green Steps

## Western Australia

### Winter 2021 Newsletter



Kaya Bulup - Welcome to the [Noongar season](#) of Djilba, the season of the second rains bringing the flowering of many plant species. Did you know that the acacia (kujong), kangaroo paw (kukulbrang) and running postman (woollong) were important food & medicine sources to Noongar people in this season? For more traditional ecological knowledge, see [Perth NRM](#). One idea for your service is to plant edible gardens according to the Noongar Six Seasons - Visit [Cannington Community Garden](#) in person or online to see how this can be done.

### SEPTEMBER is National Biodiversity Month



Little Green Steps WA is planning two workshops for Early Years educators to help you engage children in the Biodiversity space so COME ALONG. Some tips to think about:

- Audit your outdoor space to get ideas using LGSWA's [Biodiversity audit sheet](#).
- Create mini habitats and habitat gardens for native bees; butterflies, frogs and other native animals.
- Create sensory native plant spaces.
- Make signage for the Six Seasons in your plant spaces.
- Become bush detectives using senses to see, listen and become aware of the diversity of nature.
- Take part in citizen science actions - see our highlight on these at the end of this newsletter.

*We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we work on. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contributions they make to the land and the life of Western Australia.*

### Reducing Waste in the Kimberley 2021

Through Waste Wise school's support, LGSWA visited early years services in Broome and Kununurra communities in June 2021, to help them refine their waste minimisation practices with educators and the children in their care. Indigo Montessori, Broome and One Tree in Kununurra were our wonderful host services. Educators who attended, discussed ways to link in with their community to reduce waste through [community garden initiatives](#) and tapping into creative re-use social enterprises such as [REVIVE](#), Kununurra. Everyone saw the need to create that closed loop of organic recycling and educators were inspired once more, to try open composting guided by the region's seasonal calendars - [Yawuru](#) country & [Mirriwoong](#) [Gajerong](#) country and initiatives in the region which include [black fly farming](#).



# LGSWA Case Study

## Early Years STEM Project at Coolbinia Primary

STEM projects are being implemented in all early years classes at Coolbinia Primary School, from weather and seasons in Pre Primary to Waste Warriors in Year 2.

In Pre Primary, for example, the children learnt all about weather and the seasons in science. Then when they were planting in their gardens, they discussed how different plants grew in different seasons for optimal growth. They also investigated how families obtained food throughout the year and how farmers managed the growing environment to produce vegetables all year. One solution the children explored to deal with hot weather was to create a shade shelter to protect the plants from extreme sunshine.

The children used sticks, shade cloth/fabric, plasticine and pegs to make models of their shelter. The class then voted on the model they wanted to make for their garden and step-by-step instructions to construct this shelter were given by the students to the teacher, beginning the coding process. The children soon discovered they needed to modify the original design to make it work, replacing nails and cable ties instead of plasticine and pegs.

In the last week of the project the class decided they could roll up the shelter as the weather was no longer as hot and the plants needed more sunlight and water to grow. This STEM project was showcased in a sequence of photographed activities from planning, making and finally to reflection.

Sara Stewart and Elaine Lewis  
Coolbinia Primary School



## How Serene from Cockburn Family Day Care celebrated NAIDOC in 2021

During NAIDOC Week, our sensory/activity table was set up with some natural loose parts (painted gumnuts, colourful rocks/pebbles and eucalyptus leaves) for the children to play with. The set up included some empty egg cartons which had been painted with different colours for some colour sorting and matching, including some simple prompts to invite children to create (e.g. making some faces and following patterns).

We read some Aboriginal dreamtime stories, including 'Dunbi the Owl' and 'Scaly-Tailed Possum and Echidna'. We talked about the native Australian animals featured in those stories and did some art and craft activities based on these animals. We used recycled cardboard tubes to make the owls, and playdough with straws and craft toothpicks to make an echidna.

For open-ended/free play, we had little cork people decorated with coloured paper featuring aboriginal print and designs which the children enjoyed incorporating into their imaginary small world play.

Thanks for sharing Serene.



# LGSWA Case Study

## Mary's Mount in Kalamunda is Waste Sorted & the Early Years Lead the Way

Mary's Mount Primary School (MMPS) is a single stream Catholic Primary school leading the way in its sustainable practices from Kindy upwards and LGSWA took the opportunity to explore this space in May with passionate Sustainability Lead, Belinda Henderson and her Green Team.

It was hard to know where to begin as Mary's Mount is very active across the Sustainable School's Framework of Ecological Footprint and Social Handprint as evidenced through its community involvement everywhere!

A few observable actions included community participation in Harmony Week; conserving water both in play and collection processes; actively moving around the school and using renewable energies; exploring biodiversity in nature spaces and caring for country through the Noongar six seasons and learning to grow, harvest and recycle food waste.

To begin the reducing waste process, a waste audit is done at the end of each year by the Year 4 students, as both a measure for guiding the school's sustainable direction and a criterion for selecting future Green Team members, which in turn provides those selected with the agency and motivation to become active behaviour change makers.

Interestingly, Belinda reflects 'when we began the audits 5 years ago, we had 420 plastic packaging waste items in our bins destined for landfill but in the 2020 audit we had reduced this to just 20 items'. A good indicator they are on the right track.

There is a focus on whole school involvement in reducing waste practices in this community and the Kindy space demonstrates the high degree to which this is embedded.

The water tank off the Kindy roof sustains the sensory garden patches while the Kindy worm farm and compost bins are squarely located in the middle of the outdoor play area to encourage active engagement and immersion in the early year's curriculum. The children grow, harvest, use and sell their produce to the wider community on early years' market days and playtime actively incorporates looking at insects and bugs to make sure they are not eating the crops. A giant scarecrow, made from recycled items as a STEM project, overlooks the Kindy garden beds and the children happily collect worm wizz to feed their crops, ensuring this process is closing the loop on organic recycling.

The whole school system uses the [Waste sorted monster icons](#) to visually label their reducing waste actions and these are the perfect stimuli for kindy kids to begin the reducing waste journey.

Meanwhile inside the Kindy room, student-centred learning is taking place to explore how waste gets sorted at a Materials Recovery Facility. The focus is very much on diversion of waste from landfill and the fun involved through role play with trucks and bins (with correct colour coded lids) is far from contrived.

Each year group has a focus on collecting difficult waste and the Pre-Primary focus is to collect bread tags for wheelchairs as well as bottle lids for the after school Sustainable Kids Craft Club. Any extra lids get sent to 'CLAW Environmental' who then process them into plastic pellets, ready to be distributed to manufacturers to be made into recycled products.

Mary's Mount have even managed to close the loop on plastic bag recycling by not only distributing single use plastic packaging to [Redcycle](#) through Coles and Woolies, but also purchasing the end products ... a [Replas](#) outdoor plastic bench and garden bed in the early year's veggie patch.

Well done Mary's Mount crew! To share your sustainable news [contact Megan](#).



# LGSWA Case Study

## *Onwards and Upwards for Next Generation in Hammond Park*

After being inspired by LGSWA, Next Generation has recently appointed a dedicated Sustainability Officer, Belinda, with an extensive background in horticulture. Belinda comes with a huge enthusiasm for assisting the educators and service manager to move forward in their plans for sustainability. Belinda has transformed their garden beds and 'grow walls' with hands-on support from the children. Previously filled with overgrown succulents, many of the walls are now filled with edible plants, picked by the children and used by the kitchen. The children love picking fresh strawberries and watching the cucumbers grow. Belinda is also revamping the centre's bush tucker garden so the children can sample some fresh bush tucker. They have created a sensory garden for their nursery children with herbs such as rosemary, lavender and peppermint geraniums for children to smell, touch and learn about colours.

The centre has some very exciting composting plans which will be embedded into the children's daily routine such as reusing all of their food waste through worms, chickens and composting. They plan to create a community garden in the future that will also house their future chickens. This is all being made possible by the centre's commitment to dedicate a staff member solely to sustainability. This allows Belinda to plan sustainability into programs, to maintain embedded processes and care for these gardens even during the busiest of days when everyone's time is stretched. Most importantly, the children are super excited to help Belinda with every project she is doing and have been telling their parents all about their exciting adventures in the garden.



# Upcoming Workshops

## Upcoming LGSWA Webinars and Workshops 2021

LGSWA workshops will incur a nominal fee (\$5) for educators from services within our participating councils. Otherwise a standard fee of \$20 will apply for educators out of area.

**WATCH OUR WEBSITE & FB PAGE** for continuously updated future workshops.

### Canning & Cockburn Workshops:

Thurs September 23rd 2021 **'Biodiversity Awareness & Actions in Early years settings'** from 5.00-7.30pm at Canning River Eco Education Centre, Wilson. Book your place [here](#).

### WATCH THIS SPACE for our Cockburn workshops in 2021

Sat November 6th 2021 - **'Healthy Choices, Healthy Environments - sustainable actions in Energy, Air and Transport'** from 10am-12.30pm at Nido School Willetton. Book your place [here](#).

### Biodiversity engagement opportunities in Cockburn:

Sat Sept 4th & Thurs Sept 9th 2021 - **'Turtle Season Community Information Sessions'** - Find out where they live, why they are threatened and what the City is doing about this ... learn how you can get involved. Register online [here](#).

### LGSWA Reducing Waste Together Workshops

These workshops supported by the Waste Authority are FREE for early childhood professionals and are tailored to your local area. They are action-driven to help educators embed reducing waste strategies with children as well as supporting behaviour changes into the future.

## Reducing Waste Together Workshops (in all regions)

Sat 23rd Oct 2021 - **'Reducing Waste in Early Years Settings with Hilton Harvest'** from 10am-1pm at PCYC, Fremantle. Book your place [here](#).

Wed 10th Nov 2021 - **'Reducing Waste in Early Years Settings'** in the Kwinana region for Family Daycare Educators. [Email Megan](#) for more info on this one!

### WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE ...

WMRC, Serpentine-Jarrahdale and Kalgoorlie - we are coming your way - if your service is in these regions and you would like to host then get in touch via email ...

**Don't forget our 2020 UPDATED 'LGSWA Reducing Waste Together Kit' is available for SALE \$40 for non-members. [BUY IT HERE.](#)**



If your service has participated in a Little Green Steps WA workshop and you would value a visit or just a catch up chat to discuss more 'little green steps' you can take, contact us at [lgs@aaeewa.org.au](mailto:lgs@aaeewa.org.au)

# Upcoming Workshops

## Sustainable Education Networks

We encourage Educators in WA to continue to network and learn from each other and guest speakers via the Sustainable Schools WA Meetings.

These groups focus on reducing the Ecological Footprint (EF) and increasing the Social Handprint (SH) and this model provides a framework for educators to use in their planning to embed sustainable practices. Check the [Sustainable Schools WA website here](#) to find a meeting in your area.

Term 3 meeting for the South West regional network:

Tues 7th September 2021 from 3.45 pm – 5.30pm at [East Vic Park Primary School](#)

Learn about all the things they are doing in the sustainability space, including the school’s philosophy and timeline, how sustainability is integrated across all year levels, sustainable picture books and a tour.

RSVP to Joselyn Juraszek to attend via [email](#).

**Passionate Environmental Educators: Don’t forget the AAEE Biennial Conference is hosted in WA this year – 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September.**

The theme is Manjoorgadap: Changing tides with the Conference’s aim to showcase innovative, practical and effective tools to help us “change the tides” of environmental and sustainability education. Stay tuned for registration details [here](#).

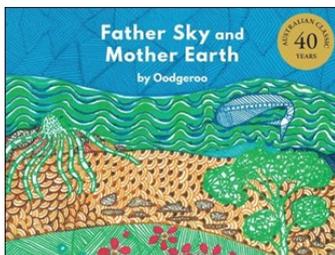


# Book Reviews



## Book Reviews with Biodiversity Themes from the City of Canning

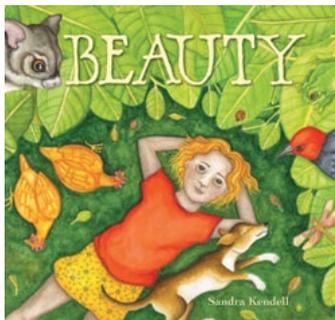
BIG thank you to Felicity Groves from the City of Canning Libraries for her review of these three marvelous books. Canning Libraries offer many programmes for the community to encourage a love of literacy. You can find out more at [www.canning.wa.gov.au/libraries](http://www.canning.wa.gov.au/libraries), or visit us to explore and experience our collection and programmes in person.



### 'Father Sky and Mother Earth'

By Oodgeroo  
ISBN 9780730391135

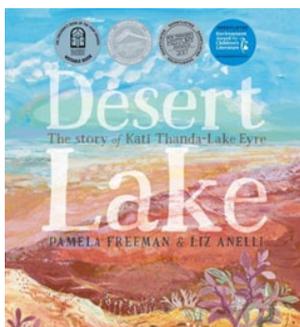
The author of this book, Auntie Oodgeroo Noonuccal, was born on Minjerribah Island in Queensland. The book tells the creation story of her people, explaining how Father Sky and Mother Earth created all things in nature.



### 'Beauty'

By Sandra Kendell  
ISBN 9781922081810

Beauty is the name of the big leafy tree that grows in a young girl's Queensland garden. This book reminds us that all things are connected; from the wildlife that lives in the trees, to the crawling insects and tiny microorganisms that make up a network – the tree's family.

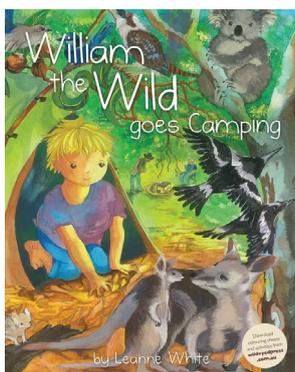


### 'Desert Lake: The Story of Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre'

By Pamela Freeman and Liz Anelli  
ISBN 9781921529436

In outback Australia, the coming of rain is such an important event due to the plant and animal life that relies on water to thrive. This book is full of fun facts suited to little ears designed to encourage curiosity about the unique ecosystems and biodiversity we can enjoy in Australia.

A pick from our LGSWA intern, Charlotte:



### 'William the Wild goes Camping'

By Leanne White

Go on an Australian bush adventure with William the Wild and help him discover all the beautiful wildlife from singing magpies to spiky echidnas!

# Cooking with Kids

## Pesto Fish Bites with Crispy Kale

Little Green Steps WA recently asked nutritionist Theresa Rayfield to tell us what's on the menu this season. Pesto fish bites and crispy kale, a great recipe to make with the kids.

Fish is an amazing source of low fat protein and when paired with kale, this meal proves to be a nutrition packed feast packed with vitamins A, B and K and topped with folate, calcium and iron.

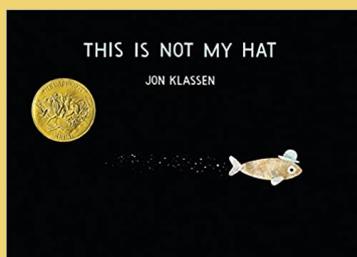
### Ingredients

- 40g breadcrumbs
- 25g grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 400g white fish
- 60g pesto - I used sundried tomato pesto
- 1-2 kale stalks
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp sweet paprika

### Method

1. Set the oven to 180°C.
2. Place the breadcrumbs, parmesan cheese and half a teaspoon of garlic powder in one bowl (this is a great step for the kids!).
3. Put the pesto into a separate bowl.
4. Cut the fish into 2cm cubes or 2cmx4cm rectangles.
5. Dip the fish in the pesto to cover using one hand and then the fish into the breadcrumbs with the other hand, cover thoroughly.

6. Alternatively, have the kids dip the fish into the pesto and pass to you to cover in breadcrumbs!
7. Place on a lined baking tray and set aside.
8. Get started with the crispy kale by ripping off the leaves and breaking into small pieces.
9. Place in a roasting tin, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with garlic, chilli, oregano and paprika (feel free to use less chilli powder if the little ones aren't keen on spice).
10. Place both the crumbed fish and dressed kale into the oven.
11. Bake the kale for 8-10 minutes, checking every 2 minutes and remove the fish after 15 minutes.



### Read a book before you cook 'This is NOT my Hat'

A suspenseful read ALOUD book that will have your children wanting to guess what happens at each page .... NOT to mention warning little fish.

Use this [seasonal food guide](#) to understand which fruit and veggies are in season now in South West WA

# What's On?

## Highlight on Resources

### Nature Passport

**Nature passports** Encourage and motivate children to have fun engaging with their environment wherever that may be. From backyards and city parks, to beaches and other wild places. With activities designed by experts in outdoor play and experiential education, the app is a robust tool for both families and classrooms.



**Buzz Ed Australia** - Through an interactive or online incursion, Luke De Laeter shares his journey and inspires others to be more aware of the importance of bees in our environment.



### NatureLink - Backyard Biodiversity Blitz



**Backyard Biodiversity Blitz** is supported by a team of nature-based experts and organisations collaborating to bring you quality online material while at home. So turn off the news, scroll down, immerse yourself in nature and have some 'me' time. What will you choose today?

## Events and Opportunities to Learn more:



### City of Cockburn Sustainable Events

Saturday 18th Sept 2.00-4.30pm **Nature Journaling Ramble** with Angela Rossen. Family friendly. Register [here](#).

Tuesday 21st Sept 6.00-8.00pm **Modern Cloth Nappy workshop** with Kam Andrews, 'The Nappy Guru'. Register [here](#).

Thursday 24th Sept 9:30-11:30am **Connecting Community with Kids - Kids Go Wild Program** looking for hidden treasures on Ngarkal Beach. BYO morning tea RSVP [here](#).

Mon and Tues 9:30-11:30am **Froggy's Fun on the Green** at [Manning Park](#). Free, family-friendly mobile outdoor play session for Cockburn families or carers of children - 0 to 5 years.



### City of Canning Sustainable Events

The **Connect in Canning** community portal aims to create community spirit through online activities including sustainability events.

**Story Threads: Connecting Cultures to Country** Sister Kate's offers creative workshops for educators on 20th Sept & 4th Oct 2021. Register [here](#).

**Canoeing on the Canning for Educators** on Friday 22nd October 8:00-4:00pm. Experience the Canning River and its biodiversity by canoe and learn key environmental issues that threaten them. Find out more [here](#).

Canning River Eco Education Centre is offering 20% discount on their early years school programs such as **Pobblebonk Swamp & Creepy Crawlies** - contact [CREEC](#) for details.

# What's On?

**The 17 Goals for Sustainable Development** were agreed upon by world leaders in 2015 to make this a better world for all by 2030. One way we can all contribute is by taking action and raising awareness on Sustainable dates.

## Sustainable Dates to Remember

### September – November 2021

#### September is National Biodiversity Month

- 7th Sept **National Threatened Species Day**
- 7th – 13th Sept **National Organic Week**
- 12th – 18th Sept **Sea Week**
- 21st Sept **International Day of Peace** – Theme is 'Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world'

#### October is Buy Nothing New Month

- 5th Oct **World Habitat Day** – Theme is 'Accelerating urban action for a carbon-free world' - so count birds and watch turtles with children.
- 10th – 17th Oct **Mental Health Week**
- 16th Oct **World Food Day – activities for kids**
- 19th – 27th Oct **Children's Week**
- 19th – 25th Oct **National Water Week**- Theme is 'Caring for Water and Country'

#### November is World Vegan Month

- 7th – 14th Nov **Pollinator Week**
- 8th – 14th Nov **National Recycling Week**
- 19th Nov **National Agriculture Day**
- 20th Nov **World Children's Day**
- 21st Nov **World Fisheries Day**
- 27th Nov **Buy Nothing Day**



### Highlight on Biodiversity resources and Citizen Science actions

**Explore** your local outdoor environment space and **identify** the **different plants** and **animals** near you. Take this one step further by learning the Aboriginal name for these plants or animals!

Early years centres near wetlands can play an important role in protecting the endangered snake-necked turtle during nesting season. **Record** turtle sightings using the **TurtleSAT app**. For more info attend a Turtle Information Night - [Register here](#).

**Learn** how to be a twitcher and monitor bird life using the **Birdlife WA data app on October 23rd** & **borrow** the Cockburn Bird Twitchers ID kit from the [Library](#).

Go on a Bushtucker & Seasons walk around Roe 8 Bushland **with Marissa Verma of Bindi Bindi Dreaming during Kambarang (Oct 30th)**.

**Engage** in a family bushcare morning with the Wildflower Society to study native flora and invasive weeds on **Oct 2nd**.

**Know** what to do if you find a baby bird - [WA wildlife guide](#).

**Build** animal habitats with [backyard buddies](#).

**Draw** native animal tracks in your sandpits, then identify real tracks in the environment!

Become an [LGSWA member](#) to download our Animal Tracks Identikit

**Make** [egg carton turtles](#) (replace the googly eyes with paper circles to stay plastic free!)

Use white playdough to create the turtle eggs and pretend to be a mother turtle burrowing in the sandpit. [Buy the LGSWA turtle kit](#) for more ideas

**Create** [snake masks](#) to dress up as a snake. Learn about snake behaviour, such as basking, hiding and hunting, through play. Use this opportunity to also teach [snake safety](#)

Have any questions, comments or requests for the next newsletter? Contact the Little Green Steps WA Program Manager: [lgs@aaeewa.org.au](mailto:lgs@aaeewa.org.au)



We're on Facebook... and we're sharing lots of great ideas, links and food for thought. Look for us [here](#). We'd love you to send us pictures of anything sustainable you're doing too.



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