

Little Green Steps

Western Australia

Spring/Summer Newsletter 2023



The colourful and shy Red-Capped Parrot

During the Kambarang (October – November) and Birak (December – January) seasons, we see an abundance of colours and flowers exploding all around us. The yellows of many of the Acacias continue to abound, along with some of the Banksias and many other smaller delicate flowering plants including the Kangaroo Paw, Eremophila and Orchids. One of the most striking displays of flowers to be seen during this season will be the 'Mooja', or Australian Christmas Tree (Nuytsia).

October is also the most likely time of the year to encounter a snake as the reptiles start to awaken from their hibernation. There are many fledglings venturing out of nests in Birak, though some are still staying close to their parents such as magpies and parrots. Reptiles will also be shedding their old skin for a new one. Koolbardies (Magpies) will be out protecting their nests and their babies (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

LGSWA NEWS

Farewell to Megan Mentz and welcome Niamh Williams to LGSWA

We say farewell to Megan Mentz who will take up the exciting challenge of taking WasteSorted Schools to rural and remote communities throughout WA. The committee wish her all the best and thank her for the eight years she committed to increasing the profile of LGSWA, development of workshops, trialing cloth nappies and building connections to so many of you. Megan has efficiently handed over the work of supporting the City of Cockburn early years educators to Niamh Williams. Niamh has a sound background in environmental and waste education from her work with WasteSorted Schools in the South Metro region. Niamh has also delivered activities to a range of children through her Eco Education work. Niamh is passionate about sustainability and we know you will find her enthusiastic support very helpful, so get in touch should you have any queries n.williams@aaeewa.org.au

The Program Manager is Dr Jennifer Pearson who has been a part of the Steering Committee responsible for the development and support of LGSWA for over 10 years. With 40 years of experience in education in WA, working across all sectors from early childhood to tertiary, she brings a breadth of experience. Jennifer has also been the Convenor of the AAEE WA Chapter for 20 years and is committed to sustainability education. Please email Jennifer on lgs@aaeewa.org.au if you have any queries.



Niamh Williams



Jennifer presenting Megan with the AAEE WA Chapter Environmental Educator of the Year in 2022

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.

LGSWA News

LGSWA meet Bluey and Bingo

At the Teddy Bears Picnic we got to hear Bluey and Bingo in concert but with over 6,000 people there it was hard to get close to the stage. On Wednesday 18 October at Manning Park in the City of Cockburn, we joined other community organisations to share hands on activities with the carers, parents and children. Many had come over the years and appreciated this event for young children.

Niamh set up six activities with a native bird theme, including the following:

- Range of nests from various small birds, including Willie Wagtail, Mudlark and New Holland Honeyeater for children to observe.
- A set of Aboriginal themed books to read, each with a bird theme.
- Trays with loose sand and tools to make tracks.
- Wire frame nest for children to weave in various material, straw, fabric, paper etc.
- Bird beak shapes for children to decorate and tie on with string.
- Cockatoo identification activity, which honey nut is nibbled by what bird



National Quality Standard Assessment

With the changes to the NQS coming into effect in July 2023 it is heartening to know that a WA centre has gained an 'Exceeding the National Quality Standards' rating. If your centre is working towards NQS then we can help you with practical planning.

Goodstart Early Learning Madora Bay

'We are so excited to announce that following our recent rating and assessment, we have been rated as Exceeding the National Quality Standard (NQS). This means the centre goes 'above and beyond' what is expected at the meeting NQS level.

We are extremely proud of our wonderful and passionate educators that do a beautiful job every day, being committed, dedicated, amazing, always giving their best and guided by our wonderful Centre Director Rachel Hooton.

We are extremely thankful and feel so very proud to have received the overall rating of EXCEEDING.'



Quality Area 1	Educational program and practice Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 3	Physical environment Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 5	Relationships with children Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 6	Collaborative partnerships Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 7	Governance and leadership Exceeding NQS

Overall



Upcoming Workshops

Upcoming LGSWA Webinars and Workshops 2023

LGSWA workshops 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 the area.

Watch our website and FB page for continuous updates on future workshops.



Cockburn Workshops:

Let's Get Gardening in the Early Years - using our organics to reduce waste



Wednesday 15 November 2023 4:30 PM - 7:00 PM
Location: Djinda Dreaming Childcare Centre,
5 Remington Court, South Lake WA 6164

Join Little Green Steps WA to learn how to close the loop on food waste by embedding earth-cycling practices including composting, worm farms and gardening. This workshop will provide you with practical skills, troubleshooting tips and hands-on engagement activities for embedding closed loop gardening into children's daily routines.

Register with this link

<https://www.trybooking.com/CLSVC>

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.

How to Support Cloth Nappies in Childcare Settings

Wednesday 8th November 2023
Port Early Learning Centre, 62 Wheeler Road,
Hamilton Hill.

Join Little Green Steps WA with the Nappy Guru to learn ways your Childcare setting can support cloth nappy use and create less nappy waste. Simple, supported systems will be explored as well as hands-on engagement with the easiest cloth types, ways to use & care for them. So come along and let's bust some of the myths about cloth nappies and hear how you can encourage your families and childcares to take part.

[Click here for more information](#) or register your place now with this [link](#).



Upcoming Workshops

Reducing Waste in EY Settings

Wednesday 6th December 2023 from 6.00pm - 8.30pm
Town of Victoria Park Function Centre at the Town of Victoria Park Administration Building, 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

Early Years Educators come join Little Green Steps WA to learn NEW strategies, activities and ideas through this fun, interactive workshop:

Meet the Victoria Park Waste Officer and learn what happens to waste and how they can support you to reduce it;

- Learn about the problems of waste with a focus on Early Years Settings;
- Explore links to the NEW Sustainability Priority of the EYLF, the NQS and WA Curriculum;
- Hear what others are doing to reduce waste in early childhood services in your region AND
- Take away new ideas and activities you can run with children to help them learn about waste and close the loop on organic waste.

Participants will also receive the updated Little Green Steps WA early childhood waste reduction kit.

[Book your place here](#)



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

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](#) to find a meeting in your area.

Term 4 meeting for the South-West regional network, at Beeliar Primary School on 31st October 2023. Send your registration notice to info@aaeewa.org.au



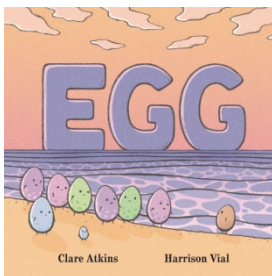
If your service has participated in a Little Green Steps WA workshop and you would value a visit or just a catch up chat to discuss more 'little green steps' you can take, contact us at lgs@aaeewa.org.au

Book Reviews



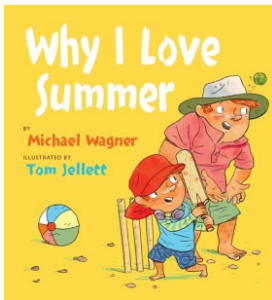
Book Reviews with Sustainable Themes from the City of Cockburn

Thanks Jessica Donaldson for your insight on this year's Children's Book Council of Australia's Notable Books of the Year. We celebrate summer and the new life for all creatures.



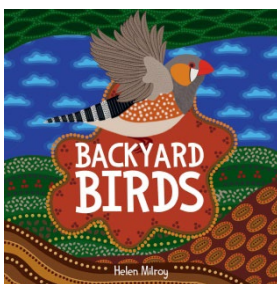
Egg by Clare Atkins and Harrison Vial (9780702265594)

When something strange washes up on the eggs' island, they are scared. It looks like them. But different. This book was Notable for Picture Book of the Year Children's Book Council Awards 2023, a tale of fearing the unknown and the way that kindness and friendship can make us bloom. This is a beautiful and timely story about the importance of the environment and connection.



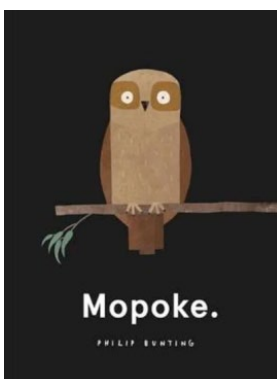
Why I Love Summer by Michael Wagner and illustrated by Tom Jellett (9780143783749)

What does summer mean to you? Ice cream and cricket in the backyard? BBQs and the freedom of no school with late nights and lazy days? Go along with one family as they celebrate all of the reasons they love summer.



Backyard Birds by Helen Milroy (9781925816563)

From local author and illustrator, Helen Milroy, this is a celebration of the birds that you may see in your backyard and local area. This is part of a series that looks at beasties and bugs as well.



Mopoke by Philip Bunting (9781742991658)

Celebrating the mopoke owl and the ways we can play with language and visual literacy this book is a sweet and funny one to share with the children in your life. Mopoke are night time creatures so you would be fortunate to see one but you might hear them.

Cooking with Kids

Mashed Potato Pancakes

Potato is a nutrient-dense food which means that for the amount of calories it contains, it provides a good nutritional return. According to [Potato Nutrition](#) potatoes have more fibre than five bananas, more potassium than a banana, twice the Vitamin C of blueberries, more Vitamin C than an orange.

Some call it Scottish potato scones (tattie scones), Boxty is a traditional Irish potato pancake and in Australia it is called Scalloped Potatoes. Each has different methods but they all use potatoes, here is a simple recipe, from Just a Taste.

Ingredients

- 3 cups chilled leftover mashed potatoes
- 2/3 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 tbsp chopped spring onions, green and white parts
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 3 tbsp plus 1/2 cup SR flour
- Vegetable oil, for pan-frying
- Sour cream, for serving



Photo Credits: Just a Taste

Method

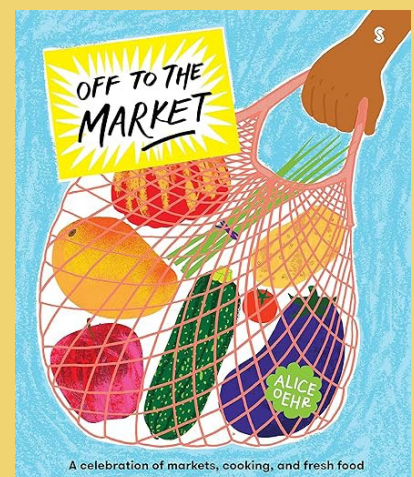
- In a large bowl, stir together the mashed potatoes, cheese, spring onions, egg and 3 tablespoons flour until combined. Using your hands, divide the mixture into 12 portions. Roll each portion into a compact ball then flatten it into a pancake about a 1/2-inch-thick.
- Place the remaining 1/2 cup of flour in a shallow dish and carefully dredge each pancake in the flour.
- Heat 3 to 4 tablespoons of vegetable oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. (Add enough oil to thoroughly coat the bottom of the pan)
- Fry the pancakes, in batches, until they're golden brown and crispy on both sides, 3 to 4 minutes. Add more oil to the pan as needed between batches.
- Transfer the pancakes to a paper towel-lined plate and immediately sprinkle them with salt.
- Serve the potato pancakes topped with sour cream and garnished with additional chopped spring onions.

Read a book while you cook

Off to the Market: A celebration of markets, cooking, and fresh food

Sunday is market day. We are looking for pumpkin, apples, eggs, and bread. What else will we find? Where did it come from? And what will we make with it? Learn all about produce in this delightful child's tour of a food market, full of fun facts, delicious new discoveries, and charming characters.

'Alice Oehr's beautifully illustrated picture book, *Off to the Market*, explores a trip to a food market, teaching children about the produce, what can be made with it, as well as the journey to our tables ... introduces fun facts and new discoveries.'



A celebration of markets, cooking, and fresh food

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

Highlight on Resources



One World Centre

The One World Centre is a non-government, not-for-profit organisation which provides transformative education, with the aim of encouraging and supporting an active and engaged citizenship, and a just and sustainable future for all.

This month we are showing some materials on Indigenous issues held at the One World Centre.

These Barwoo (meaning long time ago) stories are retellings of traditional stories of the Wongutha people of the eastern goldfields region of WA. They include 'Why The Emu Can't Fly', 'The Kangaroo Who Wanted To Be People', 'How Crows Became Black' and 'Barn-Barn Barlala, The Bush Trickster'. The four stories are accompanied by a teacher's ideas book to give lots of activities to do with the children. Written by May L O'Brein and illustrated by Angela Leaney.

The One World Centre also has this selection of colourful stories about friendship regardless of colour. If you wish to loan any of these resources then contact them at library@oneworldcentre.org.au



Christmas tree

- Decorate an [indoor plant](#)
- Create [your own tree](#) using things around the house
- Buy a real tree instead of a plastic tree
- Read more about our favourite [eco-friendly options here!](#)

Lights and decorations

- Design your own wreath using native greenery or edible herbs
- Buy ethical and fairtrade decorations from stores like [Uplift Fair Trade](#)
- Use [solar powered lights](#) or switch to LED lighting
- Light [soy candles](#) that have been produced locally
- Have a go at your own [DIY Christmas crafts](#)

WWF-Australia presents ideas for a Waste Free Christmas

Having an eco-friendly festive season doesn't mean you have to skip out on all the fun Christmas decorations! There are many ways you can dress up the Christmas tree and deck the halls sustainably, and still have beautiful lights and ornaments.

What's On?



City of Cockburn Sustainable Events

For Cockburn Sustainable events - scroll [here](#)

Froggy's Fun on the Green 9.30am - 11.30am - Mondays and Tuesdays. During term - Froggy's Fun on the Green is a free, family-friendly mobile outdoor play session for Cockburn families or carers with children aged 0 to 5 years.

Beeliar Hub Is a local meeting place for parents with young children. It is held on Wednesdays during school terms from 9.30am-11.30am at the Beeliar Community Centre.

Children's Clothes Swap Saturday, 25 November 10am - 11.30am. Join us at City's Administration Centre for our Kids' Clothes Swap. We will provide a brief presentation on how to reduce textile waste going to landfill, how to dress your kids more sustainably, and shop mindfully.

International Sustainable Updates - The Alliance

The annual European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) conference was held in Estoril, Portugal. The Sustainability SIG meeting held on the first day attracted 41 participants from across 12 countries. A meeting highlight was the launch of a SIG Sustainability position statement now ratified and well supported by the EECERA Board of Trustees. This statement offers a benchmark for other early childhood education associations/organisations seeking to promote sustainable futures for all. The SIG members also offered four symposia around ECEfS during the conference. For more information about the Sustainability SIG, see <https://www.eecera.org/sig/sustainability-in-early-childhood-education/>

The 2024 EECERA conference will be held in Brighton, England and offers an overarching sustainability focus, see <https://2024.eeceraconference.org/>

There are three recent international initiatives supporting our work in ECEfS:

- Sustainability from the Start is a series of eight free online modules for early childhood educators available in multiple languages on the ECE Academy App (AppStore/Google Play). The modules were developed in collaboration with Kristianstad University, OMEP Europe and edChild, launched in September 2023, <https://www.edchild.com/>
- The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has published the General comment No 26 (2023) on Children's Rights and the Environment with a specific focus on climate change. [General Comment No.26 | General Comment No. 26 on Children's Rights and the Environment \(childrightsenvironment.org\)](https://www.unhcr.org/refugees/General-Comment-No-26-on-Children's-Rights-and-the-Environment)
- In the USA, This is Planet Ed was launched in late 2022 by the Aspen Institute. This initiative addresses climate change through empowerment across all education levels and is, significantly, inclusive of early childhood education. <https://www.thisisplaneted.org/initiatives/early-years-climate-action>

These international initiatives offer wider support for the work we are currently doing in Australia around the new sustainability principle in the EYLFv2 (AGDE, 2022).

What's On?



Highlight on Biodiversity Awareness

Did you know that City of Cockburn volunteers will be tracking turtles again this coming nesting season in partnership with the [Save Our Snake-necked Turtle \(SOSNT\)](#) Project, with up to 5 other partner councils and catchment groups. Purchase the LGSWA Fun with Snake-necked turtle kit [here](#).

Turtles are on the Move NOW so learn what you can do to be [bodyguards](#) if you see one and **download the TurtleSAT app** so you can log your sighting on the database to help inform future management and conservation!

Now is the time to have a **Backyard Biodiversity Blitz** with your children in care – so many ways to get involved.

National Science Week – ‘Glass What is it Good For?’
The resources book has ideas for early years. Here is the link to the teaching [resource](#). An example is below.

Glass is a material found throughout the home because it is strong, waterproof, has a smooth surface, is not damaged by sunlight and can be formed into many different shapes. So ... Go on a “Glass treasure hunt – around your early years space”

Animals need protection from our waste and litter so for Keep Australia Beautiful Week – why doesn't your service accept the challenge to ‘[Contain your waste for the week](#)’

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.

This link will take you to the complete set of dates www.dcceew.gov.au/about/news/stay-informed/events

October 2023 – January 2024

October

[Australian Wildlife Week](#) (October 3-9)

[World Habitat Day](#) (October 4)

[World Seabird Conference](#) (TBC)

[World Migratory Bird Day](#) (May 14, October 8)

[World Food Day](#) (October 16)

[International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#) (October 17)

[National Bird Week](#) (October 17-23)

[Aussie Backyard Bird Count](#) (October 17-23)

[National Water Week](#) (3rd week in October)

[National Ride-2-Work Day](#) (TBC)

[United Nations Day](#) (October 24)

November

[One Health Day](#) (November 3)

[Pollinator Week](#) (November 11 - 19)

[National Recycling Week](#) (November 13 - 19)

[World Toilet Day](#) (November 19)

[World Fisheries Day](#) (November 21)

[World Olive Tree Day](#) (November 26)

December

[World Soil Day](#) (December 5)

[International Volunteer Day](#) (December 5)

[Coastcare Week](#) (TBC)

January

[Future Sustainability Summit](#) (January 17-19)

[Australia Day](#) (January 26)

Have any questions, comments or requests for the next newsletter? Contact the Little Green Steps WA Program Manager: 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.

Little Green Steps WA is proudly supported by:

