

# Growing Resilience in our Community – Working Together to Save the Endangered Kangaroo Valley Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby from Extinction

## Outline of School Education Program - Stage 3

The *Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby* community group has won multiple awards and grants for community education and delivered engaging school programs to thousands of students over 20 years.

The Friends can tailor a school education program to suit your class. The fully subsidised enrichment program will be presented by passionate members with *Working with Children Checks* and first-hand experience on the local Rock-wallaby Recovery Program.

Students will learn about a real local example of how scientists are answering questions and finding out about phenomena in the natural world. They will be exposed to ecological experimental design and constraints and the importance of scientific evidence in decision-making and problem-solving. They will identify the strengths and limitations of a threatened species recovery program.

The enrichment program generally incorporates online multimedia presentations accompanied by a selection of creative group activities designed to reinforce the KLAs. Students will explore how human activity causes biodiversity loss and consider the repercussions for society and global systems. They will develop their understanding of the diversity of living things, including plants, animals and microorganisms, and investigate behavioural and structural adaptations of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby for its survival and reproduction in a niche habitat.

A fun, hands-on outdoor activity investigating sand pads, remote cameras and/or radio-tracking will integrate the students' understanding of, and skills in, applying the processes of Working Scientifically and Working Technologically. This fieldwork component can be undertaken at school or in a nearby reserve.

Compared to other scientific disciplines, our knowledge of the Living World is infantile. As scientific research gradually increases our understanding of the interconnectedness of the Natural Environment, the values of society, industry and government sway. Peoples' perceptions and priorities change. This in turn influences the focus of scientific research and technological development. Unfortunately, much of the current technological trends are actively disconnecting young people from nature. How can we protect biodiversity, and life as we know it, if we do not know it or care?

As you would be aware, the aim of the *Science Years K–6 Syllabus* is to:

- *foster students' sense of wonder and expand their natural curiosity about the world around them in order to develop their understanding of, interest in, and enthusiasm for science and technology*
- *develop students' competence and creativity in applying the processes of Working Scientifically and Working Technologically to appreciate and understand the Natural Environment and Made Environment*
- *enhance students' confidence in making evidence-based decisions about the influences of science and technology in their lives*
- *enable students to confidently respond to needs and opportunities when designing solutions relevant to science and technology in their lives.*

This enrichment program targets numerous outcomes developed for Stage 3 for the NSW Science and Technology Syllabus: Including, a student:

- *demonstrates a willingness to engage responsibly with local, national and global issues relevant to their lives and to shaping sustainable futures (ST3-2VA)*

- *investigates by posing questions, including testable questions, making predictions and gathering raw data to draw evidenced-based conclusions and develop explanations (ST3-4WS)*
- *develops informed attitudes about the current and future use and influence of science and technology based on reason (ST3-3VA)*
- *describes how structural features and other adaptations of living things help them to survive in their environment (ST3-10LW)*
- *describes some physical conditions of the environment and how these affect the growth and survival of living things (ST3-11LW)*
- *describes how social influences impact on the design and use of information and communication systems (ST3-15I)*

*This program also links in with the following NSW Stage 3 HSE outcomes, including, the student:*

- *demonstrates an understanding of the interconnectedness between Australia and global environments and how individuals and groups can act in an ecologically responsible manner (Environments - Patterns of Place and Location ENS3.5)*
- *explains how various beliefs and practices influence the ways in which people interact with, change and value their environment (Environments - Relationships with Places ENS3.6)*
- *describes how Australian people, systems and communities are globally interconnected and recognises global responsibilities (Social systems and structures - Resource Systems SSS3.7)*

In the interest of cross-curriculum learning creative group work has been developed to accompany the interactive presentations and fieldwork components. For the group exercise, students will collaborative create one of the following productions and present to the class:

- a rap song about the benefits of biodiversity to human society,
- a community poster encouraging the management of feral animals and weeds,
- a music video about biodiversity,
- a pre-scripted puppet show from the perspective local threatened animals.

This group work will incorporate some Stage 3 English Syllabus outcomes. Students will be encouraged brainstorm and then accurately communicate ideas to others. The threatened species puppet show group will highlight solutions to biodiversity loss, the rap group will revisit the importance of biodiversity through factual oral text and the poster group will employ persuasive devices to convince people to act together as a community to save a local species from extinction. In each case, a student *composes, edits and presents well-structured and coherent texts EN3-2A*. These different styles of communication will emphasise *how language is used to achieve a widening range of purposes for a widening range of audiences and contexts EN3-3A*.

In addition, the online multimedia presentations will give the students an opportunity to *use an integrated range of skills, strategies and knowledge to read, view and comprehend a wide range of texts in different media and technologies EN3-3A*. The program will expose students to different point of view and explore stereotyping. The students could be asked to demonstrate appropriate online sourcing of information by researching a fact about biodiversity to share with the class.

Looking for a less academic approach? Our predator-prey simulation game is always a huge hit. The 30-40 minute activity begins with a photo-card led story of the Rock-wallabies and their threats. This info is followed by a fun and active predator-prey tag game *dressed up* with reversible Rock-wallaby-Predator masks, habitat and even Friends and NPWS rangers to save our species.

Please contact the [friends@rockwallaby.org.au](mailto:friends@rockwallaby.org.au) to discuss options or schedule a program for your class.