

Multicultural School Gardens

This program combines community volunteering, multicultural understanding, gardening and cooking into a unique and enriching whole-school environmental education project.

Primary school students work with their gardening buddies to create multicultural food gardens, growing fruit, vegetables and herbs from across the world. Together they cook traditional dishes using the produce from their gardens, and share stories and information about different cultures. In turn, students mentor their buddies in English language development, helping them to connect with others.

The Multicultural School Gardens project is funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to deliver to ten Victorian schools in 2010.

Over 40 schools achieved outstanding outcomes from the project between 2004 and 2008.

Student excursion and outreach programs

These positive and enjoyable programs offer hands-on and authentic learning opportunities, with students participating in a range of fun and informative activities that they can apply both at school and at home.

The primary and pre-school programs cover topics including:

Biodiversity — hands-on investigation of creatures and the roles they play in three separate habitats: freshwater ponds, forest floor and compost bins.

Recycling and composting — exploring the world of 'reduce, re-use, recycle and compost'—what happens and how to do it properly.

Water conservation — why we need clean water, how to help keep it clean, what happens to our stormwater when it rains.

Marine — students explore the rich habitats of intertidal rockpools, discover sea creatures and learn how to keep our oceans healthy.

This topic is available in terms 1 and 4 at Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary, Beaumaris.

The return of these much-loved programs has been a highlight of the Gould League's centenary, which also saw more than 200 people attend a Centenary Muster at the League's Moorabbin education centre last October, Australia Post releasing a commemorative Songbird stamp issue, and the appointment of three inaugural Gould League Centennial Ambassadors.

The trio—swimming legend Shane Gould, Victorian Parliamentary Secretary for Water and Environment Michael Crutchfield, and Charles Darwin's great-great-grandson Chris Darwin—were chosen because of their public commitment to conservation and the environment.

"We are delighted that these dedicated people have agreed to add their names to the millions of Australians who have been influenced by the Gould League," Mr Walker said.



"Their love of nature is infectious. The League has been committed to spreading that message far and wide for 100 years.

"It started as our famous bird lovers' pledge; now it's the broader benefits of nature conservation, sustainable resource use and sustainable urban living that we're helping spread to schools and the wider community."

For more information see www.gould.org.au

Children and their families enter the wonderful world of worms at the Gould League Centenary Muster.

PHOTOS: GOULD LEAGUE

Volunteer at Finke Gorge National Park!



Palm Valley in Finke Gorge National Park.

If you're travelling to or through the Red Centre this year, consider spending 2–4 weeks volunteering with the rangers at Finke Gorge National Park, just two hours' drive west of Alice Springs.

Volunteers maintain the facilities in the campground and picnic area, which usually takes two to four hours per day. The rest is up to you!

For naturalists, Finke Gorge (which includes Palm Valley) has rare and relict plants, a multitude of birds, reptiles and aquatic life, and unique geological features.

All ages and interests are welcome, but you'll need a high clearance 4WD for access, plus a reasonable fitness level. Volunteers are needed from April to October; accommodation is provided at the Ranger Station.

Contact the rangers on (08) 8956 7401 or gareth.catt@nt.gov.au or andrew.schubert@nt.gov.au for more information.