

Friends of Cornish Hill Workshop

Cornish Hill and Smith's Creek

THE Fun with Friends one-day event at Cornish Hill on Tuesday, May 2 involved The Dharma School, Bullarto, Daylesford, Drummond and the Yandoit Annexe of Daylesford Primary School along with members of Friends of Cornish Hill and neighbouring Landcare groups.

The Dharma School and Yandoit Annexe both registered as River Detective schools in 2016 and staff from the Dharma School and Daylesford Primary School have received training in water testing.

In March this year the Dharma School students received training in all aspects of water testing, thus ensuring their proficiency on the day as they acted as the **kids teaching kids** for the water testing component.

Bullarto Primary School has been involved in the North Central Catchment Management Authority's River Detectives Program for many years with the staff and students highly experienced in water quality testing and macroinvertebrate sampling at their site on Kangaroo Creek.

The event took place on Smith's Creek at Cornish Hill, Daylesford as an outdoor environmental education day. Six activities were offered on a rotational basis. These included Water Quality testing, Macroinvertebrate sampling, Frog and Reptile habitat, Beak to Belly, Bird Walk with App as well as an Art Project during which students created a lizard out of clay.

Those involved included staff from each school, parent volunteers, members of Friends of Cornish Hill, members of other Landcare Groups, Environmental consultants Nicole Howie (Beak to Belly), Graeme Harris (Macroinvertebrates), Caroline Wilson and Sally Heeps (Birdlife Australia) and Ray Draper (frog and reptile habitat), ceramicist Ann Ferguson with Margie Thomas as event coordinator.

Friends of Cornish Hill provided assistance to school staff with regard to setting up student groups prior to the event.

Tasks for the day included planning, bookings, transport, inviting guests, communication to schools, support to the Dharma school staff and students, site preparation, provision of appropriate shelter, risk assessment and emergency response plan, sourcing equipment/materials, media releases and event evaluation. These were the responsibility of FOCH and all costs were covered by a grant from **Landcare Australia** in partnership with **RACV**.

What the kids thought...

"I'm trying to get a bug out of the water and scoop it into an ice container, I'm not sure what bug it's called but it's fast." - Asha, Daylesford Primary School

"We are looking at macros with a magnifying glass or whatever this is," pointing to a bug trap and magnifying glass. - Eden, Bullarto Primary School

"I am making the scales of the lizard from a pine cone." - Saxon, Drummond Primary School

"We are doing water testing like turbidity and salinity. Salinity is how much salt is in the water while turbidity is how clean the water is. The results for around here is excellent for the turbidity, while there is still a little too much salt on the salinity measurement. Although we just got good with the salt measurement we could do better. - Oscar, Daylesford Dharma School (front page photo)

"But the water table could be getting affected by the recent rain because the salt in the water table comes up after the rain. If there is too much salt all the fish and stuff will die. We learnt this at school." - Quinn, Daylesford Dharma School (front page photo)

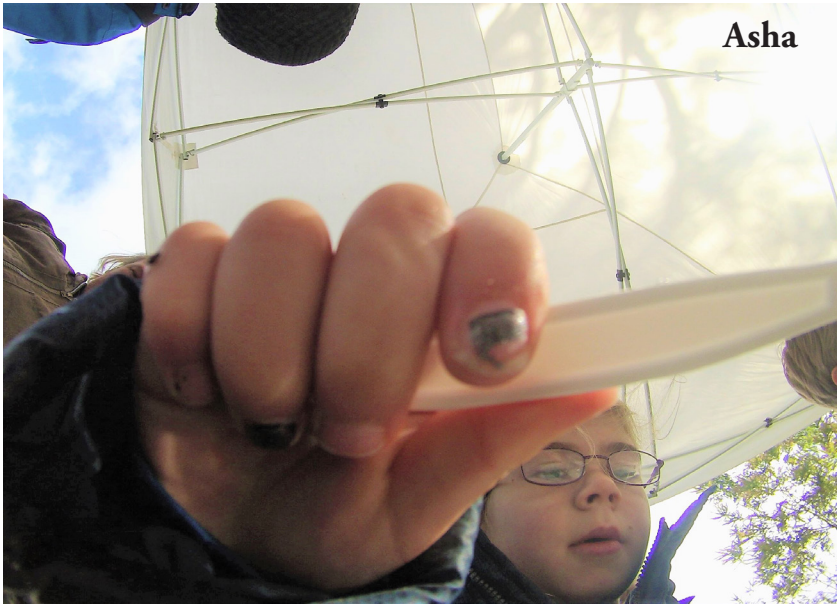
Advertorial



Friends of Cornish Hill



Fun with Friends - May 2, 2017



Asha



Eden



Saxon



The presenters and rotations

FRIENDS of Cornish Hill have a very strong desire to connect the local community with their cultural and environmental heritage at the site on Smith's Creek.

They feel very passionate about engaging local youth and encourage stewardship of the natural environment. With this in mind Fun with Friends raised awareness of the Cornish Hill site and offered an opportunity for students and teachers to meet, have fun and learn together through active, hands-on activities in their local environment.

Friends of Cornish Hill consider themselves very lucky indeed to be able to host such an event and without the support of Landcare Australia in partnership with RACV, programs like these would not go ahead.

The six rotations on the day included:

HABITAT - Renowned local expert on frogs and environment consultant, **Ray Draper** has been studying frogs, their health, and their habitat for years, and has helped and inspired many people to care for and protect these vulnerable members of our natural world. What is habitat? Ray lead a walk on the Hill where he encouraged the students to look down and see what was hiding in the grasses and reeds. Students found an assortment of critters hiding in the undergrowth, even frogs.

BEAK TO BELLY - **Nicole Howie** is a committed and passionate environmental educator. Her contribution on the day focused on the varied diets of our native birds and how their beaks are perfectly adapted to catching and eating their food efficiently. Children used common kitchen utensils and experienced firsthand what it was like to be a bird.

MACROINVERTEBRATES - **Graeme Harris**, expert macroinvertebrate enthusiast focused on the habitats of macroinvertebrates, the range of water bugs that inhabit freshwater environments in central Victoria. Students developed an understanding how the presence of water bugs can be indicators of habitat health and water quality.

BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA - **Caroline Wilson**, accompanied by **Sally Heeps**, conducted a bird walk which included an introduction on local birds, why we monitor them and also about their habitat. Data collected will be recorded onto Birdlife Australia's database. As well, habitat will be recorded. Students used binoculars to locate birds.

REPTILES - Noted ceramicist **Ann Ferguson** guided the students through the construction of a clay lizard. Using photographs of lizards indigenous to Victoria, and using clay, students interpreted the shape of the body, legs and head of a lizard, and coloured and created texture on the body using seeds and cones.

WATER TESTING - Kids Teaching Kids is an education model that uses local environmental issues as a theme for learning. Students and staff at the **Dharma School** have received training in various components of water testing and on this day, by demonstrating and explaining various tests, they were the Kids teaching the other kids in the group.



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