

SCHOOL GROUNDS AS LEARNSCAPES – A LIVING CLASSROOM

The Living Classroom – creating habitats and wildlife friendly gardens

Living Smart QLD Biodiversity Module resources provide information that will enable local schools to integrate student’s learning to identify, plan (School Environment Management Plans) and design special habitats in the school grounds where wildlife can exist.

School Grounds biodiversity audits can be carried out at any year level. An extension of **All Around You** can be used in your school grounds to build student’s skills in undertaking and managing scientific processes. Over time, student’s observation skills will develop well enough to note and record sightings of plants, birds, insects and animals (collecting and monitoring data), research the natural habitats of the local species they have identified record seasonal changes and begin to understand the natural food sources of the species in their schools.

Working through a whole school improvement process alongside capable adults, students use this knowledge to design new garden spaces to increase the number of species that make their home in these habitats. This is real action for environmental sustainability. Students are working towards improving local biodiversity.

Use the table below to guide local learning in physical spaces from the ground/soil layer right up to the canopy. Coastal schools may be located close to mangrove habitats.

Existing and potential local Native Species Habitats in School Grounds		
Ground 1m and below including mulch layer	soil plant layers Fungi leaf mulch rocks and fallen logs compost	Life stages of insects, reptiles, frogs. Burrowing animals, echidna, ground dwelling birds.
Mid storey above 1m to 20 m	Hollow log nesting Nesting Boxes Pioneer species	Tree climbing mammals. Birds, reptile kitchen, insects
Canopy above 20 m	Large local shrubs and trees Common Plant Communities	Birds, insects, gliders.
Riparian along creek banks	Planting local natives waterways	Reptiles, platypus, insects, fish, macroinvertebrates, crustaceans
Garden pots	Habitat garden in a pot	Small native fish, snails, macro’s
Frog Ponds	Creating a Frog Pond	Stages of frog life, insect larvae
Bird Baths	Bird baths and water features	Bird life, insects
General Native Habitats	Natural garden habitats	Inviting wildlife into your gardens
Year round food supply for native wildlife	Through local native plant selection	Knowing the seasons of native species
Coastal Mangroves	Bilai EEC Mangrove Research Bunya Bunya Country Aboriginal Corporation -	Important fish, prawn, crab nursery habitat, sediment filter for estuary health, erosion control

READ stories about local species, written by local people: books for sale – e.g [Fussy Glossies](#)