

The power of a tiny bug: Bringing Landcare into preschools

Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc



Engaging preschoolers can help create nature-lovers for life, and provides a valuable connection to a new Landcare audience

The issue

Landcare have strong connections with many primary and secondary schools in our region, and maintain a regular calendar of workshops and other events for adults. But often those younger than school age miss out, or are given a treasure hunt or colouring activity to entertain them while their older family members participate in our events. While being around Landcare activities is no doubt helping to get them outdoors and connected to nature, their opportunities to learn and engage are somewhat limited.

The solution

We were approached by a local preschool, keen to bring an educational Landcare workshop to their students. We invited Wagga Wagga City Council's Environmental Education Officer to join us, and together we delivered a water bug workshop to 10 eager students aged between three and five years old.

We began the activity by showing the children photos of two local waterways – one a healthy wetland, with diverse vegetation in and around the water; while the other was a significantly degraded lake which has been cleared of much of the surrounding vegetation. While this part of the activity was only about five minutes long, it gave us the opportunity to talk with the kids about the importance of our local waterways, and the role native vegetation plays in providing habitat for countless native species of animals.

We then got the kids looking at water we had collected from the healthy wetland that morning, by pouring small amounts of water (and bugs) into large trays. Using magnifying glasses, the kids were able to find numerous bugs in the water, which we helped them to identify. Some children were happy just to spot the bugs, while others were interested to learn more about them, allowing us to share interesting facts about the different species and the type of habitat they require.

The impact

The children were fascinated by the bugs they found! Some chose to count the number of different bugs there were, or the number of each species. Others just liked to watch them zoom around the tray, while others enjoyed looking at them in detail through their magnifying glass.

The feedback from the preschool was incredibly positive: "The children absolutely loved it!! And I think the educators enjoyed it just as much to be honest. We are so excited to keep learning with Landcare and fostering the children's connection to the natural environment".

We are planning a pollinator workshop for next term, and hope to be able to take the students to the wetland later in the year to extend their learning about this important local site.



Project Partners



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