



Bush Trackers resource kit



Tree artwork by Chris Tobin

Acknowledgement of Country

We recognise that Traditional Owners have a continuous and deep connection to their Country and that this is of great cultural significance to Aboriginal people, both locally and in the region.

For Aboriginal people, Country takes in everything within the physical, cultural and spiritual landscape - landforms, waters, air, trees, rocks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, minerals, stories and special places. It includes cultural practice, kinship, knowledge, songs, stories and art, as well as spiritual beings, and people: past, present and future.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present while recognising the strength, capacity and resilience of past and present Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across this landscape.

Acknowledgements

This Bush Trackers Resource Kit was written by Rachel Thomson, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service with Jacqueline Reid and Dindy Boutagy and the Bush Trackers project partners.

Photo credits J. Reid NPWS unless noted otherwise

This project has been assisted by the NSW Government through its Environmental Trust.



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See <https://www.bushtrackers.com.au/resources> for this resource kit.

Welcome!

“We have such a brief opportunity to pass on to our children our love for this Earth, and to tell our stories. These are the moments when the world is made whole. In our children's memories, the adventures we've had together in nature will always exist.”

Richard Louv, 'Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder'.

We thank you for your interest in becoming a Bush Tracker Ranger and welcome you in to a world of adventure and reward!

The Bush Trackers Program is a successful partnership project, which helps children connect with nature. Bush Trackers Rangers guide children on walks where they take part in fun, hands-on activities, and we want to spread the love and grow the movement.

It is a sad fact that many young people in today's society are disconnected from nature – suffering physically and mentally as a result. Obesity and depression can be treated with a good dose of nature – fresh air, physical activity, mental stimulation, hearing the birds sing and smelling the scent of flowers – research is now showing these things help make us healthier, happier and care enough to make us want to help conserve our natural world.

The Bush Trackers Program has inspired us to produce this Resource Kit so that you, whatever your age, occupation or passion, can also help children connect with nature.

Inside, you will find lots of information and tips on how to do this, from how to plan an excursion to types of activities to do and how to do them – you can use as much or as little as you like, you can follow instructions to a 'T' or take them with a pinch of salt. All we ask is that you get out and have fun! Remember you can contact us anytime for advice or call on us to help you guide an excursion.

Scan the Table of Contents on the next page and dip in to whatever takes your fancy to get started.

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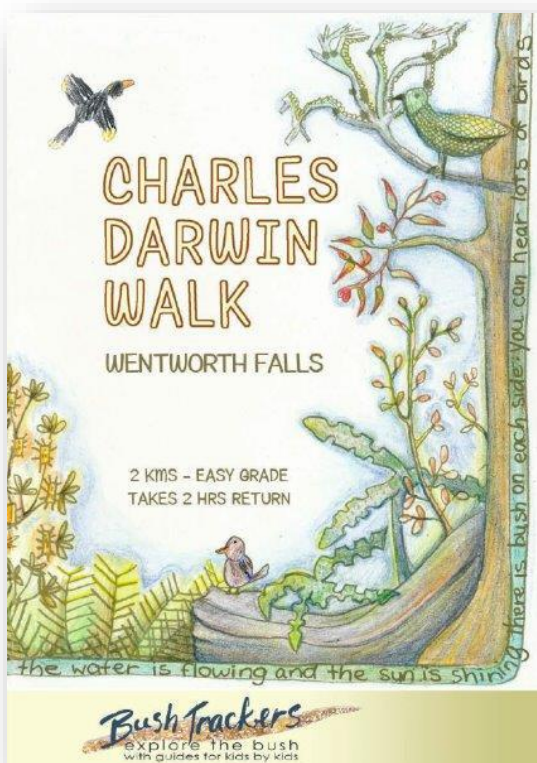
1 Introduction

1.1. What is Bush Trackers?

The Bush Trackers Program is an environmental and cultural education project with a strong emphasis on engaging kids with nature.

But it's also the beginning of something big: a spark that lights a relationship with nature. Children can develop and nurture this relationship throughout their lives and share this with their family, friends and future generations.

The Bush Trackers Program grew from support of the Stronger Families Alliance to help create a Child Friendly Community in the Blue Mountains, coordinated by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service with many dedicated partners. Over the last 5 years, NSW Environmental Trust, Commonwealth's Your Community Heritage and NSW Heritage Grants have contributed almost \$200,000 towards the Program.



NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Rangers, alongside local natural and cultural enthusiasts, have been guiding kids on local walks, encouraging them to learn and share their experience through words, poems, pictures, photos and more! These pearls of wisdom and creative gems are used to produce beautifully designed, delightfully authentic double-sided A3 nature guides and maps, to encourage other local or visiting kids and families to safely enjoy the environment.

Since 2012, many schools and hundreds of children have helped grow the Program. You can make it bigger.

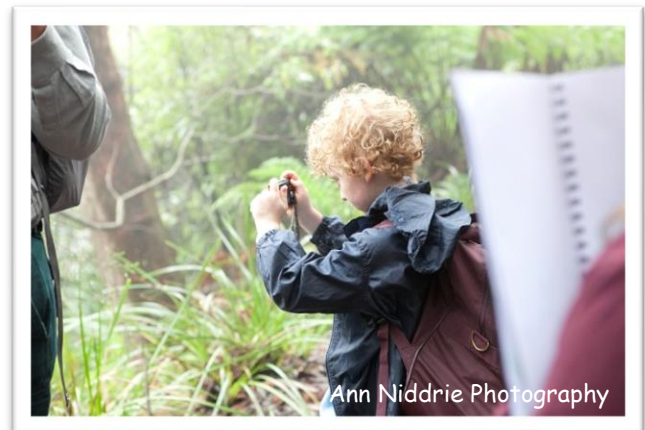
See the Bush Trackers website for more information <http://www.bushtrackers.com.au>.

1.2. Why Bush Trackers?

The Bush Trackers Program aims to encourage children to connect with, respect and protect our natural environment and cultural and historical heritage.

It aims to benefit children's health, development and behaviour and even inspire the next generation of conservationists.

It enables children to experience and learn about our natural spaces on their own terms, through their own eyes and to allow them to share with others, the stories of their experiences.



See the [video](#) 'Reconnecting Kids with Nature - Bush Trackers Program, Blue Mountains'.

Kids are inspired doing Bush Trackers activities - don't just take our word for it:

"I loved the Bush Trackers excursion; I definitely want more time in the bush."

Katoomba Public School student



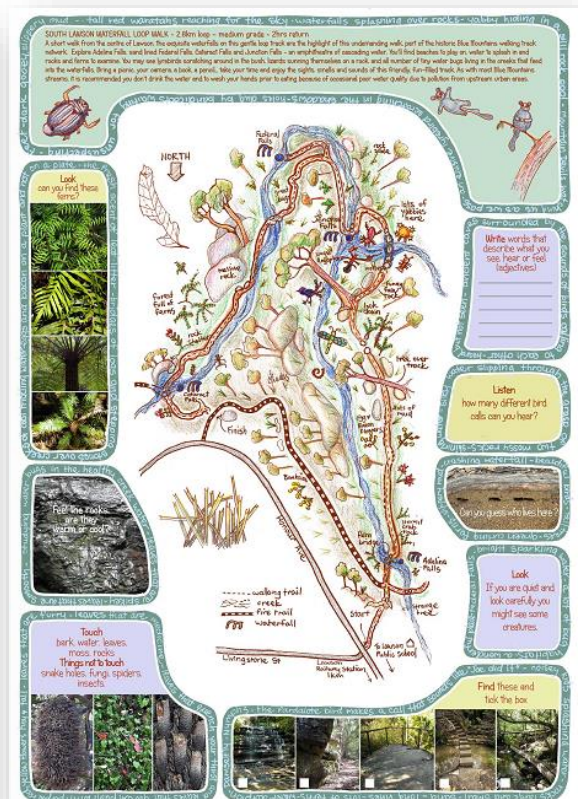
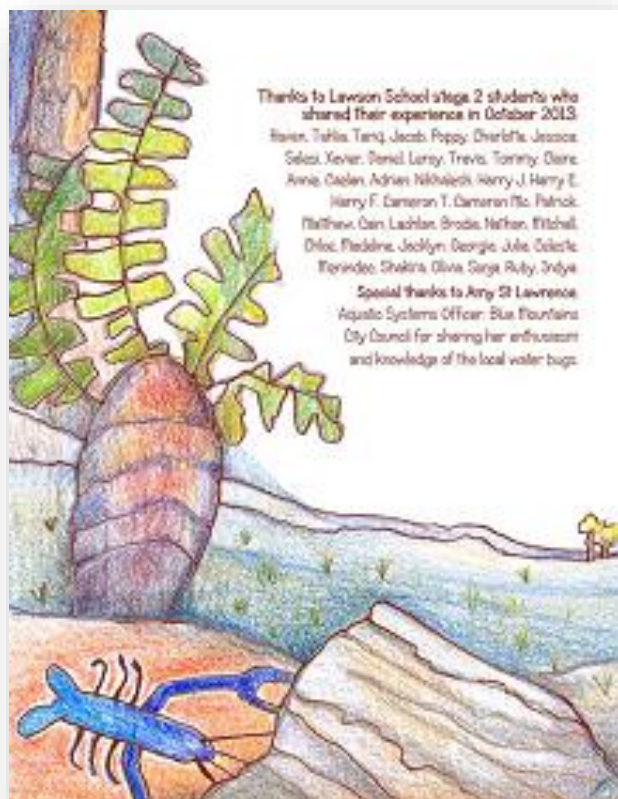
"I loved it so much, I would like to help the environment" and "I love it out there and I hope other children do too."

Castlereagh Public School students

1.3. Goals and desired outcomes of Bush Trackers

The Bush Trackers Program has several goals including, but not limited to:

- engaging more children and their families with nature and our cultural and historical heritage.
- building an evolving relationship with nature.
- promoting natural spaces as 'child-friendly' places, by empowering kids, building their confidence and giving them the skills to safely enjoy and interpret different natural environments.
- strengthening communities, by engaging kids as leaders and encouraging them to show their friends and families where they've been and what they've seen, as well as spreading knowledge of, and a sense of ownership and pride for, their local natural environment.
- Producing artefacts or useful resources, such as a maps or nature guides, produced by kids for kids. See some examples of past Bush Trackers guides at <http://www.bushtrackers.com.au/guides-maps>



The Bush Trackers Program is not simply a local initiative; it also achieves key United Nations Sustainability Goals 2030 that all levels of Australian Government are signatories to.



1.4. The success of Bush Trackers - its partners!

Key partners of the Bush Trackers program include:

- [NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service](#)
- [Stronger Families Alliance](#)
- [Blue Mountains Conservation Society](#)
- [Performing Design](#)
- [Blue Mountains City Council](#)
- [Penrith City Council](#)
- [Hawkesbury City Council](#)
- [Lithgow City Council](#)
- [Oberon Council](#)
- [Blue Mountains, Lithgow & Oberon Tourism](#)
- [Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development Greater Western Sydney \(RCE GWA\)](#)
- [Hawkesbury Environment Network \(HEN\)](#)
- [Penrith & Hawkesbury Environmental Educators Network \(PHEEN\)](#)
- [Muru Mittigar Ltd](#)
- [Merana Aboriginal Community Association for the Hawkesbury](#)
- Local primary schools in Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Penrith LGAs



2 Objective of this resource kit

To provide the tools and resources to help train you and other Bush Trackers Rangers to deliver authentic, engaging, educative and inspiring excursions to children.

But also, a springboard for you from which to launch yourself into a new learning and development opportunity.

As well as providing the theory behind the Bush Trackers concept, this handbook and kit includes a framework to follow and links to further resources.

3 Resource kit contents

3.1. Capabilities & qualities of the Bush Trackers Ranger



Motivation

You are passionate about your local green spaces and environmental education. You want to unleash children's imagination and help them see and experience nature!

Purpose

You will encourage children to connect with, respect and protect our natural, cultural and historical environment.

Skills

You are great at interacting with children. You can help them 'see'. You can tell engaging stories, think and act creatively, listen, be patient and sympathetic and put yourself in the shoes of children who may be experiencing something for the very first time. Reflect on what intrigued you, excited you, surprised you, rewarded you and even took you out of your comfort zone when you were a child.



Role

- Guide children on local walks and share how to behave responsibly in nature by looking after yourself and the environment (discreetly model desirable behaviours, like collecting rubbish, walking through puddles or along logs and wearing a hat will teach care, fun and good sense!).
- Allow children to point out the features and highlights of the walks through their eyes. The children become the experts, the authors, the guides!
- Encourage them to take part in different hands-on activities along the way and ask them to share their experience through a variety of creative expressions (such as drawing, story writing and photography etc). These expressions can be captured and used to produce a nature guide, to make available to others, inspiring and enabling them to enjoy the outdoors too.



Ann Niddrie Photography

Responsibilities

- Safety first!
- Hold a current valid [Working with Children Check](#) and [First Aid certificate](#)
- Follow guidelines for, and encourage, Bush Safety and Minimal Impact Bush Walking
- Carry a well-equipped First Aid Kit and mobile phone on all excursions
- Consider out of mobile range issues, carry an EPIRB or [Think Before You Trek](#)
- Be aware if any children on your walks have allergies or medical conditions
- Act in a responsible and professional manner and appropriately represent your organisation and its values
- Have fun!!

3.2. Audience



Target sectors

Involve children from a range of groups including Out Of School Hours (OOSH), pre-schools, bushcare groups, religious groups, home-schooling and other community organisations.

Value diversity

Involve children from different cultures, religions and socio-economic backgrounds and with different physical and intellectual abilities. Make sure you have the necessary support to help you communicate with the children and keep them safe.

4 Bush Trackers excursions

4.1. Achieving Education Framework Goals

The Bush Trackers Program sits within this supporting framework and has been guided by NSW and international best practice Education for Sustainability and Nature Connection teaching tools.

Here is a summary of the Bush Trackers Program Education Framework Goals:

Education for Sustainability Tool	Objective of Education for Sustainability Tool
1 Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask what does a community need/want?• Consider your target audience• Use age appropriate tools
2 Envisioning/ future thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask and draw what is the future I want?• How does a more sustainable future look?• Create a shared vision to work towards collaboratively
3 Narrative & stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Narratives and stories engage the imagination and connect people empathetically to a place/creature• Create your own narrative or use story books
4 Critical thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore cultural assumptions and influences• Use reflection as a form of enquiry• Clarify values
5 Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage individuals and community in decision-making processes to encourage personal responsibility for behaviour change
6 Participation through sensory & nature play activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage use of five senses• Hands-on play in nature with games and activities (see Section 3.4.3)
7 Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaboration and shared learning experiences with program partners• Pool resources, both financial and knowledge• Create networks and encourage community involvement in other related programs
8 Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empower individuals and communities with knowledge and skills to enable environmental action• Create key multipliers with students and resulting Bush Trackers guides
9 Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Did this project meet our objectives?• Design the evaluation process and the excursion program at the same time

4.2. Location

There are several factors you should consider when planning the location of your excursion, to maximize the children's enjoyment and learning, as well as ensuring their safety.



Local is best

Try to choose a local green space: it will be easier for the children to get to, help them discover and value nature on home turf and they'll be more likely to revisit with their family and friends.

Size doesn't matter

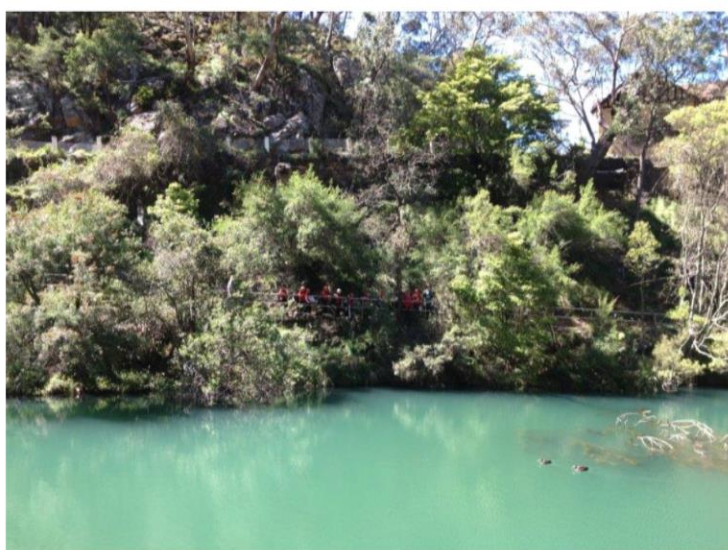
Nature is everywhere, in many forms, shapes and sizes, and children are gifted at noticing and getting engrossed in the tiniest of details! You can visit a National Park or Nature Reserve, but a small patch of Council land or bushland, creek line or wetland could be just as good as you'll be doing activities, not just going for a walk.

Audience

What is their average age, current level of knowledge, experience of the outdoors, physical and intellectual ability, will they understand your language (e.g. English), and do they have any specific interests or learning requirements? Is the group size manageable? Bush Trackers excursions ideally have a ratio of one ranger plus one responsible adult to 15 students.

Safety

Is the chosen location safe for your audience? Consider terrain (slope, surface and obstacles), path/walkway type (quality, steps), natural features (cliffs, water, dangerous plants or animals, falling tree branches), man-made features (roads and traffic) and other visitors to/users of the area (avoid congestion at points of contact). Will there be safe places to stop and do activities along the way? Will toileting be an issue? Carry out a reconnaissance before you go!





Environmental conditions

Is the location suitable at the particular time of year, even time of day, of the excursion e.g. if you want to do a water bug survey then Summer would be the best season; if you want to see lots of birds then early morning would be the best time. Check the weather before you go and be prepared to postpone the excursion if it's too windy, wet, cold or hot. Check fire risk ratings and again, be prepared to postpone if necessary.

Topics

Will the location provide the necessary resources, features and stimuli you need, if you want to cover certain themes or topics? If you want to do a water bug survey you will need safe access to a creek; if you want to do bark rubbing then a woodland location might be better than grassland.

Remember: you can contact us anytime for advice to help you guide a Bush Trackers excursion



<https://www.bushtrackers.com.au/contact>

Legal Considerations

You might consider using or amending these templates before heading out on the excursion:

[Example risk assessment](#) [attachment 1](#)

[Example what to bring](#) [attachment 2](#)

[Example permission note](#) [attachment 3](#)

[Example Bush Trackers model and text release](#) [attachment 4](#)

4.3. Location / excursion specific information

Advance planning and researching the area will ensure you and the children have the best possible experience. It may be a very light-hearted, dynamic, unpredictable (and partially self-led) learning experience for the children, but if you have some knowledge of the following themes you can better answer and prompt questions, as well as running more effective activities. Of course, looking forward is just as important as looking back in time, so try and cover threats and solutions to our modern day and future problems! Here are some suggested content/theme suggestions:



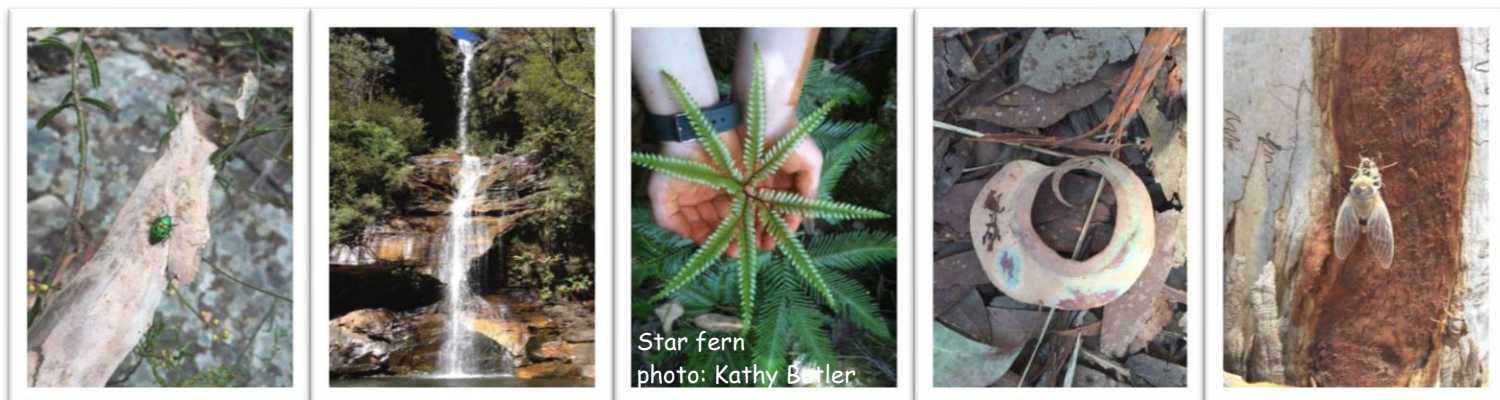
Nature Connection:

Connect children to nature through Nature Play and activities. These are hands-on creative activities, done either in groups or individually. Children will learn and engage with nature while playing a fun activity. **Nature Play and activities should make up a large proportion of your Bush Trackers excursion.**

See sections 3.4.3 Outdoor Activities & Tools for Engagement and 5.6 Teaching & Activity Information.

Natural Heritage

Plants, animals, geology, habitats, biodiversity, ecosystems (rainforest, woodland, heathland, swamp, bushland, grassland, coastal, desert), natural systems (meteorology, hydrology).



Cultural Heritage

Aboriginal, early European and recent migrant contributions (knowledge, arts, rituals, performances, language, property, sacred and significant sites and objects).

For content information: ensure that information is culturally sensitive and correct, use your own knowledge, contact your local Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal Land Council or local council. Also see section 5.6 Teaching & Activity Information.



Cox's Road, photo: Wyn Jones

Historical Heritage

Industries (mining, tourism, agriculture), transportation and infrastructure, urban and rural development (buildings).

For content information: use your own knowledge or contact your local council and Historical Society. Also see section 5.6 Teaching & Activity Information.

Threats to our natural, cultural and historical heritage

Types and sources of threats (development, land clearing, habitat destruction, pollution, plant and animal pests, climate change, mining, agriculture, inappropriate fire), solutions (education, legislation, new technologies), conservation and future management (partnerships).

For content information: use your own knowledge or contact your local council and Environmental Organisation. Also see section 5.6 Teaching & Activity Information.



Photo: Blue Mountains City Council



Photo: Jack Pascoe

Citizen Science

Students can upload their wildlife, habitat, water-bug sampling and pollinator sightings from the excursion and provide valuable data to help the scientific community and conservation. See Section 5.6 Further Teaching & Activity Information, for citizen science websites and apps.

What if you are unsure about what you saw? If in doubt, leave it out!



Connect with the Ranger Vision outdoor education app with mapping biodiversity for teachers and students
<https://www.ranger.vision>

Take a photo and submit it to iNaturalist
<https://www.inaturalist.org/>
and the citizen science community will help you identify a species.

5 Case Studies Bush Trackers excursions

5.1. McMahon Park, Kurrajong

Grade: Easy.

Length: 1 km.

Time for excursion: 4 hours.

Environment: Regenerated bushland reserve.
Tall forest and creek-line vegetation.

Points of Interest: Creek. Oval nearby for running games (e.g. 'birrong' Aboriginal football).

Activities: Long excursion time (for this short track) allows time for the following additional 3 activities:

1. Water abiotic testing, e.g. Council volunteers (45 mins).
 2. Aboriginal Cultural Presentation, e.g. NPWS Aboriginal Education Ranger (45 mins).
 3. Discussion about past and present land care activities, e.g. Council (15 mins).
- Lunch (30 mins).



Bush walking and activities with Bush Trackers Education Rangers (2 hours)

Acknowledgement of Country.

Narrative of the history of the area starting with how Aboriginal people and children lived here; moving on to Colonial times and the stock route through the area; through to the farms of 100 years ago; and finally to today's time.

Activity – 'Stealth Walk' to look for wildlife. When a bird or other creature is seen or heard, quietly point it out and make a mime of the animal e.g. flapping arms for bird wings. Encourage the rest of the group to follow.

Interpretation by Ranger of animal habitat seen (e.g. hollows, nests, insect holes).

Activity – Photograph any hollows seen and record into *Hollows as Homes* citizen science app.

Activity (Sensory) – Touch and feel rough and smooth bark trees and wet objects in the rock shelter by the creek.

Core Bush Trackers Activity - At the creek line sit for 30 mins with art diaries and draw pictures and write poetry. Encourage students to follow their inspiration (30 mins).

Interpretation - At the edge of the reserve, the Ranger can share how the Reserve has been regenerated by community volunteers, and how the students can get involved.

Closing Activity – 'Reflection' - Students divide a page into a 'Y' shape and put an answer to each of the following questions, in each of the three divided areas: "What did I see today? What did I hear today? How did I feel?"



5.2. Mount View Reserve Walk, Cranebrook

Grade: Easy.

Length: 1.8 km loop.

Time for excursion: 4 hours.

Environment: Cumberland Plain Woodland.

Points of Interest: Mount Pleasant, wetland restoration, animal images and sculptures along the path.

Activities: Long excursion time (for this short track) allows time for the following 2 additional activities:

- Talk by guest speaker on water management and the creation of the wetland, e.g. Council (20 mins).
- Aboriginal Cultural Presentation, e.g. NPWS Aboriginal Discovery Ranger (45 mins)

Bush walking and activities (3 hours):

Acknowledgement of Country.

Activity – ‘Spotto’ of animals and animal images on the path. When an animal image on the path is found, provide interpretation on that animal; who it is, habitat requirements and its significance.

Interpretation of animal habitat seen (eg. hollows, nests, birds) and significance of this remnant of Cumberland Plain Bushland (an endangered ecological community).

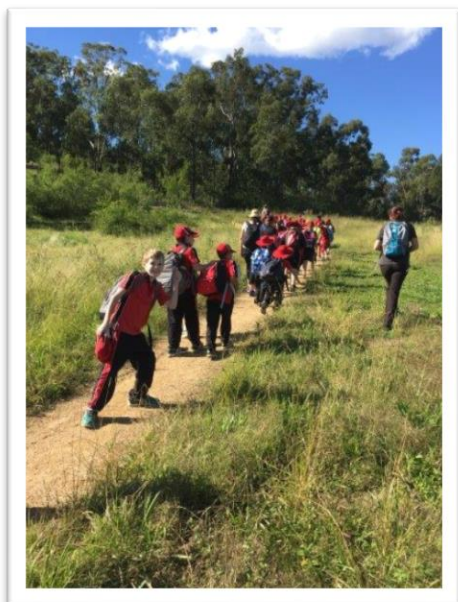
Activity at Point of Interest (Nature Play & Cultural Activity) – On top of Mount Pleasant collect sticks and build a (pretend) ‘Fire Circle’, starting with small sticks, then larger sticks. Around this fire make a corroboree and dance with clapping sticks. Form two circles: the outer circle claps the clapping sticks to create rhythm, the inner circle dances as emus and kangaroos. Students should change circles to participate in both activities.

Lunch on top of Mount Pleasant.

Core Bush Trackers Activity – Still on Mount Pleasant, students draw in their art diaries and write poetry. Hand out charcoal for drawings and bark and leaf rubbings (30 mins).

Interpretation - At the edge of the Reserve is an Olive Tree grove where the Ranger can share information on the history of the area.

Closing Activity – ‘Reflection’ - Students divide a page into a ‘Y’ shape and put an answer to each of the following questions, in each of the three divided areas: “What did I see today? What did I hear today? How did I feel?”.



5.3. Prince Henry Cliff Walk, Katoomba

Grade: Medium.

Length: 2.4 km one way.

Time for excursion: 4 hours.

Environment: Forest and woodland.

Points of Interest: Valley and cliff views.

Activities:

Bush walking and activities (4 hours):

Acknowledgement of Country and narrative on how Aboriginal children of a similar age must have lived and played here.

Activity – ‘*Rainbow Chip*’ game.

Interpretation – of the landscape and geology of the area.

Activity – Students become ‘*Wildlife Detectives*’. When an animal or evidence of an animal is seen the Ranger provides some **interpretation**.

Activity (Nature Play) – Make a ‘*Mandala*’ from different coloured objects found on the floor of the bush.

Activity (Sensory) – Smell crushed Tea-tree (*Leptospermum* spp.) and Eucalyptus leaves; feel soft Black Wattle (*Callicoma serratifolia*) leaves; taste and plait *Lomandra longifolia* leaves, provide **interpretation** to Aboriginal resource uses of this plant.

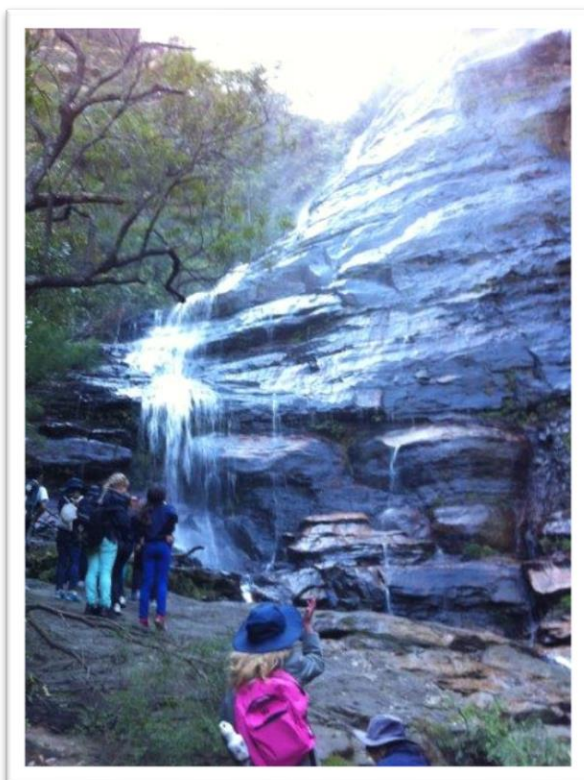
Lunch with a view.

Core Bush Trackers Activity – Allow time for drawing and poetry in the art diaries. Hand out crayons for bark and leaf rubbings (30 mins).

Activity (Nature Play) – in groups of 3-5, build a ‘*habitat*’ out of sticks, leaves and other materials found on the ground. Give each group a little finger puppet or figurine of an animal for them to make the shelter for (20 minutes).

Closing Activity – ‘*Reflection*’ - Students divide a page into a ‘Y’ shape and put an answer to each of the following questions, in each of the three divided areas: “What did I see today? What did I hear today? How did I feel?”.

5.4. Leura Cascades, Leura



Grade: Medium.

Length: 3 km loop.

Time for excursion: 4 hours.

Environment: Forest and woodland.

Points of Interest: Waterfalls, cascades and cliff views.

Partners involved on the day: School and National Parks & Wildlife Association.

Bush walking and activities (4 hours)

Acknowledgement of Country and narrative on how Aboriginal people lived and thrived here gathering their food, medicines and resources.

Activity 'Citizen Science' – Throughout the day ask students to record habitat and wildlife observations in their art diary. Back in the classroom, students can upload their observations in the Australian Living Atlas.

Activity – 'Treasure Hunt'.

Activity – Students sit quietly for 5 minutes and draw a 'Sound Map' in their art diaries.

Core Bush Trackers Activity – Allow time to draw in the art diaries and write poetry. Hand out crayons for bark and leaf rubbings (30 mins).

Interpretation - of the local environment and storm water runoff into the bushland area.

Lunch with a view.

Narrative and Story Telling of the Dharawal six seasons.

Closing Activity – 'Mud Mapping' of the day's bush walk in groups of 3-5.

Closing Reflection – Ask students to find a stick shorter than their arm and form a circle. One at a time, ask the students to throw the stick into the centre of the circle and say something they are grateful for from today's activity.

Please get in touch if you'd like to invite a NPWS Discovery/Education Ranger to join you on an excursion



6 Delivery: teaching & knowledge sharing

6.1. Pre-excursion briefing

You need to complete some paperwork and ‘set the scene’ for the children and adults involved, ahead of the excursion. Reinforce to them that this experience is not just a walk, but more an experience of spending time in the outdoors, be it sitting, playing near a creek, exploring a cave, investigating plants and animals, listening, smelling and touching etc. It is not just about reaching a destination!

The Bush Trackers Ranger and/or teacher/group leader should:

- Identify which group of children will be taking part in the *Bush Trackers* excursion.
- Introduce simple map-reading skills to the group in preparation for the excursion, so that the children understand the concept of the types of information that maps convey and the types of stories maps tell. This will stimulate ideas and engage them with developing their own maps during the walk and give them an understanding of what they need to keep an eye out for along the way.
- Discuss and decide on how best to share the artwork created and gathered during the excursion and what form the final map/nature guide will take – you could produce a beautifully designed, delightfully authentic double-sided A3 guide, similar in style to the original Bush Trackers Guide. Or you could produce a one-off sculpture/collage/mosaic/mud map/picture/film etc, which could be captured in a photo or video or printed.



The Bush Trackers Ranger should prepare and conduct the following:

- Choose a local walk close to the community group/organisation/school of a suitable length for the children, (ideally no more than 3km), with exciting features that children will enjoy, such as creeks, caves, etc. Do a reconnaissance of the walk to ensure its suitability. Ideally the chosen walk will be within walking distance of the organisation/school's/community group's premises; if not, you will need to agree and coordinate transport.
- Visit the organisation/community group to speak with children and teachers/group leaders for a brief introduction to the themes of the Bush Trackers Program and what to wear, bring and expect on the excursion.

6.2. The excursion

On the morning of the excursion, you as Bush Trackers Ranger should introduce the participating group to the following:

- ✓ Prepare the children with Health & Safety instructions and Minimum Impact Guidelines for your chosen excursion location.



- ✓ Explain the objectives of the project and the outline of the excursion to the children. Help them understand that their observations and experiences are going to lead to the creation of a map and nature guide of their local walk for other children who have never been there. Tell them they are going to become the guides, the experts of this particular nature space and will be able to lead other children and families along it in the future.

- ✓ During the walk, help children learn about and discuss the natural, cultural and historical heritage of the walk and surrounding area.
- ✓ Leaving at an agreed time, the group will walk from the start (organisation/community group's premises) to the beginning of the walk accompanied by the Bush Trackers Ranger, teachers/group leader and parents.
- ✓ Allow a minimum of two hours for the group to complete the walk at a slow pace.
- ✓ Morning tea and lunch, supplied and carried by the participants themselves, will be eaten at suitable spots along the walk.
- ✓ There will be plenty of time for the children to stop and explore, touch and investigate things that grab their interest along the walk.
- ✓ Time will be allocated for the children to draw and write about their observations.
- ✓ Participants are to return to the starting place in plenty of time before home time.

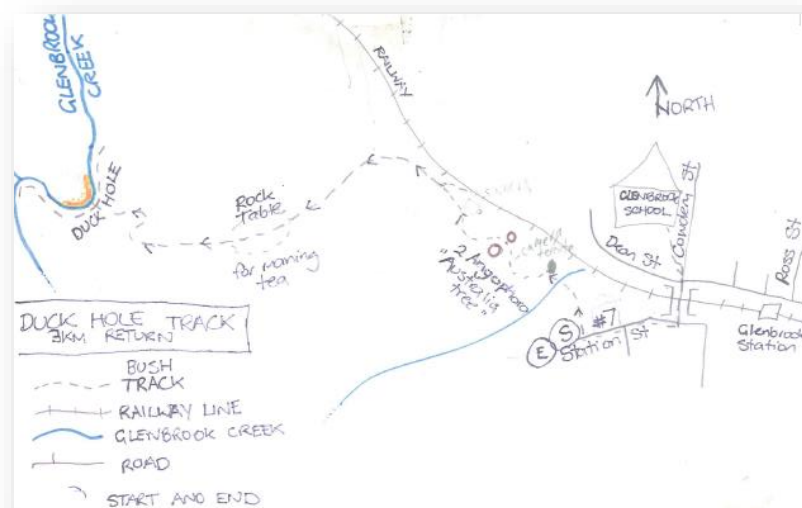
Remember: you can contact us anytime for advice or call on us to help you guide an excursion
BlueMtns.Education@environment.nsw.gov.au

7 Outdoor activities and tools for engagement

During the excursion you can encourage the children to take part in sensory games and practical activities by supporting the children's own interpretations of the different environments. Incorporate your own personality, style and creativity – have fun yourself and the children will too!

Materials needed:

- ✓ Art diary and a few coloured pencils
- ✓ Charcoal or crayons for rubbings
- ✓ Camera (optional)
- ✓ Tablet or smart phone to record findings in a Citizen Science App - such as Australian Living Atlas, Hollows as Homes, or iNaturalist (optional)
- ✓ Map of the bush walk



Teaching Tips:

Use a mixture of some of the following activities; choose at least **one** activity from each section: 7.1 Nature connection activities, 7.2 Historic heritage and 7.3 Cultural heritage below.

- You will need about 6 - 10 activities in your tool kit for an excursion.
- Always use an Art Diary as an activity so you can collect the children's artwork and musings.
- Create your own activity!
- Don't always give answers straight away to a question asked, but ask questions of participants in return – does anyone know why this is?
- Encourage a 'WOW' factor with your own curiosity and passion.



Bush Trackers Excursions Format

Ideally include each of these techniques in an excursion:

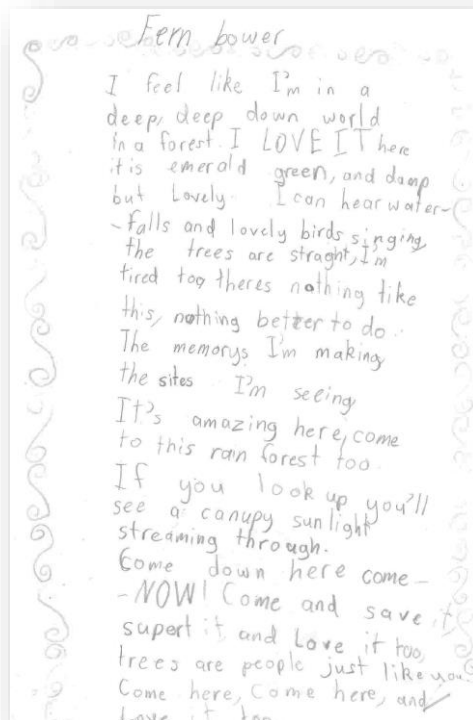
- ✓ Begin with an Acknowledgement of Country (see an example at the beginning of this tool kit)
- ✓ Interpretation of some information (natural, historical, cultural)
- ✓ Narrative and story telling
- ✓ Sensory experience
- ✓ Nature Connection Activities (see section 7.1)
- ✓ Use of art diary for drawing, poetry and mapping
- ✓ Closing reflection - ask "What did you see? What did you hear? How did you feel?" and/ or 'Mud Mapping'.

7.1. Nature connection activities

Art diary and pen - allow time for reflection, drawing and poetry

Include a map in the diary for kids to mark locations on; this can form the basis for the final map/nature guide

Use charcoal or crayons for bark or leaf rubbings



Encourage a silent minute, or more, to watch for wildlife and listen for birds, splashing water, rustling leaves and other sounds; create a 'Sound Map' (see below)

Become a 'Wildlife Detective' or play 'Spotto' (e.g. 'bird spotto'). Option to make 'binoculars' with toilet rolls before the excursion



Go bug hunting under leaves, rocks, hollows and behind bark: use a stick, rather than fingers, to delve into the unknown!

Tell stories and use narrative to engage the imagination and create an emotional connection. Ask “How does it make you feel? Describe it in a poem, song, story, artwork or dance”

Find clapping sticks to make rhythm and music

Choose a scenic place to have a picnic

Use animal puppets of animals found in the local environment

At the end of the excursion get participants to say or think of something they are grateful for today

As a small team make a stick shelter or pretend camp fire to sit around



In pairs or small groups, one person has their eyes closed or blind folded and are lead to a tree to feel it. Bring the person back, spin them around and then un-blindfold them. Which tree did they feel?



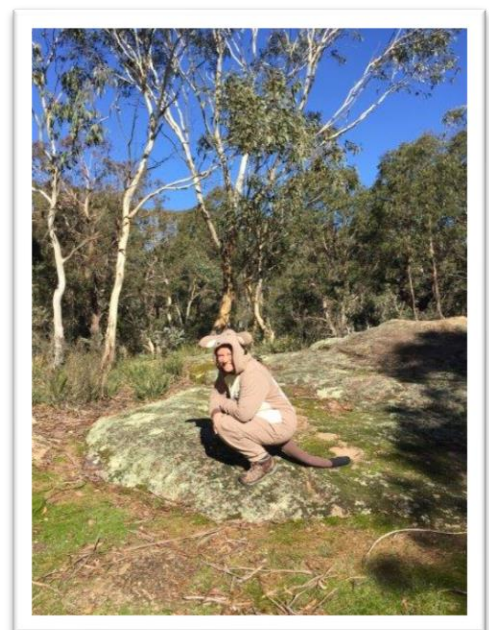
Crush and smell fragrant leaves such as Eucalyptus and Tea Tree leaves

Crush and dissolve different ochre rocks to make paint for faces, hands or transfer to rock or tree trunks

Use fallen bark and sedge or vines to make and race ‘boats’ on a creek

Stealth Walk: walk quietly like a hunter and see what wildlife you can see. Firstly place the heel of one foot down on the ground, roll the outside side of the foot down and lastly the toes.

Observe animals or plants and mimic their movement or behaviour

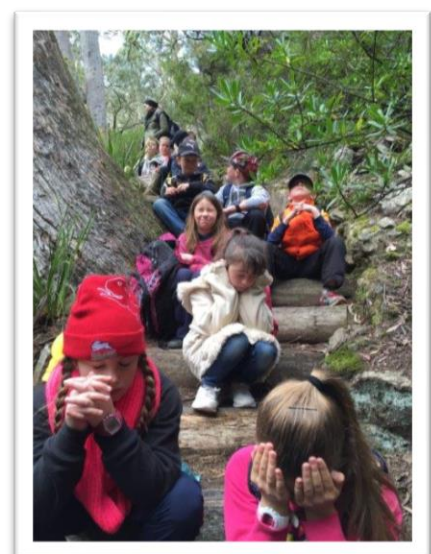
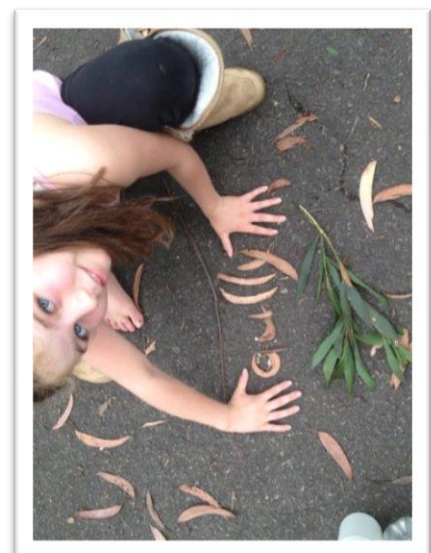
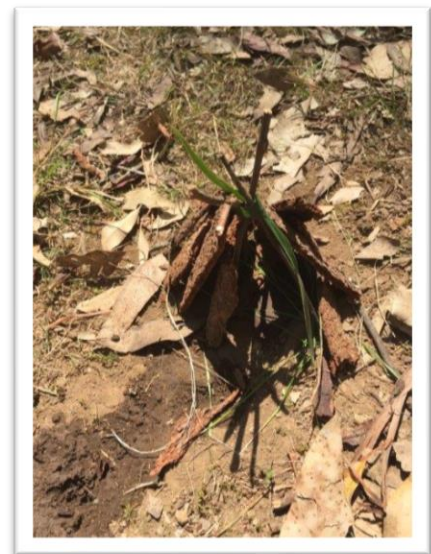


Habitat Building: As a small team, make a model of a nest or shelter for an animal that lives in the local environment. Encourage the use of different materials for different benefits e.g. large sticks for strength and protection against predators, moss for soft 'bedding' and large leaves to protect against rain. Test the effectiveness of the nest/shelter by putting a model animal inside and sprinkling it with water – is it dry or wet? Dismantle or leave it to revisit later – have any creatures moved in?

Eco Art: Use natural found objects (e.g. bark, gum nuts, stones, leaves, sticks, flowers, grasses, vines, earth, feathers) to make relief sculptures of animals found in the environment, or abstract shapes. Build the base shape from earth then enhance/decorate with objects to represent features (e.g. sticks for legs, grass for fur) or provide variety of colour, texture and shape.

Mud Map: At the end of the excursion, in groups of 3-5, finish by making a mud map using found objects on the ground to make a map of your excursion and the area explored. Etch or mark out a boundary for the map, inside add prominent features (e.g. track, big tree or rock, creek, building), then more detailed ones, interesting things that stood out (e.g. patch of ferns, nest), even transient things (e.g. flock of birds flying overhead, ants scuttling across the track).

Sound Map: Sit quietly to listen for, and make a record of, the different sounds you hear. In the middle of a sheet of paper mark a cross (this represents you), then draw other symbols/shapes to represent other natural or man-made sounds you hear; position them on the paper to represent their location in relation to yours (e.g. behind or in front of you) and make their size and number represent how close/far away and loud/quiet the sound was.



Mandala (*artwork of concentric circles*): Place a stone/object in what will be the centre of your Mandala. Ask participants to find **non-living** items of a certain colour/texture on the ground. Find one theme at a time and get participants to bring items back e.g. something red, then yellow, then green; or rough, then smooth, then soft.

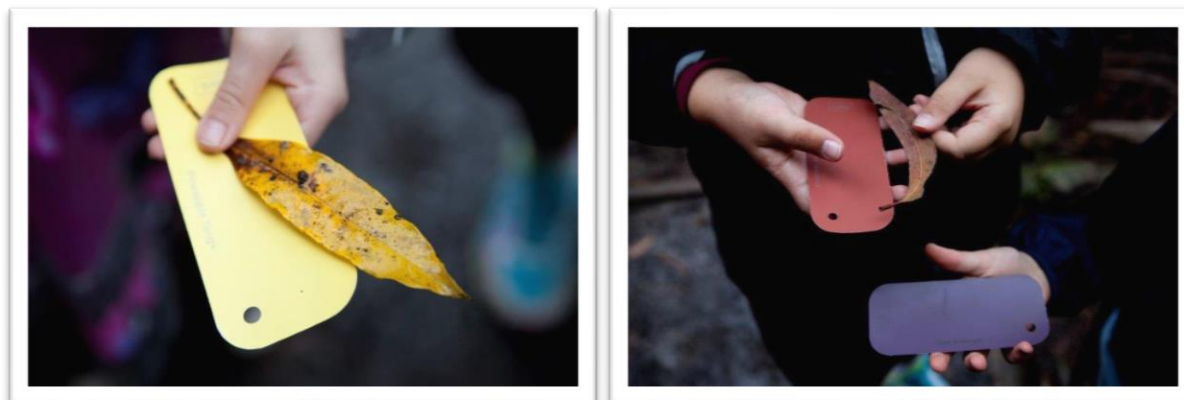
Place the items in themed concentric circles around the centre object to create your Mandala: stand back to better admire your group effort.

Reflection: Ask were they surprised by the colours/textures found in the bush and why are they there?



Rainbow Chip Game: Randomly hand out colour paint cards (from hardware stores/paint shops) to participants. Useful colours are: yellow, orange, purple, white, pink, red, greens and browns. Ask participants to play bingo while they walk and match their colour with a colour in the bush. Remember don't pick leaves, flowers or fruits rather bring the group to share the great match! Explain they may be surprised with what colours they find and where. Once they have matched their colour cards, collect the cards, shuffle and hand a new one out to each participant.

Reflection: Ask where they matched the colours in the bush and why those colours occur in the bush?



Treasure Hunt: Ask participants to collect **non-living** samples of different trees and shrubs from the ground, within a defined area along a track e.g. 20m.

Ask participants to form groups of 3-5, give each group one of the samples (the treasure for the hunt!).

Ask participants to find the tree/shrub that their sample came from within the defined area. Once found, ask participants to stay at their tree/shrub until you can check they are correct.



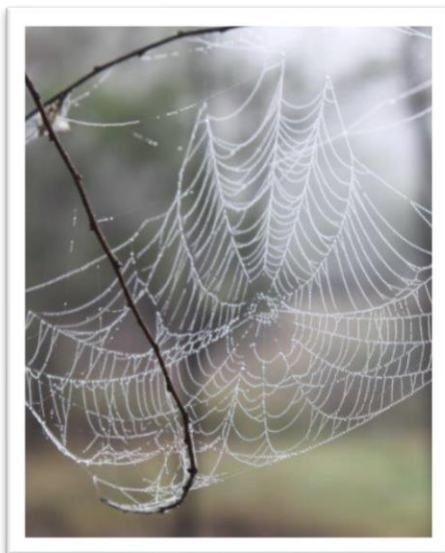
Reflection: How did they identify their tree or shrub with their sample?

Drawing a Habitat Tree: Choose an old tree with hollows and other visible habitat (e.g. nest, possum drey, burls, spider webs) to draw.

Ask participants to sit down and draw (using pencil and paper) the Habitat Tree with its branches, leaves, bark, hollows and other visible habitat.

Ask participants to consider what might live in the Habitat Tree, then draw them in position (e.g. possum, gliders, owls, birds, microbats, spiders, lichen, insects and bugs).

Reflection: Trees are a living community of thousands of species (1 tree can host 10,000 species!). Old trees provide important habitat for creatures in hollows (these can take over 70 years to form), behind bark, on leaves, in crevices and in tree branches and trunks.



Contact NPWS Education/Discovery Rangers to demonstrate these activities on your excursion:
BlueMtns.Education@environment.nsw.gov.au



Water bug survey or macro-invertebrate water sampling with the assistance of your local Council or Streamwatch.

Discuss weed invasion and rehabilitation techniques (possibly with the assistance of your local Council, Land Care group or National Parks & Wildlife Service)

Discuss the local environment as habitat for native animals. Play 'Homes and Hideaways' and find hollows, crevices, webs, nests or ant mounds

Look for evidence of animals such as tracks, scats, chewed leaves, regurgitated pellets, 'scribbles' on Scribbly Gums



Use Citizen Science apps (such as Australian Living Atlas, Hollows as Homes or iNaturalist) to upload your findings from the excursion.



7.2. Historical heritage

Use interpretation to share historical information about the track, trail or local village or town. What's important about this place? Seek assistance from the local historical society or council.

7.3. Cultural heritage

Involve the Traditional Owners of the site, or local Indigenous members, by asking them if they would like to help plan or deliver the excursion; find out who to contact from the local Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Local Aboriginal Land Council or local Council



Acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land at the start of the excursion or invite them to provide a Welcome to Country

Ask participants to imagine Aboriginal children (like themselves) living and playing in this area

Navigate using nature – stars, shadows cast by the sun, lichen growing on one side of a tree's trunk

Show and discuss natural found foods (wombat berries, banksia flowers), but warn of the danger of misidentification, medicines (paper bark as a 'band aid', sap and saw sedge as an antiseptic) and resources (rock as paint/ tools, leaves/bark to weave/make string from/make vessels out of)



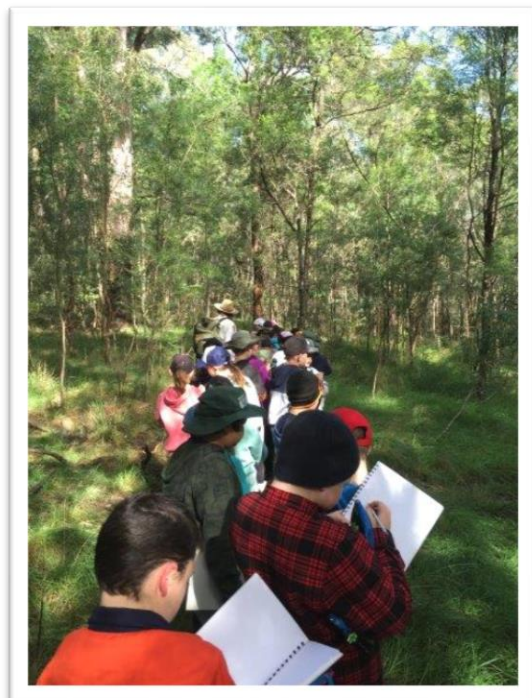
Please help to preserve our precious cultural heritage and remember all Aboriginal sites, animals and plants are protected. Don't walk on Aboriginal engravings, grinding grooves or touch rock art. Don't remove artefacts. Be respectful of Aboriginal Elders.

8 Post-excursion summary

It's important to know and record what went well and what didn't, so that you can improve and adapt your excursions each time. Ask the children for feedback including what they liked and disliked. You are welcome to use or adapt our before and after surveys to help, see ['before survey' at attachment 5](#) and ['after survey' at attachment 6](#).

Encourage the teachers/group leaders/parents to allow time for the children to work on their art/stories/poems etc upon return and in the following days. Select work (e.g. from the art diaries, photos taken) to contribute to the final map/nature guide, whether a 'traditional' Bush Trackers Guide, one-off sculpture/collage/mosaic/mud map/picture/film etc, captured in a photo or video or printed.

Ask teachers/group leaders/parents to provide list of names of all children who participated in the excursion, so they can be included on the final map/nature guide.



Encourage the community group/organisation to help the children apply what they've learned and experienced beyond the excursion: build a bug hotel, make and put up nest boxes or create a habitat garden on the premises and continue to observe and record the wild goings on!

Sew the seed or, if possible, make arrangements with the community group/organisation of doing it all again next year, with different children, in a different location.

8.1. Next steps

Distributing the map/nature guide

Spread the word to share your passion, connect more children to nature and protect the environment! It's important to tell others about the Bush Trackers Program, the great work you're doing, how they can get involved and how they can obtain or purchase a nature guide.

Once you have produced your map/nature guide, ensure copies are provided to the community group/organisation.

Don't be shy! Remember to use project partners' knowledge and dissemination mechanisms to help you publicise and distribute your wonderful product.

Social media

Embrace social media and post to your Facebook, Twitter or Instagram pages. This is a great and cost efficient way to get information out fast and frequently and build the Bush Trackers Rangers brand.

Traditional media

Why stop at print e.g. organisation newsletter: consider contacting local radio. Local news channels may also be interested! Write and issue a media release about the Program to local contacts in your network.

Evaluation and adaptation

Assess the type of experience you, the children and the teachers/group leaders/parents have had, as part of the Bush Trackers Program. Ask others for feedback and consider any changes you or they might make to improve the whole process, experience and outcome, for next time. Use or adapt our before and after surveys to help – see [‘before survey’ at attachment 5](#) and [‘after survey’ at attachment 6](#)

Incorporate your own ideas

Don’t hold back! If you have ideas, try them. Next time, try producing something different to an A3 nature guide, maybe a map, guide, booklet, poster, model, calendar or artwork. If your ideas aren’t as successful as you’d hoped, don’t worry, you can use the available and referenced resources.

Tailor and enhance this Resource Kit for your specific needs

This Resource Kit is a suggested framework, a starting point, so feel free to take the elements that are going to work for you and your chosen groups and activities.

Share your ideas with NPWS and project partners

We want to hear from you and benefit from your experience and innovation. If you have ideas or suggestions for changes or improvements to this Resource Kit, please use the Bush Trackers contact page at: <https://www.bushtrackers.com.au/contact>

Recruitment

Recruiting the next generation of Bush Trackers Rangers is one of the primary goals of this Program. As a new or established Bush Tracker Ranger, you are the best advocate of this program and the benefits it brings to communities and the environment.

We’d like your help to inspire and recruit our next generation of Bush Trackers Rangers. The notes and resources below should help with this process.

Recruit ‘trainee’ Bush Trackers Rangers

Add a ‘call to action’ in any marketing activity to encourage awareness and involvement in the Program. Encourage posts to social media with links to Bush Trackers Ranger recruitment and training page. Retweet, share and Instagram.

Invite trainees to shadow you on your next excursion

Shadowing a Bush Trackers Ranger on an excursion is a great way for interested people to experience what it’s like to be a Bush Trackers Ranger. They will gain some of the necessary skills to lead, inspire and educate children and, with the resources available in this resource kit, bring their own ideas, interests, enthusiasm and personality into their future excursions.

Share this Resource Kit with trainees



Please share this Resource Kit and all available resources with any potential or interested parties. For further information, refer them to the Bush Trackers website, where they will be able to get current contact details for key project personnel and project partners.

<https://www.bushtrackers.com.au/>

Future Development

Repeat stages 3.3 'Excursion', 3.4 'Delivery: Teaching and Knowledge Sharing' and 3.5 'Marketing': plan new excursions and experiences to inspire, educate and enable people to sustainably connect with, respect and protect the environment for future generations.

9 In summary...

The aim of the Bush Trackers Program is to show kids and their families how easy and fun it is to spend time in nature. Bush Trackers Rangers create an opportunity for children and their families to seek and build an evolving relationship with nature and the outdoors simply by spending time in it and experiencing it on their own terms through their own eyes.

Remember to:

Make it **FUN**

Get **CREATIVE**

Encourage **EXPLORATION**

LISTEN to the participants

Create an **EMOTIONAL CONNECTION**

Connect with **CULTURAL HERITAGE**

And most importantly, be happy that you have made a difference!



10 References and resources

10.1. Contacts

Bush Trackers

<http://www.bushtrackers.com.au>

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/>

Your local council!

10.2. Templates

Example risk assessment	attachment 1
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Example what to bring	attachment 2
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Example permission note	attachment 3
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Example Bush Trackers model and text release	attachment 4
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10.3. Evaluation

Please use or amend our before and after surveys to create your own evaluation – see [‘before survey’ at attachment 5](#) and [‘after survey’ at attachment 6](#)

10.4. Teaching and activity information

Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre - multitouch ibooks ‘Eucalypt Forest’ and ‘Habitat’

<http://fieldofmarseec.nsw.edu.au/digital-learning/multitouch-books/>

Nature Play activities for children

<http://childreninnaturensw.com.au/>

The Atlas of Living Australia, CSIRO - hands-on, nature based activities

<https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Collections/ALA>

Citizen Science Database - information on animals in your area and for you to contribute your own data from an excursion

<https://www.ala.org.au/citizen-science-central/>

iNaturalist – explore and share your observations from the natural world

<https://www.inaturalist.org>

Hollows as Homes – register your wildlife and hollows sightings

<https://www.rbg Syd.nsw.gov.au/HollowsHome>

Birds in Backyards – the oldest citizen science program in Australia for bird research, education and conservation

<http://www.birdsinbackyards.net>

Wild Pollinator Count – contribute your wild pollinator insect findings to this conservation project

<https://wildpollinatorcount.com>

TurtleSAT – help map freshwater turtles in your local community

<https://www.turtlesat.org.au/turtlesat/default.aspx>

WomSAT – help record wombats in your local area

<https://womsat.org.au/womsat/default.aspx>

Stream Watch – monitor and protect the health of local waterways

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/streamwatch>

Ranger Vision – mapping biodiversity for teachers and students

<https://www.ranger.vision>

Dharawal Dreaming Stories

<https://dharawalstories.com/>

Dharawal Seasonal Calendar

<http://www.bom.gov.au/iwk/dharawal/index.shtml>

Australian Association for Environmental Education

<http://www.aaee.org.au> <http://www.aaee.org.au/publication/links-recommended/>

10.5. Logistical resources and guidelines

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) weather reports

<http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/>

Minimal Impact Bush Walking Guidelines

<http://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/bushwalkers-code/>

Bush Safety Guidelines

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/bushwalking-safety>

Working with Children Check

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check>

First Aid Certificate

<http://www.stjohnnsw.com.au>

For teachers, schools and community educators

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/forteachers.htm>

Teachers' Kit - What is a National Park?

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/edresources/TeachersKitNationalpark.htm>

Australian Museum

<https://australianmuseum.net.au/>

Australian Wildlife Conservancy

<http://www.australianwildlife.org/>

Environment Protection Authority

www.epa.nsw.gov.au/

Think Before You Trek

<https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/safety/bushwalking-safety/trip-intention-form>

10.6. Further reading for adults

Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) NSW 2017,
'A guide to planning a best practice sustainability education and engagement project', Sydney.

Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) 2015,
'Make the Change: A framework for Education and Engagement for Sustainability 2014-2021',
Sydney.
<https://www.aaeensw.org.au/sites/aaeensw.org.au/files/pages/files/makethechangeframework-oct2015.pdf>

'Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder' by Richard Louv,
published in 2008 by Algonquin Books

10.7. Further reading for children

'*Sam's Bush Journey*' by Sally Morgan & Ezekiel Kwaymullina & illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft,
published in 2009 by Little Hare Books

Sam is a city boy and doesn't care about the bush: Aboriginal creators have woven a magical story about journeys and survival that suggest that there is more to the Australian bush than meets the eye.

'*My Place*' by Nadia Wheatley & illustrated by Donna Rawlins, published in 1988 by Walker Books,
listen at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inL_Lf-3YOY

An Australian classic that takes you back to the past, depicting the history of one particular piece of land in Sydney from 1788 to 1988 through the stories of children who lived there.

'*The Buggiest Bug*' by Carol Diggory Shields & illustrated by Scott Nash, published in 2005 by
Candlewick

A fun children's tale, which explores different features of bugs and insects.

'*Possum Magic*' by Mem Fox & illustrated by Julie Vivias, published in 1983 by HMH Books for
Young Readers, listen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BboBeS-vhig>

A children's story of two possums who make their way across Australia to find the magic food that will make Hush possum visible once more: a story to whet your appetite for a bush picnic!

Example risk assessment



Host organisation or person: _____

Location: _____

Phone contact: _____

e-mail contact: _____

Web address: _____

Activity/program: Easy or Medium grade walk/ educational activity

Recommended age group/fitness level/ prerequisite skills: _____

Staff accreditation/ competence for this activity/program: Working with Children

Clearance. First Aid trained and certified. _____

Possible Hazard or Risk	Suggested risk management strategy
Unsuitable weather	Check weather forecast leading up to activity date and liaises if postponing activity before the day of the activity.
Changing weather and exposure to the sun/wind/rain	Circulate "What to Bring" list to help ensure all participants are suitably equipped including appropriate clothing and suggested items listed especially water.
Carparks/roads next to meeting place and start of walk	Be aware and responsible for participants in carpark areas prior to and after the activity
Hazards in the natural and built environment including cliffs, uneven or slippery ground, stairs.	Do a 'Take 5' safety assessment prior to each activity, and at each new venue. Includes a safety briefing at the beginning of the activity and at pertinent times for the duration. Bush Tracker Ranger stays at the front of group to constantly observe track conditions.
Injury on the activity	Bush Trackers Rangers are certified with First Aid and carry a first aid kit.
Participants get separated from group.	Bush Trackers Rangers brief participants at the beginning of activity to stay on track and with group. Try to engaged a 'tail ender' to ensure no dawdlers are left behind. Count student number of each group prior to start of walk and keep check throughout activity
Participant suffers from exhaustion – lack of fitness.	All activities are designed to complete the walk easily without significant physical exertion. Bush Tracker Ranger ensures full scheduled time for activity is available. Check for any special needs or physical constraints prior to confirming activity.
Serious medical condition arising (asthma, allergies, epilepsy, knee/back/ankle problems)	Identify any serious medical conditions in advance of the activity and consider whether they are able to participate. Ensure understanding of any special needs, allergies and makes arrangements as required. Record emergency contact details of all participants. Ensure participants carry personal medication as required (eg asthma puffer).
End of walk	Bush Tracker Rangers lead participants to the end of the track/activity.

What to bring for Bush Trackers activities



To ensure your comfort and safety on your Bush Trackers activity, please check that you have a small backpack so that hands are free to hold onto art diaries, railings etc.

In your backpack you should carry:

- a minimum of 600ml water (not soft drink or juice)
- snacks and/or lunch
- a raincoat
- beanie, gloves and a warm jumper (April – Oct)
- any personal medications e.g. asthma puffer, EpiPen;
- a small plastic bag for rubbish
- a camera (optional)
- small torch (optional)
- a small first aid kit could be useful
- paper and pencils or pens for drawing, writing, colouring etc.

Please wear:

- enclosed walking shoes
- a hat and sun screen
- a warm jacket (April –Oct)

Minimal impact bush tracking...

...means you try to do no damage at all to the environment so that someone following you could not tell you had been there.

Take nothing but photos, leave nothing behind, and:

- always keep to the track and tread softly and quietly
- don't pick the flowers or plants in the bush
- be gentle and careful if you touch things (don't touch snakes and spiders!)
- carry your rubbish out with you



Example permission note



Dear Parents,

We have organised an excursion on: _____

which will involve a bushwalk at _____

It will enable participants to learn about nature, cultural stories and bush safety.

We will depart at _____am and will return at approximately _____pm.

Children should bring a backpack with:

- a minimum of 600ml water (not soft drink or juice)
- snacks and/or lunch
- a raincoat
- beanie, gloves and a warm jumper (April – Oct)
- any personal medications e.g. asthma puffer, epipen
- a small plastic bag for rubbish
- a camera (optional)

Please ensure children wear:

- enclosed walking shoes
- a hat and sun screen
- a warm jacket (April –Oct)

Please complete the Permission Slip below and the Model and Text Release Form and return to school before _____.

I give permission for my child, _____ of class _____ to attend the Bush Trackers experience on _____

Parent/carer signature _____ Date: _____

If your child has any medical conditions that may be an impact on this excursion please indicate below. All excursions are equipped with First Aid Kits

Medical condition _____

Example Bush Trackers model and text release



I, _____

give [organisation] _____

permission to use the following:

☐ Written material by myself (or my child) _____

☐ Quotes by myself (or my child) _____

☐ Photographic images of myself (or my child) _____

Taken with my consent, by [organisation]: _____

At [insert location] _____

These images will be used for the Bush Trackers project by [organisation] _____

I understand that [organisation]: _____

- will retain copyright of the images
- aims to maintain the integrity of these images and not allow their use in a derogatory treatment or context.
- may share images with project partners and sponsors for the promotion of the Bush Trackers Project.

Name: _____

Signature / Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

BUSH TRACKERS BEFORE SURVEY

Before going on the excursion, please tell us a little about you and your experiences.

NAME: _____

[We ask for your name so that we can match the before and after surveys following your excursion. Names will not be analysed or distributed]

1. Do you go bushwalking? (please tick one)

- ☐ LOTS (at least once a month)
☐ SOMETIMES (a few times a year)
☐ HARDLY EVER (maybe once a year)
☐ I HAVE NEVER BEEN ON A BUSHWALK

2. If you have been bushwalking before, where did you go? _____

3. Have you been on this bushwalk before? (please tick one)

- ☐ YES
☐ NO

5. What do you know about how to keep safe in the bush? _____

6. How important do you think it is to have **bushland areas that people are allowed to visit?**
(please tick one)

- ☐ Very important
☐ Important
☐ A little important
☐ Not at all important

7. How concerned are you about **protecting bushland areas?** (please tick one)

- ☐ Very concerned
☐ Concerned
☐ A little concerned
☐ Not at all concerned

PLEASE TURN OVER THE PAGE....

8. How concerned are you about **looking after the environment generally**? (please tick one)

- ☐ Very concerned
☐ Concerned
☐ A little concerned
☐ Not at all concerned

9. How much do you **enjoy being in the bush**? (please tick one)

- ☐ Very much
☐ A lot
☐ A little
☐ Not at all

10. Here are some **thoughts** and **feelings** that people have about the bush.

Please rate each comment with a tick ✓	Very much	Some	A little	Not at all
I think the bush is beautiful				
I think being in the bush is fun				
I think being in the bush is relaxing				
I feel safe in the bush				
I feel happy being in the bush				
I feel a sense of adventure being in the bush				
I want to spend time in the bush				
I want to help look after the bush				

11. Please choose 2 of the following things that you think have most influenced what you know, think and feel about the bush (please tick **two**)

- ☐ My experiences in the bush
☐ Movies and TV
☐ Bush Trackers excursion
☐ My parent's interest in the bush
☐ What I have learnt in school

Thanks so much for your help!

BUSH TRACKERS AFTER SURVEY

Thanks so much for your help today!

Now that you've been on the excursion, we'd like to know what you thought of it,
and how you feel about the bush.

NAME: _____

[We ask for your name so that we can match the before and after surveys following your excursion. Names will not be analysed or distributed]

1. Please rate today's activity (please tick one)

- ☐ Excellent
☐ Really good
☐ Good
☐ Just OK
☐ Not very good

2. What was the best thing about today's activity? _____

3. What did you learn on the excursion about how to have minimal impact in the bush? _____

4. What did you learn on the excursion about how to keep safe in the bush? _____

5. How important do you think it is to have **bushland areas that people are allowed to visit?**
(please tick one)

- ☐ Very important
☐ Important
☐ A little important
☐ Not at all important

6. How concerned are you about **protecting bushland areas like this?** (please tick one)

- ☐ Very concerned
☐ Concerned
☐ A little concerned
☐ Not at all concerned

7. How concerned are you about **looking after the environment generally?** (please tick one)

- ☐ Very concerned
☐ Concerned
☐ A little concerned
☐ Not at all concerned

PLEASE TURN OVER THE PAGE....

8. How much do you **enjoy being in the bush**? (please tick one)

- ☐ Very much
☐ A lot
☐ A little
☐ Not at all

9. Here are some **thoughts and feelings** that people have about the bush.

Please rate each comment with a tick ✓	Very much	Some	A little	Not at all
I think the bush is beautiful				
I think being in the bush is fun				
I think being in the bush is relaxing				
I feel safe in the bush				
I feel happy being in the bush				
I feel a sense of adventure being in the bush				
I want to spend time in the bush				
I want to help look after the bush				

10. Here are some things that people **know** about the bush.

Do you think you learned more about these by doing Bush Trackers?

Please rate each comment with a tick ✓	I learned...			I didn't learn anything more
	...a lot more	...some more	...a little more	
The bush is home to native animals & plants				
The bush is a place of Aboriginal culture				
How to stay safe in the bush				
The names of some native plants				
The names of some native animals				
How my actions affect the bush				

11. Please choose 2 of the following things that you think have most influenced what you know, think and feel about the bush (please tick **two**)

- ☐ My experiences in the bush
☐ Movies and TV
☐ Bush Trackers excursion
☐ My parent's interest in the bush
☐ What I have learnt in school

12. Does this Bush Trackers excursion inspire you to take your family or friends into the bush?

- ☐ Very much
☐ A lot
☐ A little
☐ Not at all

13. Is there anything else you'd like to say here? _____

