



Schools Education Services

Victoria's natural and cultural environments provide some amazing learning opportunities for students from all ages and backgrounds. Parks Victoria provides educational services for school groups at a large number of park locations across the state. These services range from education kits for self guided excursions to curriculum based experiential programs at key Education Centres.

Schools education services.

Park based studies are a great way to encourage student leadership, co-operation, problem solving and critical thinking all within an exciting outdoor environment. Parks Victoria provides a range of curriculum based education programs to cater for all levels from Prep to Year 12.



Key education centres

To facilitate effective park based learning, education centres have been developed in park locations representative of Victoria's diverse natural and cultural environments. These locations are:

- Wilsons Promontory National Park
- Dandenong Ranges National Park
- Serendip Sanctuary
- Grampians National Park -Brambuk - The National Park and Cultural Centre
- Werribee Park Mansion

These education centres provide opportunities for students to get truly engaged in nature by participating in curriculum based hands on learning. Programs are designed to deliver exciting, hands-on activities and cover VELS, VCE and CSFII learning frameworks.

These centres are staffed by dedicated Education Officers who can provide fun, hands on educational programs and activities on a variety of topics. Refer to the specific Education Program Guides to view what is offered, or contact an Education Officer on 13 1963.

Ranger guided activities

In addition to Parks Victoria's education centres, education services are often available in other parks and reserves throughout the

state. Services depend on local staffing availability and range from guided tours at areas such as the Buchan Caves and Organ Pipes National Park to brief park introductory talks and the provision of materials for excursions in other areas. Contact your favourite park to enquire about possible services.

Teachers resources

Parks Victoria can provide teachers with study resources to suit primary and secondary study needs. There are a variety of education kits, maps, information packs and children's activities available online via the education section of www.parkweb.vic.gov.au. These products have been designed for teachers to use to incorporate class based studies into park environments.

In addition, Parks Victoria conducts annual teacher professional development and student career information days. Contact an education centre or keep an eye on Parks Victoria's website for dates and more information.



Ranger Roo

Ranger Roo is the mascot of Parks Victoria's Junior Ranger Program. This program has been developed to inspire primary school students to visit, enjoy and learn about Victoria's parks. The Ranger Roo website www.rangerroo.com.au has

education

For further information
Parks Victoria
Information Centre
Call **13 1963**
or visit the
Parks Victoria website
www.parkweb.vic.gov.au

a variety of fun and interactive games, fact files and activities suitable for primary school aged children to complement and encourage park visits.

Park excursions

Before you go on a park excursion, it is important that you are aware of and implement planning procedures as set out by the Department of Education and early Childhood Development. These can be viewed in the *Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors* document, available from www.education.vic.gov.au.

Remember to contact the local park staff to advise them of your visit. Make sure you are aware of the parks current conditions, its facilities and that there are no other large groups visiting at the same time. There is also a handy teachers tips section on the education section of <http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au>

Many parks have self guided activities available for school visits. Check the Parks Victoria website for activities that can be downloaded or contact an Education Officer for assistance.

Environment Corps funding

As a part of the Environment Corps program, up to \$1500 funding is available for partnerships between school groups and Parks Victoria parks.



This funding can be used to purchase project materials, including tools and personal protective equipment for use on school-park works.

Environment Corps is a program that aims to involve young people with Parks Victoria in field based projects such as revegetation, flora & fauna monitoring, and habitat rehabilitation.

In addition to the skills gained directly from these projects, with the assistance of our education

staff, projects can be specifically designed to integrate curriculum needs, providing valuable hands on project links to your classroom.

Schools participating in the Environment Corps program have already shown success, with activities ranging from tree planting to captive breeding of endangered species.

How to arrange a project:

- Where possible, obtain a management plan for the park of interest. Management plans can be obtained by visiting www.parkweb.vic.gov.au.
- This will give you an idea of the park's management priorities and possible projects.
- Speak to the staff at the park of interest. A local ranger may be able to advise on project areas that may be planned for the park, or suggest a suitable alternative if there are no project opportunities available.

Project selection

Student participation in the planning and decision-making process is encouraged. When selecting a project consideration should be given to:

- Accessibility
- Students' interests
- Local issues
- Size, scale, and time constraints
- Access to resources, and students' strengths

Project ideas include:

- Revegetating or restoring habitat in local parks and reserves in conjunction with Parks Victoria and local Friends Groups
- Fauna surveys (kangaroo counts, koala surveys, habitat monitoring)
- Nest box construction, placing and monitoring
- Reducing erosion by tree planting or brush matting
- Organising a community event (beach clean-ups, Clean-Up Australia Day planting days)
- Weed eradication/control
- Other projects as appropriate that may tie in with existing subjects, such as signage, projects (Art), a documentary on the park (Media), research project and presentation

More detailed information on the Environment Corps program can be found in the *Parks Victoria Environment Corps Resource Kit Overview*. This is available from the education section of www.parkweb.vic.gov.au or by phoning 13 1963.