

Planting the seeds for environmental sustainability



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FEW things engage students as much as getting a first hand look at the way the world works.

That was the excitement awaiting grade five students from St Patrick's, Yarrunga and Appin Park primary schools at the North East School Environment Day at the HP Barr Reserve on Tuesday.

Children attending the excursion were assigned to groups and enjoyed learning about a wide range of environment-related topics in an interactive way.

One topic that was of particular interest to the students was North East Catchment Management Authority's water bugs presentation, where students could look at live water bugs and even design their own macro-invertebrate.

Nicole Godde, from Appin Park Primary School, said many children enjoyed a session run by Aboriginal artist, David Dunn, who guided students through producing spe-



cial pieces of Indigenous artwork using his silhouette technique.

"They had a really good time," she said.

"There were lots of really good activities, the girls from Galen Catholic College did a very interesting presentation on palm oil and there was an Aboriginal painting session."

Teachers attending the event, including Dan Hogarth from Yarrunga Primary School, said the students had benefitted from the chance to learn in a hands-on environment.

"I think they forgot they were learning," he said.

"The kids got a buzz from being outside the classroom and being interactive so it is good to give that opportunity to the students."

Andrea O'Connor, from St Patrick's Primary School, echoed Mr Hogarth's excitement about the excursion.

"We are very lucky that such a great educational opportunity was available to the kids," she said.

"It was run by experts in those particular fields so the students were given opportunities they wouldn't have been given in a classroom."

UP CLOSE WITH OUR ENVIRONMENT: Yarrunga Primary School student Cody LePordevin (right) inspected the water for water bugs as he learned about macro-invertebrates while (above) classmates Sasha Watson and Makal Eames learned about the destruction of rainforests for the production of palm oil through a virtual reality tour.



PHOTOS:
 Emma Hillier

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