



Forest Health



Test school feedback



Kit synopsis

This resource introduces students to New Zealand's native forests and the unique plant and animal life found within them.

Students begin by getting to know a tree and the community of living things, in, on and around it. The structure and soundscape of a healthy New Zealand forest is explored using audio files and the dimensions of two of our forest giants, kauri and pōhutukawa, are visualised, measured and compared. Slices of tree trunk are supplied for discussion about how trees store information about their past and the environment in which they grew. Kauri dieback and myrtle rust, are also covered to help students identify ways to minimise the impact these diseases have on the health of our forests.

Students get the opportunity to dissect, clean, dry and store seeds and discuss the importance of seeds in the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems.

Test schools

Bethlehem Primary School

Greenpark School

Ōtamarākau School

Horohoro School

Kawhia School

Overall comments

This kit is incredible! Schools will love the mātauranga Māori aspect throughout – it really brings the learning to life and so meaningful for a lot of the species that students will be aware of.

The activities are wonderful – instructions and support very clear.

I love that you've explained what the myrtle rust actually is.

And the posters are beautiful.

Karen Scott, House of Science PLD Facilitator

Great to see mātauranga Māori lens included in this resource.

This kit is very relevant to our local curriculum.

Staff at Ōtamarākau School

Thank you for sharing this box. My plan was to integrate the learning in this resource across the curriculum over a 3 week period and it has worked really well. I have been so pleased with their science-inspired creative writing and non-fiction posters about trees. We have thoroughly enjoyed this resource.

Andrea Acton, Year 3 /4 Teacher, STEM Leader, Bethlehem School

What is a Forest?

Fantastic activity for all students but particularly juniors. Learning to make observations with their taringa. Students across the school enjoyed trying to identify birds and then finding them on the forest cross-section poster. The wind, rain and stream sounds were quite hard to differentiate.

The cicada sounded more like a bird flying.

Horohoro School years 1-8.



Students very responsive to the sounds of te ngāhere. These guys much better at hearing the differences between wind, rain and stream. Experience of spending time in bush and connecting with nature. Did the bird sounds a little differently – let the students put together the cross-section puzzle and find the birds first, identify the ones they could then we listened to the calls. The tamariki listened then located the birds on the poster.

Kawhia School years 2-4, full immersion



We loved this activity; it was a huge success. It was interesting to see how many children were able to identify the birds. We listened to the forest sounds before doing our creative writing and I feel that it added to the quality of our writing. I have sent through some examples of our science-inspired creative writing.

Bethlehem Primary School years 3&4

Tree Time

The students did this as their reading activity. They enjoyed this. It would be nice to have a larger slice to look at together. I found a great journal about trees, and they are using this to do non-fiction posters. I will share once they are complete.

Bethlehem Primary School years 3&4



We did loads of korero around trees – what they are, description etc beforehand. Tamariki loved using the magnifying glasses, were very good at counting the rings.

The bark was well handled – students enjoyed rubbing and picking at it. A great test of its durability!

Being juniors we had to talk about how old they are and compare that with the trees. They are really old trees!

Kawhia School years 1-4, mainstream

Some great discussion here as well. This was new learning for 2 of the kaiako – now having a new appreciation of the makeup of a tree.

Kawhia School – staff hui



Seed Stuff

The students enjoyed looking at the beans. We have talked about seed storage and seed banking and will start germinating the beans next week. We have a section of the garden we can plant them out in once they are ready. The posters were fabulous. It would be nice to have a large poster of the bean life cycle.

Bethlehem Primary years 3&4

