



December 2008

Taupo for Tomorrow (2008)

What a Year!

2008 has been an exciting year for Taupo for Tomorrow with many changes on site both in terms of personal and programme development. Part 2 of Wonderful Wai 'To Matou Moana was delivered this year, with the focus very much the long term health of our precious Lake Taupo and storm water education for year 5/6 students. Many classes chose to make this programme part of wider inquiry learning in their classroom environment and took the opportunity to utilise the generous funding for travel made available through the Taupo District Council for students in the lake Taupo catchment area. This programme and funding is still available during 2009 and our hope is that many local schools will make use of the site and associated learning possibilities.



The purchase of an interactive whiteboard and associated digital microscope for the classroom enabled students the opportunity to capture, view and release a range of invertebrates present in the Tongariro River in a detailed and meaningful way. Many of



these species are easily identifiable animals, indicative of excellent water quality, so provide a fine context for water conservation studies. Our white board also allows learners to instantly view digital video in their chosen area of interest. The purchase of high quality water testing units this year will provide learners with up to date and user friendly technology and data collection methodology when involved in field studies at the site.

The LEARNZ programme visited us again this year, attracting around 1100 learners to the field trip from around NZ. The videos captured during that time are popular with visiting school groups, particularly when looking at food chains/webs, life cycles, management of a natural resource and wider sustainability issues. In fact the beauty of the Taupo for Tomorrow programme lies in the ability of the trout and associated waterways to engage students on site and provide a deep and meaningful learning experience within a myriad of curriculum areas.



Once again the Tongariro National Trout Centre Society came to the fore with many children introduced to fly fishing for the first time and participating in a viable and exciting outdoor recreation. Without the assistance of this group of dedicated volunteers we simply would not be able to offer this fantastic experience to children on site. Not only is it wonderful to see the excitement on the students faces when catching their fish, the interactions between the anglers and their younger counterparts can be truly memorable for both parties.



2009 is shaping up as a vibrant and exciting time for the programme. In addition to the programmes already offered on site, Genesis's solar energy initiative; School Gen, will be added to the site and programme. In these days of increasing awareness of sustainability, it provides another avenue for learning about how we can best use our renewable resources in an ever changing world. It is hoped that many schools will choose to view School Gens' photovoltaic technology operating in a context other than a school.

Taupo for Tomorrow offers learners the opportunity to think deeply about some big ideas. Students engaging in deep learning demonstrate curiosity and a personal interest in developing their understanding. If the smiles and genuine enjoyment displayed by students observing trout in their natural environment and braving the elements to test for water quality and invertebrate life in the Tongariro is an indicator of deep learning, then the

Taupo for Tomorrow programme provides a fine place for students to make sense of some increasingly important environmental issues.

Our vision is for young people to value the unique biodiversity and fresh water resources throughout NZ. Sustainability, and conservation of natural resources are hugely important concepts, and these same young people are the thinkers, problem solvers and decision makers of the future.

See you in 2009

Mike Nicholson



CONTACT US

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