



ECO Learning Network Conference 2017 Pedagogy and Practice in Nature Education

Saturday April 22, 9am-4pm

Mueller Hall, Birdwood Avenue, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria - Melbourne

Program

9.00-9.30 - Registrations			
9.30 - Acknowledgement & smoking ceremony			
10.00-11.00 – Keynote Address: Cecile van der Burgh, co-founder, Kids in Nature Network <i>Nature Play, bush kinder and outdoor learning survey 2016: the key findings from a collaborative initiative aimed at discovering what is happening in the early childhood outdoor learning space across Victoria.</i>			
11.00-11.30 - Morning Tea			
11.30-12.30 Breakout sessions			
Breakout 1A <i>Karen Anderson, Balnarring</i> Nuts & bolts: Nature Kindergarten Basics	Breakout 1B <i>Sam Crosby, Australian Botanic Garden</i> What's in a name: Nature Play/Nature Pedagogy?	Breakout 1C <i>Ame Christiansen, Victoria University</i> Exploring the evidence base: nature kindergartens and children with additional needs	Breakout 1D <i>Angie Zerella and Jedda Charles, Bubup Wilam</i> Connection to Country - Outdoor learning at Bubup Wilam
12.30 – 1.30 – Lunch: paper bag lunch provided including panel conversation: come along to share your experience and ask questions			
1.30-2.30 - The Bundjil Nest Project: the journey of a program incorporating First People's Culture into the early childhood outdoor learning space. <i>Karen Anderson and Ann Slater, Balnarring Preschool</i>			
2.45-3.45 – Breakout sessions			
Breakout 2A <i>Reade Smith, Reade's Weeds</i> Fungi and edible weeds: foraging and identifying	Breakout 2B <i>Mick Robertson, Royal Botanic Gardens</i> Plants and birds: names and stories for flora and fauna	Breakout 2C <i>Sam Crosby, Australian Botanic Garden</i> Mapping as a Place-based practice in the Early Years	Breakout 2D <i>Annette Sax, Yarn Strong Sista</i> Aboriginal Literacy in the Early Years: art and storytelling
3.45-4.00 – Plenary: Where to from here? Doug Fargher			

Presenters

Cecile van der Burgh

Cecile is a human geographer and a co-founder of the Kids In Nature Network based in Melbourne. She has led nature conservation advocacy campaigns for over fifteen years with various non-government organisations. She is currently completing a PhD on connectivity conservation initiatives (nature links) in Australia. Born and raised in The Netherlands, Cecile spent a large part of her childhood playing outside and observing nature. She believes all young people deserve an opportunity to experience and explore nature. She is a fellow of the Centre for Sustainability Leadership and a recipient of the Mary Byles Award. Nature Play Week, Kids In Nature Network's signature initiative, was a finalist in the Premier's Sustainability Awards 2016 and a winner of the People's Choice Award 2016.

Sam Crosby

Sam Crosby is the Coordinator of Education and Community Programs for the Australian Botanic Garden, Mount Annan and Centennial Parklands in Sydney. She is an experienced Nature Educator and Trainer and has spent countless hours covered in mud, grass and insects all in the name of fun, learning and developing in future generations an awakened connection to nature. She is the co-author and trainer of the Early Years Bush Connections TAFE unit and has been an advocate for early years and out of hours school care nature education programs in NSW. Her favourite bird at the moment is a Kookaburra.

Ame Christiansen

Ame Christiansen has worked in a range of children's services in NSW, Western Australia and Victoria including 5 years as an Inclusion Support Facilitator. She has taught in the Bachelor of Education at Victoria University since 2010 and is a Children and Family Services Planner in local government. Ame is currently undertaking a Doctorate in Education at Melbourne Graduate School of Education with the support of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Jedda Charles

Jedda Charles is a strong and proud Mutthi Mutthi/Yorta Yorta woman who is an exemplary Early Childhood Teacher. Jedda was selected as one of three finalists for Victoria in the 2016 Early Childhood Awards for the amazing works she does, making a significant and positive impact to the lives of the Aboriginal children and families at Bubup Wilam. Jedda is dedicated and committed to ensuring children have the best start in life and has been integral to the development of the Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Early Years Curriculum Framework and its implementation through an Aboriginal lens. Her innovative teaching approach supports children's self-regulation and she has made a huge difference to children's ability to focus and engage in learning. Using both the Bubup Wilam Framework and the VEYLDF, Jedda has created an innovative, strengths-based classroom that ensures that both ways of learning are embraced. Underpinning Jedda's pedagogy is the notion of self-determination and supporting children's strong and proud Aboriginal identities as their foundation for lifelong learning, health and wellbeing. She has taken a lead role in the development of the Bubup Wilam Connection to Country program.

Angie Zerella

Angie Zerella has 30 years' experience working in Early Childhood Education. She is an experienced early years' consultant, presenter and adult educator within the ACE (Learn Local), TAFE and university sectors delivering early years qualifications. Angie completed her postgraduate degree with Monash University with her research focus on Mindful Pedagogy in early childhood education. Her passion for social justice and equitable access and outcomes in education drives her work in both early childhood and adult education. Angie is employed at Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Aboriginal Child and Family Centre as their Early Years Education and Training Manager. In this role she is responsible for developing, overseeing and supporting the implementation of the Bubup Wilam Aboriginal

Presenters

Early Years Curriculum in collaboration with the CEO, Lisa Thorpe. She is also responsible for the delivery of the Certificate III and Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care on site at the service and supports the professional development of staff. Angie also worked in the Northern Territory delivering the Certificate III in Early Childhood Education within Alice Springs and in remote Aboriginal communities.

Ann Slater

Ann Slater has taught in the early childhood field for 37 years. This includes working within community kindergartens, children's hospitals, early intervention services, university and as a Preschool Field Officer. For the past five years Ann has worked as a part time teacher at Balnarring Preschool for three-year-old and funded preschool programs. The embedding of First Peoples perspectives and learning and living with nature are principles and practices Ann celebrates and intentionally teaches within the preschool's daily programs.

Karen Anderson

Karen Anderson has taught at Balnarring pre-school for 34 years. During that time Karen also worked as an Early Intervention worker for Yooralla and various companies delivering professional development. In 2011 Karen introduced a natural environment as an educational setting and addition to the program. While learning about teaching in this environment Karen has explored how to include learning about First Peoples into everyday practice.

Reade Smith

Reade Smith has had a varied career: Senior constable with Victoria Police, Local government councillor and mayor; and more recently developed his company Reade's Weeds. He has an interest in climate change and environmental issues. Reade, whose ancestors were members of the Tsalagi Ani-Awi (Deer Clan of the Cherokee Nation) represented the Mornington Peninsula

shire on the Inter Council Aboriginal Consultative Committee. Reade has led several walks on the Mornington Peninsula that have involved foraging for edible weeds and mushrooms then cooking them up for the participants.

Mick Robertson

Mick Robertson has been Education Co-ordinator at RBGV, Cranbourne for 13 years where he has actively promoted nature play, particularly for Early Childhood, as well as Aboriginal culture and history. He is a co-opted member of the Committee of ECOLN and a member of the Steering Committee for Mapping Nature Play in Victoria.

Annette Sax

Annette is a Taungurung woman and has worked in the early childhood profession for 26 years. For the past 16 years, she has been the small business owner and Education and Creative Arts Director of Yarn Strong Sista Pty Ltd. Yarn Strong Sista is an Aboriginal Education Consultancy that provides storytelling, conducts cross cultural training with teachers, and develops culturally appropriate resources. Annette feels blessed to be able to go out on Country where she has been taught her traditions and stories by her Taungurung Elders. She is passionate about passing on the knowledge they have given her permission to share. Annette is a storyteller, artist and illustrator who paints using ochre and wattle sap on canvas. She also felts on silk. Annette has taught these mediums during Art projects in early childhood programs in Melbourne and surrounding areas.



Living Plant Collections

- 1 Oak Collection
- 2 Camellia Collection
- 3 Herb Garden
- 4 Fern Gully
- 5 Australian Forest Walk
- 6 Arid Garden
- 7 Species Rose Collection
- 8 California Garden
- 9 Water Conservation Garden
- 10 Cycad Collection
- 11 Lower Yarra River Habitat
- 12 Southern China Collection
- 13 Grey Garden
- 14 Perennial Border
- 15 New Zealand Collection
- 16 Southwest Pacific Collection
- 17 Viburnum Collection
- 18 Tropical Glasshouse
- 19 Rare & Threatened Species Collection
- 20 Southern Africa Collection
- 21 Palms
- 22 Eucalypts
- 23 Bamboo Collection
- 24 Guilfoyle's Volcano

Visitor facilities

- Telephones (no TTY)
- Toilets
- Bike racks
- Visitor Information Centre
- Map boards
- Pavilion
- Trams
- Bus parking
- Photo opportunity
- Drinking water
- The Gardens Shop
- Designated accessible parking
- Punting – The Landing

Walks, paths and site access

- Lawn
- Garden bed
- No public access
- Major path
- Secondary path
- Path with steps
- Path on hill, arrows point uphill

