How is the Bush Blitz Teach Live program being used in Rollingstone State School?

The Background

Each week, I run a 1 hour program called ‘Futures’ with each of the four classes. It was initially based around the Education Queensland cross curricula priorities of Sustainability and Technology. This is in line with the school’s priorities of environmental sustainability, ecology and recycling. This year, it has been expanded to include Coding in term three. Since returning from BBTL, I have set up a project to run in term two for the next five years.

What is the project?

The school currently uses only half of the area it owns. Between the school and Rollingstone Creek is a large area covered in guinea grass and other weeds, which make it inaccessible for the students. The Year 5/6 class is going to clear a portion each year and encourage the return of native grasses. By the end of this year, we hope to have enough clear to start creating an outdoor classroom beside Rollingstone Creek.

Where is the Science?

In term one, all the classes looked at how to plan, run and monitor a science project. In term two, each class will have a specific project.

- Year 5/6 will collect and preserve plant specimens to study the long term changes to the area as clearing begins. Photographs and dried plants will create a record of what is there now and how it changes over the five years.
- Year 3/4 will collect and identify insects in the cleared and untouched areas to check if the changes in vegetation causes changes in the insect population.
- Year 1/2 will be working with the Townsville Birdwatching Group to survey birdlife around our school. They will also plan changes to trees around the school to support the local bird and insect life.
- The Prep class (plus some assistants) will collect and identify insects inside the current school grounds.

What else is happening?

We are a small community and many people were interested about my experiences at Bruny Island. I am trying to build on this by including parents and community groups in our projects.

- Our local Coast Care group has allowed us to use their brush cutter for clearing.
- NQ Dry Tropics is going to help us plan the clearing and monitor the areas.
- We are going to run a couple of evenings on the oval for the parents to work with the students collecting the night flying insects. Other parents are willing to help with some of the junior classes.
- The Rollingstone Lions Club will help with tasks that are too big for our students to do alone. This will be particularly important when we start the outdoor classroom.
- The Cardwell/Ingham Reef Guardian Network is going to hold their Future Leaders Eco Conference at Rollingstone so that our students can pass on the techniques and skills to representatives from schools to our north.
- We are assisting Tangaroa Blue Marine Debris Projects with beach collections, data recording and rubbish reduction projects in our local area.

Thank You

Without the experience from the Bush Blitz Teach Live team and the support of the Australian Science Teachers Association, I would have been far less confident starting a project this big. It has taken a lot of time and effort to start but the benefits for the students will be relevant and exciting.
1  Preps collecting insects from a trap

2  Checking one of the year 1/2 traps
4  A small sample of the area to be cleared

3  Sorting and Counting Insects