



South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare

Bringing together the community, business and government to develop and implement projects that improve the health of our waterways and other ecosystems.

Name of your organisation South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL)

Location/Contact Details

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Contact Person SERCUL Education Team:
Amy Krupa – Education and Promotion Manager
Deb Taborda – Environmental Education Officer

Purpose of the Excursion

SERCUL was formed in 2003 as an independent Natural Resource Management body in Perth. SERCUL brings together the community, business and government to develop and implement projects that improve the health of our waterways and other ecosystems.

SERCUL educates the community about the importance of caring for the Swan Canning Catchment through undertaking on-ground activities, at the historic Yule Brook Homestead, to improve the health of the catchments including revegetation, river restoration, water quality monitoring, fauna surveying and community environmental education. SERCUL staff can also come to your school.

The Phosphorus Awareness Project (PAP) is an education campaign that educates the general community about the impact too many nutrients can have in the Swan and Canning River systems and wetlands, and how to reduce those levels.

The PAP aims to see a decrease in nutrient loads and algal blooms through changes in community and industry behaviour and practices resulting in biodiverse and sustainable rivers and wetlands throughout the Perth Metropolitan Area.

The Phosphorus Awareness Project is managed by Amy Krupa, is hosted by SERCUL and is supported by the Swan River Trust.

The vision of our free, curriculum linked education programs is to achieve environmentally responsible school communities in the Swan Canning Catchment, which are actively involved in environmental protection and catchment management.

Environment

The SERCUL office is located at the historic Yule Brook Homestead, Beckenham and is surrounded by 29 hectares of public open space (Beckenham Open Space). The homestead overlooks a small ephemeral lake and is in an area rich with Nyoongar and European history.

Nestled between the banks of the Canning River and Yule Brook, and with a number of wetlands scattered around the property, it is a fantastic place to bring students to experience waterway ecosystems.

Student activities take place both indoors and outside within the Beckenham Open Space. Although some activities may involve students collecting resources from the banks of the river or wetlands, there is no intention for students to enter the water. If you wish to discuss this aspect of the excursion to SERCUL further, please contact the Environmental Education Officer.

There is a meeting room, shed and toilet facilities situated on the premises. Outdoor facilities include grassed and paved areas suitable for recess and lunch breaks. The Yule Brook Homestead has wide verandahs providing undercover areas. Wheelchair access is available throughout the centre and most areas of the Beckenham Open Space. However some activities may require extra adult assistance and we recommend you discuss this with the Environmental Education Officer prior to booking.

All teachers are invited to tour the centre/facilities prior to their excursion.

*Please note there is no food available to purchase on the premises.

Transport

Transport arrangements are the responsibility of the school.

For public transport options contact Transperth www.transperth.wa.gov.au

A large carpark is located on the property. For further parking information contact the venue directly.

A map of our location is available on our website: <http://www.sercul.org.au/ybh.html>

Students' Capacity

Student programs run at SERCUL are suitable for age groups K - 12 and can be adapted accordingly.

SERCUL offers a number of programs which allow students to learn about the natural environment in a fun, educational setting. Programs run for a minimum of 45 minutes and can be adapted to suit your unit requirements.

SERCUL excursions are free of charge.

Programs offered include:

Planting

SERCUL undertakes rehabilitation of surrounding wetlands, rivers and bushlands by planting local native species in order to:

- encourage natural restoration of the waterways by returning it to close to its natural state, through using local plant species;
- address the high levels of phosphorus and nitrogen in our waterways (deciduous species add extra nutrients into the waterways as they lose their leaves); and
- encourage local biodiversity through returning bushland and waterway settings to their natural state.

Weeding

Many Australian native plant species have seeds which can last in the soil for decades before germination. Weeding is an effective strategy to allow these seeds to have access to the required nutrients, water and light.

SERCUL actively removes weeds from the surrounding area to encourage the natural revegetation of local indigenous species, and to control the competition of access to nutrients, water and light for plants.

Walks and Talks

SERCUL invites school groups to:

- visit the historic Yule Brook Homestead;
- learn about the history of the area, from 1885 to the present day;
- learn about the different waterways that are on the property;
- learn about the different species of flora and fauna which inhabit the area; and
- find out about what SERCUL and our volunteer groups are doing to rehabilitate the area to its natural state.

Macroinvertebrate Sampling

Using water samples from the Canning River or wetlands in the Beckenham Open Space, students investigate the macroinvertebrates that live in the system. Students determine how healthy the waterway is from the species they discover. The samples are collected by the SERCUL staff, and students do not have access to the river or wetlands.

Catchment Models

Students learn how a catchment works through participation in an interactive catchment model activity. Using coloured water, the students see how different activities impact on the catchment system, regardless of their distance from the river. Discussions about the impact of excessive use of nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, in our daily lives develop the students' understandings of how individuals can care for our waterways.

For a more detailed description of individual program content please contact SERCUL.

Supervisor/Supervisory Team

It is the responsibility of the school to develop a supervisory team that meets their specific requirements in line with the recommendations below.

It is the role of SERCUL staff to facilitate activities and provide a fun learning experience for all students involved. The overall duty of care, including informing SERCUL staff of any special student requirements/medical conditions, is the responsibility of the school staff/teachers and assistance in supervising student activities is expected at all times.

The school supervisory team is asked to prepare students for an excursion to this venue using the briefing information provided within this document and must accompany the students throughout the visit to actively monitor behaviour and intervene as necessary.

External Provider Information

All SERCUL staff have current *Working With Children Checks* and First Aid certificates. SERCUL staff have a range of tertiary qualifications including education and environmental science; and are experienced Environmental Educators.

PUBLIC LIABILITY:

Insurer: CGU Insurance Limited
Amount: \$10 000 000

A copy of the certificate of currency is available by emailing the SERCUL Education Team (as above).

Supervision Strategies

We recommend that for students in **Kindergarten and Pre-Primary**, that their excursion be part of a 'Buddy' program with students from the senior classes, or that you have a supervision ratio of 1 adult to 5 students (1 adult to 3 students for the macro sampling).

Planting; Weeding; Walk and Talks, Macro Sampling and Catchment Model

- Students of all ages are able to participate in this activity, however, all students will require a supervision ratio of 1 teacher/parent to 10 students
- Teachers are ultimately responsible for the students; SERCUL staff will make every attempt to ensure safety of students while on-site.

Identification of Excursion Participants
<p>As the majority of student activities are conducted outside it is recommended that students wear their 'gardening clothes' as they may get quite dirty.</p> <p>ENCLOSED SHOES ARE MANDATORY FOR THIS EXCURSION.</p> <p>As the homestead and surrounding areas can be utilised by members of the general public, it is important that all students can be easily identified.</p> <p>We also request that attendance records be kept by the school supervision team so that in an emergency, there is an accurate list of student numbers participating in the programs.</p>
Communication Strategies
<p>The Environmental Education Officer carries a mobile phone at all times. It is recommended that a member of school staff also carry a mobile phone and if necessary create external meeting points for both students and teachers. There are phones at SERCUL if the school needs to contact the teacher.</p> <p>In the event of unfavourable weather conditions SERCUL will inform the school of any changes to the running of programs or arrange an alternative day for visitation. It is important to plan the excursion with the content of the program in mind and as such students should be prepared for all weather conditions especially during the wet winter months. If thunderstorms are likely then the excursion will be cancelled and rescheduled for another day.</p>
Emergency Response Plan
<p>Schools will have their own Emergency Response Plan pertaining to the particular needs of their students.</p> <p>SERCUL has a documented Fire Response Plan which can be requested by contacting the Education Team.</p>
Briefing Students and Supervisors
<p>On arrival at SERCUL, students and supervisors will be greeted and asked to assemble near the western veranda or at the SERCUL shed. The Environmental Education Officer will then go through the following before commencing the programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to SERCUL • General housekeeping including general safety, site specific flora and fauna safety, behaviour expectations, toilet locations • Brief on evacuation plans/procedures • Outline programs and activities.
Other Relevant Details
<p>Please contact us to further discuss SERCUL education programs.</p>
This information is valid until 31 January 2013

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