

Conservation

SDGs Covered:



Experience

Undertake **one** activity related to **each** of the following:

1. Get into nature, connect with a local natural environment, and learn about conservation

After completing these activities, you will have **experienced** nature in your local environment and **developed** an understanding of what conservation is.

- Explore a stream or pond. Examine the life beneath the water. Take a water sample and examine it under a magnifying glass or microscope. Record what you see. Return the water and creatures back to the stream or pond. Different species can tolerate different levels of pollution. How polluted is your stream or pond?
- Using a bingo sheet with different plants and insects, go for a walk in small groups to find what species you can. Keep looking until you've completed a row from your chart.
- Learn about pollination and why plants need to be pollinated. Then go on a pollinator scavenger hunt and look for bees, butterflies, tui and the different plants they pollinate such as pohutukawa, kōwhai, flax etc.

2. Understand the importance of biodiversity

These activities will help you to **understand** what biodiversity exists in your neighbourhood and **recognise** the importance of conservation to different species.

- Investigate invasive species of plants and animals. What impact do they have on New Zealand's conservation efforts?
- Draw a map of your community. Include both natural (such as forests and rivers) and human features (such as buildings and roads). Identify the possible sources of pollution on your map. Remember, some pollution comes from a single source (like a pipe) while other pollution comes from many small sources (like runoff from land). How does pollution affect biodiversity? On your map, draw arrows linking the pollution sources to the biodiversity they affect. What can be done to minimise pollution?
- Do an experiment to test the effects of acid rain on plants. Grow three plants in three separate pots under identical conditions (except for the watering). Water the first plant with 100% water. Water the second plant with a mixture of 90% water and 10% lemon juice or vinegar. Water the third plant with a mixture of 50% water and 50% lemon juice or vinegar. What happens? How do you think acid rain affects plants and trees?

3. Identify local conservation issues

These activities will help you **understand** the threats to nature and **recognise** what can negatively affect a healthy ecosystem.

- Go to your local water body and check the water for the 5 C's (cool, clear, clean/clarity, current, critters) and decide if it's healthy.
- Learn some Māori words, phrases, or concepts that relate to conservation and the environment. Create a display that explains some of these concepts and share them with your group. Start using the words and phrases with your family and peers in the work you are doing.
- Do some research to find out about the 'dirty dozen' pest weeds. Learn to recognise these invasive weeds and how to control them. Check your own backyard and dispose of any invasive weeds carefully. Check you aren't spreading seeds or weed scraps when you travel around. Join a community group working to remove this issue and work with them to remove invasive weeds in your local area.

4. Recognise some solutions and take conservation action

After completing these activities you will be able to **identify** some solutions and conservation practices and **take action** to protect our natural environment.

- Create a biodiversity friendly yard that offers lots of homes for different species. Use recycled goods or material that might otherwise end up in the trash. Bee houses can be made of bundled bamboo straws. Another home can be made from an old half-buried teapot. Use your imagination! Watch the wildlife take up residence in your backyard.
- Make a rain barrel out of clean recycled material. List all the possible uses for the collected water. Use the water for some of the ideas on your list.
- Visit a predator-free location. Learn about the control methods used to keep predators out - how do they impact the natural environment and its ecosystems? Reflect on their effectiveness.

Act

- Build a pond to create a new habitat for insects, amphibians, plants, and others. Make sure you plant only native species.
- Choose a species or area of Māori Environmental Significance and take an action to raise awareness around this.
- Track and monitor predators in your local area to identify what traps would work best, and to understand what other animals are in your local environment. Then, set up some traps in your local area to assist with predator control. Monitor these traps regularly to analyse the impact you are having.

