

Westpac Landcare Education Award

Edi Upper Primary School

Edi Upper Primary School's Seed to Tree Project gets children involved in growing trees for local Landcare projects and raises money for the school.

The project started back in 1997 when the school formed a partnership with the Black Range Landcare Group. The School and the Group worked together to build a shade house and a greenhouse on the school grounds. Around 18 months ago the children started going out on excursions to collect seed from indigenous native trees. Teachers, parents and a tree biologist run the excursions. The seed collecting is great fun and a terrific opportunity for learning.

The children take the seed back to school where it is prepared and stored ready for planting. The seed is then planted in seed-raising trays and stored in the greenhouse. The children monitor the progress of the seedlings and decide when they are ready to be transplanted into tubes and put in the shade house for toughening up. Once the trees have reached a certain height they are sold to the Landcare Group and the local community.

The care and skills of the children can be seen in the very high germination rates they are achieving. Tree Violets, for example, are a difficult species, but the children had close to a 100% germination rate and ended up with nearly twice as many seedlings as they expected!

The Seed to Tree Project has made the school and local Landcare projects a focal point for this small community. While the project gives children an opportunity to learn while doing something worthwhile, it also involves a host of parents and volunteers who work with the children sharing their skills and knowledge.

The scale of the project keeps increasing – there are currently 1000 seedlings in the shade house. The original investment of the Landcare Group in helping to build the shade house and greenhouse has certainly paid off – the group now has a good, constant supply of locally grown trees.



Pictured: Principal Howard Gibson and students from Edi Upper Primary School, winners of the Westpac Landcare Education Award with John Landy, Governor of Victoria.