

Geelong Botanic Gardens Education Program

Report to Friends of Geelong Botanic Garden Inc for year ending June 2015



1. Summary

Education is one of the key deliverables of the Geelong Botanic Gardens (GBG) as a scientific institution. The GBG Education Program is an important part of Public Programs@GBG which engages people in the world of plants.

The key focus for 2014-15:

- Teaching school programs
- Delivering school holiday program activities
- Developing partnerships and profiling the program

The City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) values and acknowledges the Friends of Geelong Botanic Garden Inc financial contribution of \$10,000 per annum.



2. Key Outcomes

2.1 Program Administration

Administrative processes have been improved to enable online booking and payment for school holiday programs. Promotion of the program through our website, facebook and networks has increased awareness of the program.

2.2 Volunteer contribution

Friends volunteers and education students have supported program delivery during the year. Volunteers have working with children checks and assist our teachers to deliver elements of the school holiday programs.

	Number of volunteers	Volunteer hours
Fairies & Dragons	4	12.0
Sprout	3	8.5
Open Garden @GBG- Sprout with Costa	3	12.0
Batwatch	7*	14.0
Total hours		46.5

* Batwatch- staff from Council & CSIRO volunteering

2.3 School Holiday Program

The School Holiday Program has included three booked activities over the past year totalling 607 participants.

During 2013-14 the program attracted 538 participants with four events.

Our review of last year's program determined that booked summer activities aren't viable. We provide free activities and downloadable resource sheets that enable families to drop in anytime. Our observations indicate that the numbers of families visiting is increasing and the majority follow the trails during the holidays.



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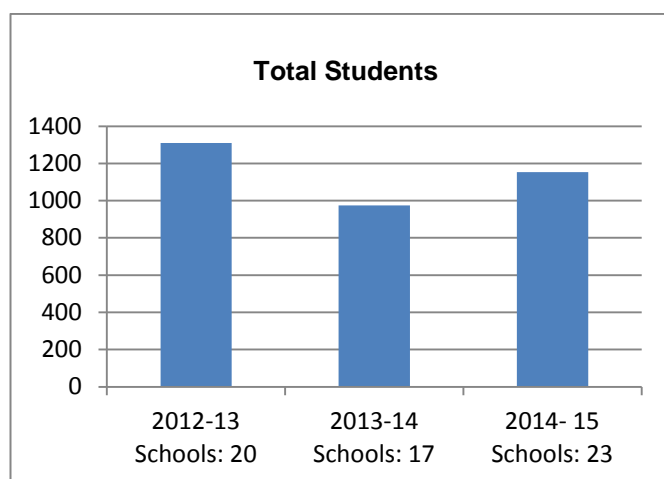


Date	Program Title	Detail	Child
2014 Winter	Fairies & Dragons	Create a fairy garden, garden trail	268
2014 Spring	Sprout	Growing plants from seeds	48
2015 Summer	Informal program	Free activities; Butterfly trail, Storytime	
2015 Autumn	Batwatch	Evening family activity in partnership with CSIRO	291*
		Estimated Total Children	607

* Family tickets; number represents total persons

2.4 Deliver programs for school students

Our program is most popular for primary aged children. Our program does deliver from pre-school to tertiary level. We deliver programs for Deakin as part of their orientation of overseas students. An outline of programs on offer can be found on the Learn@GBG section of our website. Program activities relate to the AusVels and can be tailored to meet special needs students and school programming.



During the past year 23 schools with a total of 1154 children participated in our program. Schools bring between 1-4 classes per session.

We are building relationships with a number of local schools who bring students each year.

The number of repeat customers is 48%. We have welcomed many 'new' schools to our program.

2.4 Developing partnerships

Participation in networking groups and events provides opportunities to profile our program and develop relationships for future partnership events;

- **Poppykettle**- delivery of classes to primary school students at this annual event hosted by GPAC
- **Family Services** department of the City of Greater Geelong supporting connections to playgroups, cross-promotion in newsletters and delivery of Children's Week activities.
- **Healthy Together Geelong**- participated in a breakfast event for local teachers to promote our program.
- **Sustainable Week**- delivered 'Open Garden @GBG' event which featured an appearance by Costa from Gardening Australia and the 'Sprout' activity to encourage kids to grow from seed.
- **Nature Play Network**- hosting meetings for the newly formed network of educators interested in outdoor education for children.
- **Cultural Educators Network**- participation in meetings with other educators in the region to discuss shared issues and seek partnership opportunities.

3. Future Focus

Key focus for the 2015-16 year:

- Develop evaluation tools to seek feedback from program participants
- Review of programs offered and financial models to improve viability.
- Develop new themed programs
- Deliver a professional development event for local teachers

