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Whangawehi Catchment Management Group runs freshwater workshop for school students

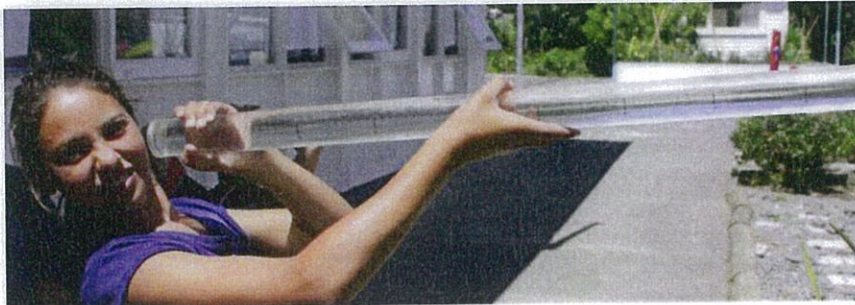


Photo by: Nic Caviale-Delzescaux

On the 12th of December, Arthur Bowen (local freshwater monitoring coordinator for the Whangawehi catchment management group) and his team took a group of students from Te Mahia school for a walk along a nearby creek to assess the water quality and do some fish monitoring. This session is part of the Whangawehi Catchment Community based water monitoring programme funded by Nga Whenua Rahui since January 2013.



Photo by: Nic Caviale-Delzescaux

This workshop gave the students the opportunity to learn how to measure and compare water quality in different habitats. While walking amongst a bushy section of the river, Arthur Bowen and Edward Hammond talked about the native tree species found, their traditional use especially for Rongoa or culinary purposes. A Hinaki set the night before gave the students a lot of fun and they were most impressed when they realised that the eels caught were the rare and endangered Long Fin eels.

This project is part of the numerous activities of the Whangawehi Catchment Management Group initiative, looking at improving water quality and promoting more sustainable land uses throughout the catchment. The group strongly believes that there is a urgent need to pass on the traditional knowledge on the Awa, Tikanga and Kawa to the next generation of Kaitiaki. This has been reinforced by Meka Whaitiri, Labour MP for Ikaroa Rawhiti, during a Community meeting held in November at Tuahuru Marae. Meka reinforced her belief that Maori have got deep connections and interests in fresh water and there is a need to build Indigenous expertise in that field.

The group has been working with Nicky O'Brien, Principal at Te Mahia School, since March 2013 looking at integrating the transfer of traditional knowledge within the Enviro School network. These practical workshops will be run by skilled local Kuia and Kaumatua around Mataurangi Maori themes : Tikanga, native plants, Rongoa, Water and fish monitoring , bird watching , weaving etc. This unique template has already generated a lot of interest and the school has been offered the support from WWF- New Zealand, Department of Conservation, Fish and Game, HBRC and the National Aquarium of NZ through the Fresh Water Education Programme.

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Group Map



Group Data

1,318,158 plants in the ground

14,923 possums killed

2,860 stoats killed

205 groups active

26,376 group members