



## Ecosystem Explorers

### Program Outline

**What is a forest?** Students explore the characteristics of a forest and identify the features of a forest ecosystem. How do living/non-living things rely on each other to survive?

#### Producers - The start of it all

Walk through a forest and explore the diversity of producers - from the tallest tree to tiny moss, and everything in between. Role play the growth and change of a tree in a forest and examine how its needs may or may not be met. Will your tree make it from a seed to a forest giant?

#### Consumers - Who's eating who?

Search the forest for evidence of different consumers and conduct a scat survey. Explore how producers and consumers interact by participating in a forest food chain activity.

#### Break it down - The secret world of decomposers

Take a walk through a wet eucalypt forest. Students get their hands dirty as they investigate samples of decaying wood for evidence of invertebrates and understand the role of decomposers in a forest ecosystem.

#### All together now...

Bring together new learning about forest ecosystems and find out how many species call the forest their home. Students will have the chance to represent their learning through a hands-on design challenge.



**Hollybank Forest Reserve, Launceston:**  
Lightly sloped walks through wet and dry forests.

**Waterworks Reserve, Hobart:**  
Walk from entrance to main sites: approx. 1km

Dry eucalypt forest walk: steep and loose under foot 200 meter section, optional steep stone staircase to lookout on Gentle Annie Falls, gentle down slope with some small stairs.

**Both sites:**  
Recess and lunch breaks are held at main barbeque sites with toilets accessible.

*If any of the above would prevent your participation, please contact FEF to discuss tailoring a program for your class.*

#### Curriculum Links:

##### Science

- Compare characteristics of living and non-living things and examine the differences between the life cycles of plants and animals (AC9S3U01)
- Explain the roles and interactions of consumers, producers and decomposers within a habitat and how food chains represent feeding relationships (AC9S4U01)

##### Science Inquiry Skills

- Pose questions to explore observed patterns and relationships and make predictions based on observations (AC9S4I01/ AC9S4I01)
- Construct and use representations, including tables, simple column graphs and visual or physical models, to organise data and information, show simple relationships and identify patterns (AC9S3I04/ AC9S3I04)

##### HASS

- The importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia and on another continent (AC9HS4K050)