

December 2014



Te Mahia School take a field trip

On Wednesday 15 October Te Mahia School students went on two field trips. One group went to Opoutama wetlands (http://www.iserve.co.nz/users/nznfrt/nznfrt.org.nz/htdocs/index.php?page_id=105) where DOC ranger, Malcolm Smith, explained some features of wading wetland birds, using real bird models, and compared them to other birds who visit wetlands. The students walked to the raupo beds and listened for bittern calls, watched pukeko and some also heard fern birds and saw swallows. After the freshwater wetlands, they travelled to Oraka where the tidal wetlands of Maungawhio Lagoon provide a habitat rich in food for dotterels nesting on the beach, and for migratory godwits, knots and other birds.

Meanwhile the second group arrived at Mahia Beach to learn about the

new sewerage system. After watching a septic tank installation at a private property, the students looked at a model and followed the story of waste, from filtration at septic tank, liquid is pumped to the pump station, then 16 litres per second pumped uphill to the settling ponds, this was explained by Project Managing Engineer, Jason Schirnack. The students then went to the settling ponds at the headwaters of Whangawehi River and learned what happens there.

After lunch at Mahia Beach, the students swapped destinations and experienced their second field trip of the day. It was a hot, beautiful day packed with action and information, which they are still processing.



Enviroschools Hawke's Bay



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