DEEP CREEK BUSHWALKING EXPEDITION

By Stuart Kenny, Camp organiser and PE teacher

From Tuesday the 19th to Friday the 22nd of May a group of 10 Murray Bridge High School students participated in a five day lightweight bushwalking expedition through Deep Creek Conservation Park.

Their challenge was to walk approximately 35 to 40 kilometres over the 4 days through some of the most stunning scenery the Fleurieu Peninsula has to offer. Being a lightweight expedition, the students were responsible for carrying all of their own food, water, clothes, rubbish and equipment (including bed, trangas (stove), sleeping bag, mat and tent) necessary for the journey. In total, backpacks can weigh anywhere from 12 – 16 kilograms.

The journey from Murray Bridge High School was pleasant, with everyone in good spirits and eagerly anticipating the adventure ahead. Most students were amazed to see so much wildlife, the spectacular coastline and the rich green rolling hills as we arrived at Deep Creek Conservation Park.

Arriving at a place called Goondaloo Cottage, the students were able to have lunch and our bushwalking leader Felix was able to go through the finer points of packing a rucksack. From there we were able to follow the Aaron Creek walking trail to our first destination, Eagle Waterhole Campground. As soon as we arrived the group was greeted by a spectacular view of Kangaroo Island and an incredibly large population of kangaroos, literally the most amount of kangaroos I’ve ever seen.

Day 2 was the greatest walking distance of the trip, covering almost 13 kilometres, which took us from Eagle Waterhole to Tappanappa Campground. We started walking around 8.30 in the morning and due to the strong determination, fantastic enthusiasm and fitness levels of the group we were able cover over 2 thirds of the day’s walking well before midday. This enabled us to have an early lunch and have an extremely long break at the Tappanappa Waterfall. Although the water was very brown in colour, it made for a brilliant spectacle and the sound of the rushing water made it a relaxing and serene space to spend some downtime.

The group was treated to some light entertainment as one of the students decided he would like to test the water, get clean and refresh himself after the intensely long walking. The air temperature was around 16 degrees Celsius and the waterfall sits in between two large hills and does not see much sunlight. Needless to say Harley took a long time to actually submerge himself completely under water and stayed in only for around 2 minutes.

Having arrived at our destination Tappanappa Campground, the group promptly set up their tents, prepared the evening meal and elected to go on a night walk along the hills of the coastline. We were treated to a stunningly clear night sky – I have honestly never seen as many stars in my life, it was overwhelming! It was also interesting to note the glow from the city lights of Adelaide and Victor Harbour from our spot.

With our guide Felix providing us with relevant and interesting facts, stories regarding these constellations and the local area, it was a genuine highlight of the trip for the staff and the students. A visit to the beach at Tunkalilla and the sight of the beautiful Tunkalilla Beach, was pleasant, with everyone in good spirits and enjoying being so close to the beautiful blue water.

The weather was extremely kind to us. We experienced sunshine throughout the trip which made it even more enjoyable. The group of students did an absolutely fantastic job and surpassed all expectations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Felix, our bushwalking leader for his wealth of knowledge making it one of the most interesting trips, all of the students who participated in this camp for making it such a pleasurable experience and to Ms Kate Noble, a fellow PE teacher at the school for her participation and assisting in the supervision of the group.

Walking through the beautiful landscape at Deep Creek.

Deep Creek Conservation Park. Arriving at a place called Goondaloo Cottage, the students were able to have lunch and our bushwalking leader Felix was able to go through the finer points of packing a rucksack. From there we were able to follow the Aaron Creek walking trail to our first destination, Eagle Waterhole Campground. As soon as we arrived the group was greeted by a spectacular view of Kangaroo Island and an incredibly large population of kangaroos, literally the most amount of kangaroos I’ve ever seen.

Day 3 consisted of a day walk to an even more beautiful location, Tunkalilla Beach. Travelling approximately 4 half hours along the Heysen Trail form Tappanappa, the trail brings you to four and a half kilometres of some of the most pristine, unspoilt coastline you will ever see. As we arrived on the last hill approaching the beach we were able to see a small pod of dolphins surfing the waves and cruising along the coastline. This has been a common sight in recent years and is something you can never get tired of seeing, truly amazing. The group took full advantage and appreciation of the location enjoying a swim, a long lunch on the beach and basking in the sun.

On the final day, we chose to visit another beautiful part of the area – Blowhole Beach. A little bit further than our drop of spot Goondaloo Cottage again, this is a reasonably secluded beach but just as stunning and pristine as Tunkalilla. The group enjoyed exploring the area, climbing the rock formations along the coastline, the close up view of Kangaroo Island and enjoying being so close to the beautiful blue water.

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AGRICULTURE IN 2009

By Joe Maharrack, Coordinator Agriculture/Science

So far this year students at the High school have been involved in preparing our animals for a number of competitions.

In April this year we once again took part in the Frank Jacobs carcass competition as part of the Mount Barker District Show. We entered two pens of lambs in the competition in the 25+ kilogram section. Our lambs once again performed very well in this category with the school taking first and second place in the “On the hooks” section.

As we progress through the year our students are also involved in preparing our animals for a number of competitions. Currently they are in the process of breaking in three steers: an Angus, a Murray Grey and a Limousin. These three animals are being fed and groomed by the Year 12 Agriculture students as part of their overall studies this year.

In addition our Year 11 students are preparing 10 wether goats for their competition. Both groups are learning and practicing a number of skills in grooming, ringcraft and showmanship that is all vital in presenting the animals to the best of their ability. Not all of our animals are being presented for the show ring. Currently we are running two Alpacas at the High School as part of our overall studies.

The two Alpacas were obtained from Mrs. Ruckert’s Alpaca stud based in the Loxton region of the animal. As a result Murray Bridge High School were awarded the overall Schools trophy as part of our overall studies.

The two Alpacas were interesting animals and make excellent companion animals for our sheep. They are extremely protective of the sheep and make fantastic watch animals when dealing with foxes and the odd stray animal that may pose a threat to the flock.

Throughout the year all of these animals will provide our students with opportunities to practice a range of animal handling skills and the ability to generally interact with them. Agriculture is very much a hands on subject where learning takes place by practicing and not out of a book.

We thank our sponsors P Coldrey from Banksia Ridge for the Murray Grey, R Gunner from Wanderribby Pastoral Company for the Angus, and Foon Genetics for Limousin, organised by D Gomers.

WETLANDS EXPERIENCE 2009
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME

By Travis Wiese

On June 10 and 11, Murray Bridge High School held its annual Swansport Wetlands Experience. The experience is designed to encourage students to be made aware of and consider the environment and in particular their local environment including the Murray River. The experience is also a vital component of the school’s International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and it allows a range of students to work in the Environments Area of Interaction.

The actual day was organised and run by a group of Year 10 students along with some help from community experts with an interest in environmental issues. The Year 10 students involved chose to run the Wetlands Experience as a part of their International Baccalaureate Personal Project. These students researched a range of environmental issues and planned interactive activities that they could run with the Year 9 students while at the Wetlands. The activities included the following:

- Water Conservation (Brett Altschwager & Corey Parker)
- Water Watch & Water Testing (Nicole Rumbelow & Brooke Newell)
- Bat Monitoring & Animal Habitat (Haylee Daniel & Maddie Binney)
- Fisheries & River Health (Ben Gogel & Lachlan Butler)
- Revegetation (Kath Rothe)

The 70 Year 9 students who attended responded very well to the information provided and appeared to have a great time at each of the stations. I would also like to commend these students for the outstanding level of behaviour and work ethic that they displayed throughout the day. It was much appreciated by all who attended.

I would like thank the community volunteers that gave up their time to help out on the day and also Mr Jeff Lines for his help in organising the day. Finally, I would like to thank the Year 10 students who were involved in this day for all the effort that they put in to ensure that it was a success.