

**Sally Edgar, Nov 2016, Natural Phenomena.**

It was the November 2016 Natural Phenomena in which I won a student scholarship to attend, so yes, my feedback is somewhat overdue! Looking back since then I can say with certainty that the conference has had a significant life-changing impact upon my life, and teaching practice and pedagogy. The quality of the speakers, workshops and presentations were of such high quality, highly informative and very accessible. I gained knowledge and inspiration which I took away giving me the confidence to organise, implement and lead a regular bush excursion with the children I worked with.

What has been very exciting for me was all that I had read and learned regarding the positive impact of children having regular visits to the same place in the bush, is what I began to see in the children. Two year olds unfamiliar and uncomfortable in an environment with sloping ground with low growing branches would react with total discomfort, crying and refusing to move and wanting to be carried. Very soon these children became natural leaders of the group and singing joyfully while climbing over big logs and happy to explore with their whole bodies.

The Natural Phenomena is in a beautiful, slow-paced, natural setting, the food is OUTSTANDING! The facilities are great, the atmosphere is welcoming, friendly and fun. I made wonderful professional connections and lasting valued friendships.

The knowledge at the Natural Phenomena has set me onto a nature pedagogy path that is actually playing havoc with my 'main-stream' teaching as I now see nature as the core to my teaching and being inside using traditional resources is hard work! I have discovered nature kindergartens and forest schools which is where I long to be. Nature is where it's at!! The Natural Phenomena has also lead me now onto the path of working with a school to create and lead their desire for a one day a week bush curriculum.

This conference will add to or kick-start your nature teaching/learning path, be warned, your life may be changed dramatically for ever!!