

Youth Environment Council South Australia



YEARBOOK
2022

GREEN
ADELAIDE



What is the YEC?

The Youth Environment Council is a year-long program for young people in years 7 to 11 to develop their leadership, team building and public speaking skills through camps, workshops and forums, while meeting like-minded people who also want to make a difference to the environment.

The program involves students working on an environment or sustainability project, such as tree plantings; measuring the impact of solar panels; spreading awareness about fast fashion; and promoting pet adoption. The possibilities are endless!

A wrap-up was held in November where students shared the projects that they'd developed throughout the year.

This yearbook is a memento for the members of the 2022 council to reflect on their involvement and achievements.

2022 Program

TERM 1

Mentor Training Day (YEC Mentors only), The Joinery

Week 6: Tuesday 8 March

Mentors came together to develop mentoring and facilitation skills and assist with YEC event planning.

TERM 2

Welcome Forum, Belair National Park

Week 1: Thursday 14 April

All students were invited to attend this day, where we shared ideas, learnt new skills and got to know each other.

Online Discussion Forum

Padlet was used throughout the year from the first event to the last event so that everyone could stay in touch and share their progress or interesting experiences and discoveries.

Two-night Camp, Arbury Park Outdoor School

Week 3: Monday 16 - Wednesday 18 May

Camp was an opportunity to join in fun team building exercises, and build skills in leadership and teamwork. We further developed our skills and knowledge on environmental and sustainability themes and ways to take action.

Monthly Online Catchups via Zoom

An opportunity for members to share and troubleshoot their projects, as well as hear from guest speakers and participate in online workshops.

TERM 4

YEC Sharing Forum, Adelaide Botanic Garden

Week 8: Thursday 3 November

At the final event, we shared and celebrated your environmental achievements, and reflected on actions and changes as a group. We also heard from some past YEC members about their experiences.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

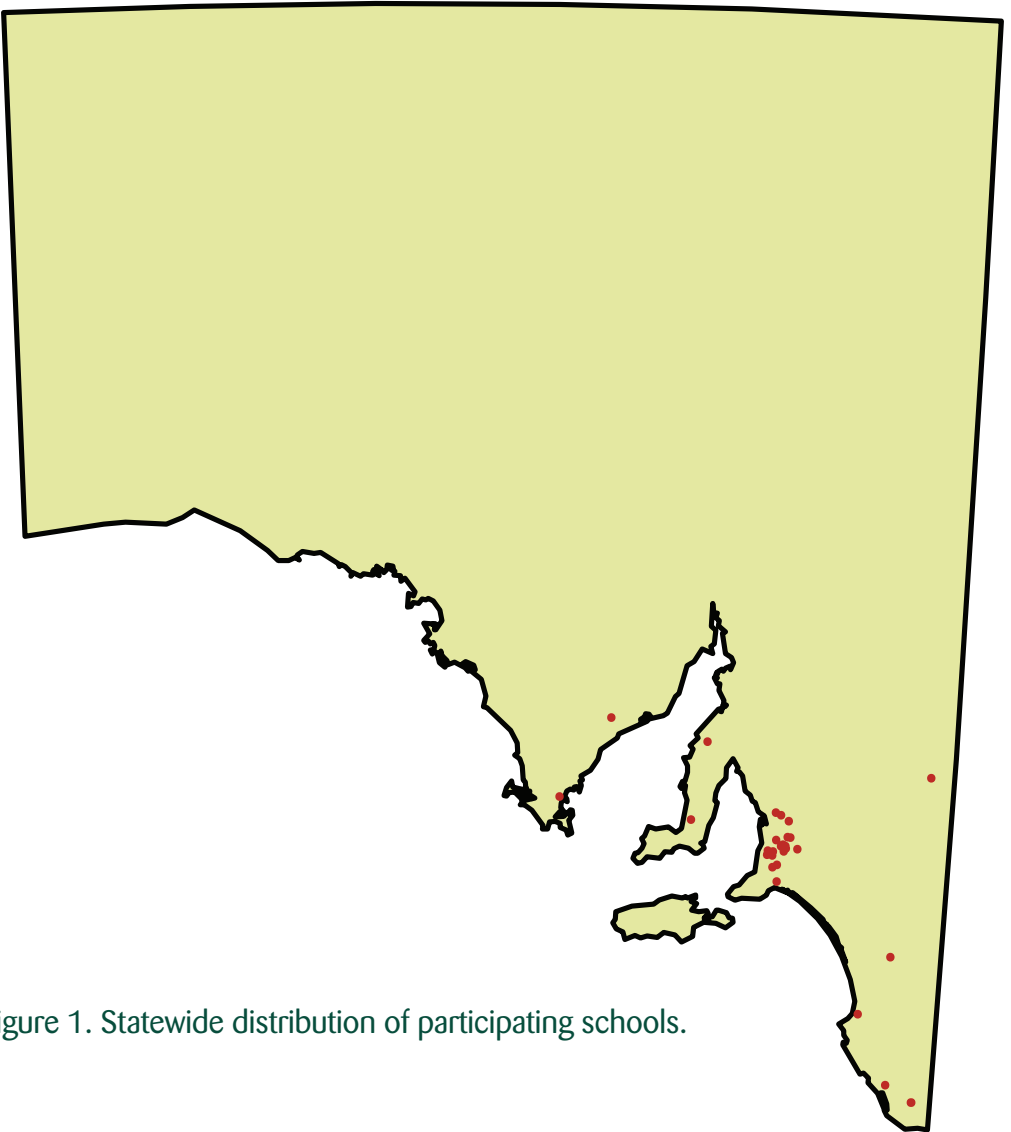


Figure 1. Statewide distribution of participating schools.

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

- Aberfoyle Park High School
- Adelaide Botanic High School
- Adelaide High School
- Allenby Gardens Primary School
- Athelstone Primary School
- Basket Range Primary School
- Berri Regional Secondary College
- Burton Primary School
- Cleve Area School
- Gleeson College
- Glenunga International High School
- Grant High School
- Immanuel College

- Investigator College
- Kadina Memorial School
- Keith Area School
- Kingston Community School
- Loreto College
- Millicent High School
- Minlaton District School
- Mitcham Girls High School
- Mount Compass Area School
- Mt Compass Area School
- Port Lincoln High School
- Prince Alfred College
- Sacred Heart College

- Salisbury High School
- Southern Montessori Middle School
- St Ignatius College
- St Mary's College
- St Peters College
- Tenison Woods College - Mount Gambier
- Urrbrae Agricultural High School
- Walford Anglican School for Girls
- Westminster School
- Willunga High School
- Woodcroft College
- Xavier College Gawler Belt

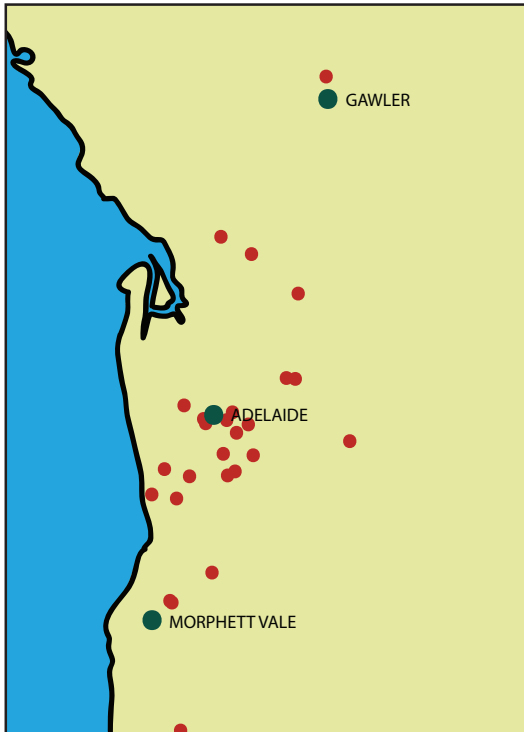


Figure 2. Locations of participating schools in Greater Adelaide.



Student leaders calling the shots at the YEC mentor day

The Youth Environment Council of South Australia (YEC) uses an effective and engaging peer-learning model, involving experienced YEC members being selected to support Green Adelaide staff to mentor their fellow YEC students from across SA.

In March, this year's seven mentors completed a training day with Green Adelaide staff at The Joinery, a community environment space in the heart of Adelaide.

They helped staff plan the year's YEC activities and during the year they will further develop their self-confidence, leadership, public speaking and group work skills by acting as encouraging and supportive role models for the younger YEC students. They will also deliver engaging activities to help the YEC students bond into a united council during the year.

During the training day, the mentors were asked to remember the challenges they experienced when first arriving at YEC events, brainstorm what makes effective leaders, understand their own thinking and learning styles, develop skills in starting and holding conversations, and other techniques to support their fellow YEC members.

At the end of April, they will use their newly learnt leadership skills at the Welcome Forum in Belair National Park with the 60 or so students who will be chosen as members for this year's YEC. The Welcome Forum will be followed soon after by a three-day overnight camp at Arbury Park Outdoor School.

The YEC mentoring program is an integral part of training emerging leaders in the Youth Environment Council which has been running in South Australia since 1997.

2022 YEC MENTORS



Colby

I love all aspects of the environment especially the natural landscape. I also really don't like all of the plastics that are in the natural environment and landscape around us. I love the flexibility that YEC provides; it's not just about one aspect of the environment but it's everything to do with it.



Jesse

What I love about the environment is that it's peaceful and I enjoy seeing wildlife and exploring the geology. I like visiting national parks, going hiking and camping. When I was little I was involved with tree-planting and looking after the creek and what are now the Pledger Wetlands.



Katie

I love that nature provides happiness and joy to all species of flora and fauna. I always enjoy learning something new and sharing my knowledge with others. I am very passionate about protecting the environment and have been inspired since I was younger.



Keira

I love everything about nature and the environment but I especially love the ocean and marine wildlife. I have grown up on such a beautiful coastline and I have always been eager to do whatever it takes to protect the local marine species at Lipson Cove.

My entire YEC experience has been absolutely incredible. I have loved every second of it.

2022 YEC MENTORS



Layla

I've always had a passion for the environment. But my most favourite thing would have to be animals! I thoroughly enjoy spending time with them, whether it be out in nature or just spending time with my pets and when you love something you want to protect it.



Manil

It was incredible to be part of helping the community and the one thing I love about the YEC is understanding the values of what they do in helping nature and the species that live in it.



Mollie

I love the diversity of species – from flora to fauna – and how despite our differences every living thing on this Earth is connected in some way. I love learning about the environment – like its history and evolution, the incredible things animals and plants do that create a balance.

I was really inspired by the mentors talking about their projects from previous years.

Welcome Day 2022

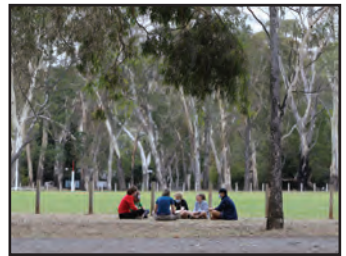
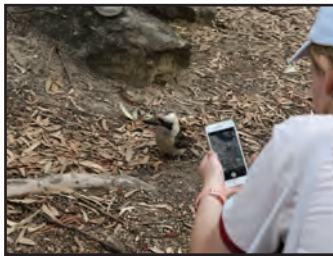
On Thursday 14 April the Green Adelaide education team hosted the welcome day event for the 2022 Youth Environment Council program at Belair National Park. This event was the first day of the program where all 63 participants were able to come together and meet. The day was filled with team activities, including an introduction to planning the projects that the participants will each work on during the year.

The YEC has been running annually since 1997, enabling like-minded 11 to 17 year old students from across South Australia to come together, share their passion for the environment and run their own action projects in their local communities.

Year 8 student Samaira sees the YEC as *'a great opportunity to be empowered and motivated to make a change'*.

Other students felt the same way about meeting a network of others who could support them to promote and conserve our environment. Jackson, in Year 11, remarked *'this is a great way to meet new people and gain new experiences, which is an important aspect of looking after the land'*.

Year 9 student Tamara added, *'I'm really enjoying meeting like-minded people who feel the same way I do, and having a chance to make a difference in my community'*.



Arbury Park Leadership Camp 2022

In mid-May the Green Adelaide education team ran the annual YEC Leadership Camp at Arbury Park Outdoor School in the Adelaide Hills.

Fifty students were involved in both outdoor and indoor activities with the aims of building leadership skills, linking explicit learning to real world practice, and developing and planning the environmental projects they'll carry out as part of their involvement in the YEC.

The student projects are based around sustainability issues that they consider important in their school, local community or more widely. Among the wide range of topics they hope to tackle with their projects are revegetating to increase biodiversity; educating people about climate change; creating bee hotels; waste recovery at school; encouraging people to clean up dog waste; establishing a native food garden; and beach clean-ups.

Arbury Park Outdoor School is situated in the hills, and the property contains a series of interconnected wetlands, native woodland, a revegetation area alongside Cox Creek, and other engaging outdoors learning areas. These provided ideal conditions for students to deepen their knowledge of sustainability issues and increase their leadership, problem solving and team building skills.

Staff from Green Adelaide Education and the school collaborated to deliver a fun program that actively encouraged the students to connect with nature, challenge themselves and think deeply about their goals.

The students were asked for their favourite activity at the camp, with many listing orienteering; the night frog walk; Landcare along Cox Creek; hearing from mentor Keira about her experiences volunteering; team building activities; and project planning as highlights.







YEC presents at Youth Climate Forum

On Wednesday 14 September, the Youth Environment Council was represented at a Youth Forum on climate change, organised by the City of Burnside. Each year City of Burnside runs a forum for high schools in the area, looking at a topic nominated by young people at local schools. This year they had chosen the theme "Climate Change - Turning down the Heat".

Two of our YEC members, Lucy and Samaira, agreed to come along as members of a panel and answer questions from the audience about what actions they have taken on climate change, the challenges they have faced and their advice for peers looking to start their own initiatives.

They had some great insights to share and did a fantastic job representing the YEC and inspiring others with their passion.

Alongside our students on the panel were Resilient East Coordinator Bec Taylor and environmental explorer and scientist Tim Jarvis; who both shared some fantastic examples of practical action they have been involved in.

Following the panel session, participating students took part in a hands-on workshop to plan their own projects back at school with some help from our YEC reps.

As well as this Youth Forum, some of our YEC members also represented the council at other state and national events. These included the Australian Youth Climate Coalition's Power Shift in-person and online summit; consultation with SA Water for their investment priorities for 2024-28; launch events for Green Adelaide's Sustainable Schools program; the Limestone Coast Landscape Board's Young Environmental Leaders Program; the Limestone Coast Youth Environment Council; and the Resilient South Regional Climate Action Plan.

THOUGHTS ABOUT BEING IN YEC

I will always remember how inspiring everyone was and how I felt excited to see what and where everyone will end up.

I am very honoured to have been accepted into this amazing, wonderful group.

The work I am doing will make a difference even if it's small - my ideas can grow and develop into more and more.

I'm now educated on the importance of making connections to broaden pathways.

I have learnt that getting involved in conservation is super easy and there are lots of other like-minded people who want to get involved too.

I would like to thank Green Adelaide, YEC and the mentors for assisting me on my journey to help the environment.

It is possible to make an impact, regardless of your background.

I learnt the importance of planning and persistence in our projects and to always follow your dreams/passions.

Sometimes you'll come to multiple challenges and obstacles while doing your projects but you always have to keep pushing on.

Follow your dreams and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Hard work is heart work.

YEC gave me confidence that I can make positive change and continue saving the environment in the future.



YEC students celebrate their successes

On Thursday 3 November, 41 students from across South Australia celebrated their involvement in the 2022 Youth Environment Council (YEC) at a Celebration Forum in Adelaide Botanic Garden.

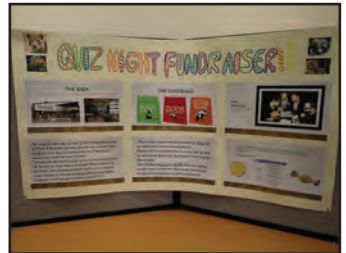
Despite recent rainy conditions, the weather on the day was perfect, allowing the students to participate in enjoyable, entertaining activities, embracing the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature, and sharing their personal research and action projects with each other.

The students were able to choose from activities including nature journaling; a botanical treasure hunt; making seed bombs and newspaper pots; investigating bird behaviour; and searching for insects and other invertebrates. Their posters and displays covered a diverse range of topics including food gardens; recycling stations; a radio interview with local tradesmen about recycling in their supply chain; fundraising for environment and community organisations; research on local threatened species; composting; creating wildlife gardens; litter clean ups; and comparing the growth of native spinach vs baby spinach.

A visit from a panel of past YEC members who shared knowledge about their experiences since participating in YEC was a highlight of the day, prompting the students to reflect on their own experiences of the year.

After lunch each of the YEC students created a painting using Aboriginal symbols with Sasha Hill, a Yamatji/Noongar woman, a mother and lover of all Aboriginal art. It is fair to say we have some incredibly talented artists in the YEC.

The day wrapped up with the opportunity for the YEC students to showcase their projects to VIPs and family, and receive a certificate during a ceremony with guest speakers.



2022 YEC MEMBERS AND THEIR PROJECTS



Abigail
Established recycling bins at school.



Alice
Monitored fungi growing at a local revegetation site. Created a pamphlet about the diversity of mushrooms.



Archer
Set up a recycling station for single use items at the school, which is used by the wider community in his town.



Ashlee
Planting habitat for Southern Emu-wren, Blue-banded Bee and other solitary bees with Dakoyta and Ella.



Astyn
Started a school garden for use by the Home Economics classes.



Bonnie
Established a soft plastics recycling station at school and undertook a beach clean up.



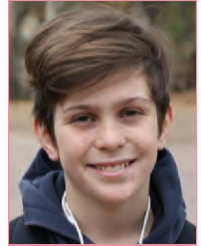
Bradley
Worked with Vlad to investigate the health of a local creek and produce a VR simulation to show results.



Caitlin
With Grace, established three butterfly gardens at school to improve biodiversity.



Callum P
Planned a quiz night to raise funds for Zoos SA.



Callum S
Established a bush tucker garden.



Camille
Investigated biodiversity in a spring-fed dam on a creek.



Cara
Led a school clean up so that the local ecosystem will be cleaner and healthier.



Charlotte
Created a mural and artworks to support conservation work at Warramong Sanctuary.



Colby
Conducted radio interviews with local contractors about reducing waste in their supply chains.



Dakoyta
Planting habitat for Southern Emu-wren, Blue-banded Bee and other solitary bees with Ashlee and Ella.

I enjoyed having specialised mentors to help people who are already doing their projects.

2022 YEC MEMBERS AND THEIR PROJECTS



Django

Worked to restore habitat for birds on the Fleurieu Peninsula; including weeding and planting over 200 trees.



Ella

Planting habitat for Southern Emu-wren, Blue-banded Bee and other solitary bees with Dakoyta and Ashlee.



Esther

Undertook awareness raising about the school's beehive. Produced posters, puzzles and a colouring competition.



Eva

Aimed to improve or make compost and a worm farm for use in Agriculture classes at the school or for sale.



Evie R

Wanted to establish a butterfly garden with support from Bringing Back the Butterflies.



Evie R-W

Aimed to do a beach clean up and undertake some research on microplastics and fishing gear.



Grace

With Caitlin, established three butterfly gardens at school to improve biodiversity.



Harry

Undertook weed eradication in a local reserve.



Indiana P

Worked with local council to encourage people to clean up dog waste in a local park.



Indiana V

Undertook tree planting and worked with primary school students to teach them the importance of trees.



Isabelle

Planted in the school garden to help attract native bees, birds and butterflies.



Jackson

Investigated options to reduce waste in his school, including establishing new bin systems.



Jazmin

Researched Red-tailed Black Cockatoos and produced a book to raise funds and awareness about them.



Jesse

Started an environment society at his school.



Kaylee

Investigated planting bush tucker and wildflowers in the school's wetlands.

I made heaps of friends and will be more confident in the future in leadership.

2022 YEC MEMBERS AND THEIR PROJECTS



Keira B

Created a website about Bottlenose Dolphins and other wildlife at Lipson Cove.



Keira F

Investigated establishing a butterfly garden at school.



Layla

Worked with Olivia to establish a school bush tucker garden and investigated the growth of native spinach.



Leah

Undertook a school waste management program, including soft plastic recycling.



Lilka

Produced flyers to inform people of issues such as their carbon footprint, climate change and global warming.



Lilli

Produced beeswax wrap containers.



Lillian

Aimed to improve waste management systems at school.



Lucy

Developed environmentally friendly recipes and tips to help reduce food waste.



Mackenzie

Investigated pollution on her local beach.



Mali

Created posters about endangered species and how they can be helped.



Manil

Produced posters on threatened wildlife.



Olivia

Worked with Layla to establish a school bush tucker garden and investigated the growth of native spinach.



Riya

Investigated establishing a butterfly garden.



Ruby

Establish a herb garden at school for use in home economics classes.



Samaira

Climate Education and building strong foundations for opportunities on climate action in senior year levels.

Keep going and don't give up on your ideas!

2022 YEC MEMBERS AND THEIR PROJECTS



Sienna

Undertook an experiment to show the benefits of using organic fertiliser vs synthetic fertiliser.



Sophia

Investigated methods to reduce waste in the ocean and re-purpose medical masks.



Tamara

Wrote an environmentally friendly cook book.



Toby

Investigated how climate change affects the ocean and what we can do to help it.



Vlad

Worked with Bradley to investigate the health of a local creek and produce a VR simulation to show results.

For more information about the projects undertaken by YEC members over the years, check out the **YEC projects** pages on the website:

www.yecsa.net.au/yec-projects.html

I was able to try and stay positive and have fun. From my fellow mentors I learnt to be more selfless.

