Youth Environment Council South Australia

YEARBOOK
2025

GREEN ADELAIDE

Reflecting on the Year

Thank you for being part of a year-long program to develop your leadership, team building and public speaking skills. Through camps, workshops, and forums, you met like-minded people who also wanted to act together for a sustainable future.

Collectively you worked on a wide range of awesome projects and this yearbook is a memento for you to reflect on your involvement and achievements.

GREEN ADELAIDE

The Youth Environment Council of South Australia was initiated by the Department for Environment and Water in partnership with the Department for Education in 1997. It is now coordinated by Green Adelaide.

www.yecsa.net.au

YEC Program

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Mentor Training Camp (YEC Mentors only), Adelaide Zoo

Wednesday 22 – Thursday 22 January

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

TERM 1

Welcome Forum, Belair National Park

Thursday 20 March

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

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Two-night Sustainability Camp, Arbury Park Outdoor School

Monday 14 - Wednesday 16 April

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.

TERM 2/SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Main focus: Developed your project ideas, got feedback from your YEC staff mentor, started/continued your project, then contacted your YEC staff mentor with an update.

TERM 3/SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Main focus: Worked on your project; thought about how you will present your progress at the Celebration forum

TERM 4

Sharing and Celebration Forum, Adelaide Botanic Garden

Thursday 6 November

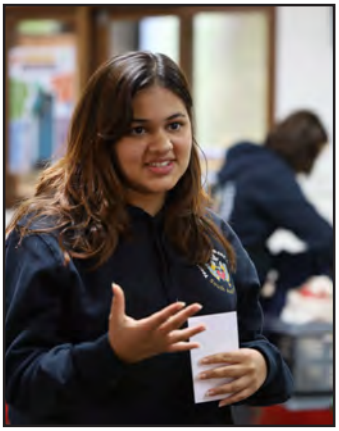
At the final event, we shared and celebrated your environmental achievements and reflected on actions and changes as a group.

Mentor Training Camp at Adelaide Zoo

The Youth Environment Council of South Australia (YEC) uses an effective and engaging peer-learning model, involving experienced YEC members, to support Green Adelaide staff to mentor their fellow YEC students from across SA. This year's eight mentors completed a 2-day overnight training camp with Green Adelaide staff at the Adelaide Zoo.

They undertook leadership training activities to develop their self-confidence, leadership, public speaking and group work skills. They also undertook Facilitation Training; developing their skills in facilitating group discussions, leading group activities, and encouraging networking. Green Adelaide staff coached them through scenarios on how to be encouraging and supportive role models for this year's YEC members.

A highlight of the camp was the students' engagement with zoo educators. An educator provided formal learning around ecological evolution and took them on night and morning walks through the zoo. The Mentors also met one of the zoo keepers, who was a previous YEC member. The students' interaction with the educator and keeper allowed them to ask questions about potential career pathways for their environmental passions.



The YEC Mentors

Alexis

My family has a tradition of camping two or three times a year, since I was young. Those experiences were definitely what drove my passion for the environment.

Ameera

I love doing many things in the environment such as learning about different species of plants, hiking and planting.

Astyn

I love going to the beach, hiking, four-wheel-driving, and just being in nature. Whether that be swimming in the ocean, hiking in the pines, or just sitting in the middle of a garden.

Django

I love to be out in the natural world and exploring different habitats. I particularly love birdlife and how the ecosystems work to create bonds that support each other.

I learnt I can speak up when I have an idea because I usually don't.

The YEC Mentors

Esther

I love the beach and learning about the coastal environment. I love swinging and surfing even though I look like a fish out of water. I enjoy exploring new places and what they have to offer.

Harry

What I love about the environment is how it provides a space where everyone can come and appreciate the beauty of nature and learn to love the place we call home

Stella

I love the environment and learning about how it started. I love to be outdoors and learn new things out of my comfort zone.

Teesha

The environment is a privilege—it sustains plants, animals, and humans. I find it fascinating how things grow naturally, from the beauty of flowers to the fresh scent of the earth.

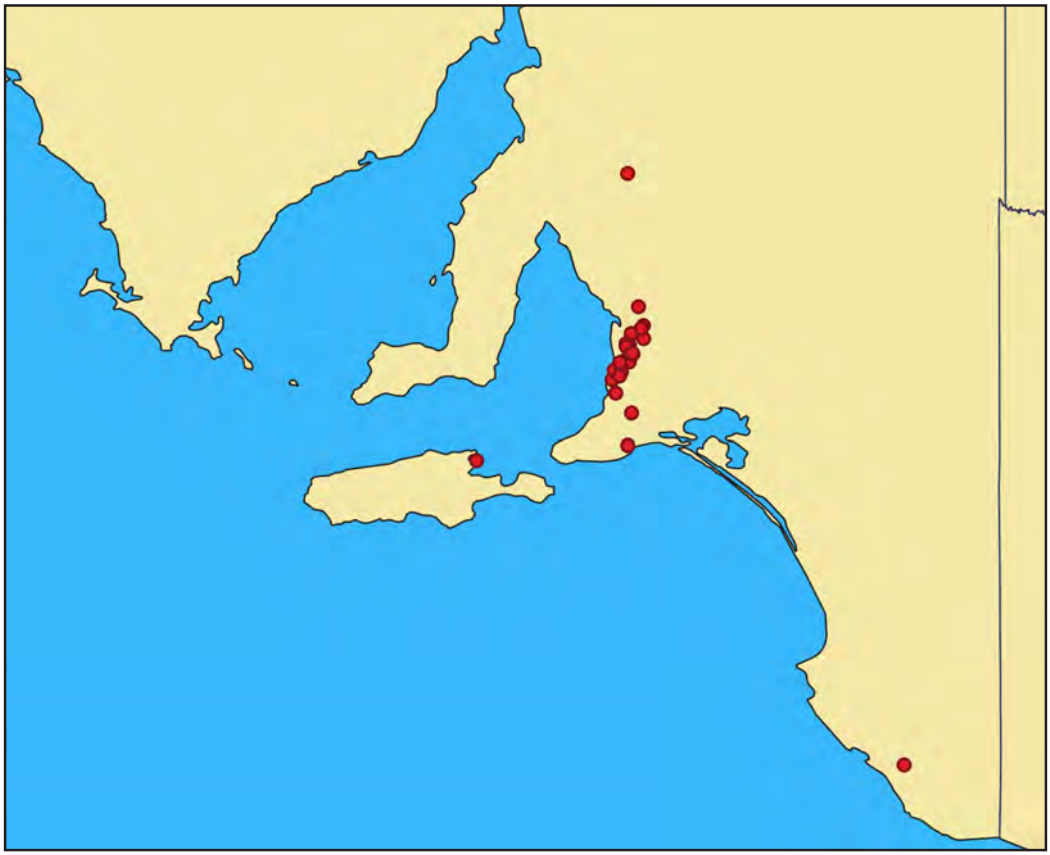
I have learnt new ways to get involved within the community and great opportunities revolving around volunteering.

Why Mentoring is Great!

According to our 2025 YEC mentors.

Participating Schools

- Adelaide Botanic High School
- Adelaide High School
- Australian Science and Mathematics School
- Blackwood High School
- Christie's Beach High School
- Clare High School
- Golden Grove High School
- Hallett Cove School
- Investigator College
- IQRA College
- Kangaroo Island Community Education
- Mercedes College
- Millicent High School
- Mitcham Girls High School
- Mount Compass Area School
- Reynella East College
- Roma Mitchell Secondary College
- Seaview High School
- St Aloyisus College
- St Columba College
- St Dominic's Priory College
- St Ignatius College
- St Mary's College
- Tatachilla Lutheran College
- The Heights School
- Unley High School
- Urrbrae Agricultural High School
- Woodcroft College



Welcome Forum at Belair National Park

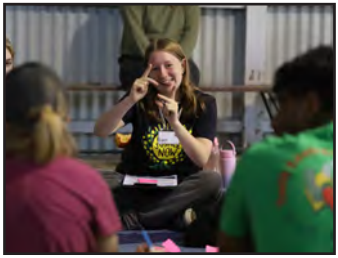
On Thursday 20 March, we were welcomed by much needed rain and a stunning outdoor backdrop as we gathered at Belair National Park to celebrate the newest members of the Youth Environment Council of SA (YEC).

Fifty-six high school students from across the state, including regions as far-reaching as the Northern and Yorke Peninsula, Murraylands and Riverland, Kangaroo Island, and the Limestone Coast came together for the first event for all members this year.

The YEC Welcome Forum, is a day dedicated to getting to know each other, sharing experiences and passions, and brainstorming individual sustainability projects to work on in their schools and communities throughout the year. Members were immersed in the natural beauty of the park while participating in fun team building and leadership exercises.

The YEC Mentors helped guide the program and activities of the day with lots of enthusiasm and made sure their fellow YEC members felt welcome. The mentors would continue to play an important leadership role in supporting YEC members at the next event, a three-day leadership camp held at Arbury Park Outdoor School in Bridgewater.

We couldn't wait to see all your wonderful project ideas unfold throughout the year.



Youth Environment Council
Step Up
Speak Out

Youth Impact Summit

On Saturday 5 April, the YEC was represented at South Australia's first ever Youth Impact Summit presented by the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

It was a day dedicated to young changemakers joining together to explore the many ways in which they are already shaping the future and inspiring others to do the same.

- Stella represented the YEC on a panel of young changemakers, and Sharli and Esther hosted a table talk to showcase real-life examples of how they're having a positive impact.

- YEC members, including Luci and Layla, facilitated native seedling propagation as a contributing lunch time activity to share their knowledge and skills.

- There were also opportunities to connect with local politicians and other decision-makers who are committed to helping bring about the changes young South Australians want to see.

The day finished with a wrap-up session in which young people were invited to share their ideas on ways we can all work together for greater youth impact in SA!

Sustainability Camp at Arbury Park Outdoor School

During the first week of the school holidays, the annual Youth Environment Council of SA (YEC) Sustainability Camp was held at Arbury Park Outdoor School in Bridgewater. Education Officers from Green Adelaide with the assistance of staff from the school and guest Environmental Education Coordinator from the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board collaborated to deliver a program for YEC members to connect with nature, challenge themselves and think deeply about their environmental goals for the year.

A total of 48 members engaged in a range of both outdoor and indoor activities to build their skills as young changemakers, link learning to real world practice, and develop and plan their environmental projects.

This year we changed the program to include a selection of activities based around project themes (which included plants, animals and land; water, marine and coast; climate change; and community) and leadership (public speaking; activism, advocacy, civics and citizenship; circle of influence, bringing people along; and project and event management). Members chose two activities from each of the streams based upon their interests or skills they wanted to improve on. In each session, the members were also encouraged to reflect upon how the activities could be used to enhance or support their projects.

A particular highlight of the camp was the Kaurna engagement activity with Walking Together with Kaurna. Members learnt about Aboriginal culture and connection to Country from Kaurna man Drew Kilner, who shared stories and showed various tools and culturally important items. Liesl von der Bosch led members through a number of Aboriginal children's games.

Other activities the YEC members undertook included guided bush walks, orienteering, a night-time frog hunt (where we saw a threatened frog species), a seed propagation and Landcare activity, and a fun mission survival challenge.

The camp was rounded out by a quiz night and talent show, and plenty of free time with opportunities to form friendships and learn from other members experiences and past projects.

Following the camp, members worked on their chosen projects throughout the year and prepared to come together at the end of the year to share them and celebrate their achievements.

ENVIRONMENT

Driving Citizenship Through Sustainability

Green Adelaide and the Department for Education joined forces to shine a light on young changemakers from the Youth Environment Council of SA. They created a series of powerful films capturing YEC members' journeys — from the spark that inspired them to act, to the challenges they faced, and how their passion for nature and environmental protection helped them overcome obstacles.

These stories show individual achievements and highlight how youth-led action can nurture a strong sense of environmental citizenship, shaping engaged and active future leaders. The films were showcased at the Active Citizenship Convention, contributing to the Government of South Australia's emerging focus on safeguarding democracy.

Over 1,000 Year 10 students attended the Convention, where YEC members also led table discussions and sessions to ensure youth voice is front and centre in conversations about active citizenship in SA.

Here is what Luci had to say about her experience being filmed for the Active Citizenship Convention:

"Hi, my name is Luci, and I was recently filmed to share about my advocacy in the youth voice and climate justice space. The film was shown along with other students' achievements at the Citizenship Convention held at Adelaide Oval and focused on highlighting initiatives and projects taken by young people. I had a great time filming and sharing not only my personal experiences, but advice for other young people who want to make change. I shared about how I created and manage my Adelaide Hills Australian Youth Climate Coalition (AYCC) group, and other achievements such as organising a local community clean up and free barbeque."

Sharing and Celebrating at Adelaide Botanic Garden

On Thursday 6 November, keen members of the Youth Environment Council of South Australia (YEC) gathered at the Adelaide Botanic Garden for the final event of this year's program, celebrating and showcasing their year-long projects with friends, family and invited guests.

Members had the opportunity to spend time outdoors connecting with nature and with each other. They chose from a range of activities including planning for a YEC Alumni network; contributing their environmental concerns and action to an annual report to be sent to the Green Adelaide Board; sculpting birds and other wildlife from clay; creating a newspaper pot and planting native seeds; going on a nature scavenger hunt; and undertaking a nature art activity.

A big highlight for many students was the inclusion of a new celebration, where YEC members who've been a part of the council for 3 or more years were presented with certificates and posters to recognise their efforts. Their fellow members particularly enjoyed seeing the profile photos that highlighted just how much some of those students had grown over the years. Unfortunately, that also meant farewelling the students who will be too old to be involved next year. We wish them well and look forward to hearing how their lives unfold further down the track.

The day also included a visit from a panel of past YEC members who shared their experiences since participating in the YEC. Of particular interest to many was hearing from Gemma, who now works at Adelaide Zoo, talking about her experiences caring for threatened species such as the Giant Pandas, and Amy, discussing her career as a Ministerial Adviser and speech writer in the South Australian Parliament.

But, as always, the focus of the day was to celebrate the different action projects that the members undertook. Over the year, they each developed an environmental project that focused on creating positive change within their school or local community. Some of the many amazing projects they'd worked on this year included: building an air brick to monitor air quality that also purifies the air; creating food and biodiversity gardens; creating jewellery from recycled objects; producing a photographic essay of a local ecosystem; making a 3D art piece showing what happens to all the waste in the oceans where whales feed and how it affects them; weeding and habitat restoration; developing a fun video game about the Hooded Plover, highlighting threats they face in the environment; starting school environment groups; and creating enrichment toys out of discarded clothing for rescued dogs and cats.

REDUCE • REUSE
RECYCLE

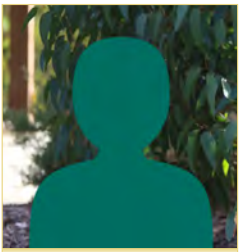
Superdry

ATOO
Event

YEC Members and their Projects

Aahlia

Made and painted a birdhouse.



Adele

With Stella Z, researched and made beeswax wraps to encourage others to use fewer single use products.

Akari

Conducted surveys of the awareness of problems related to Fast Fashion and usage of second hand shops.

Alex

Upcycled items like yarn and fabric from op shops into new wearables to prevent them from entering landfill.

Alexis H

Researched ways we can help save Orange-bellied Parrots and their habitat, and raised awareness about the species.

Alexis M

With Aura, is bringing back the butterflies by planting with yr 7 classes to create habitat for the Australian Painted Lady.

Ameera

Astyn

Continued making handmade jewellery, including crane earrings inspired by a school trip to Japan.

Athok

The air we breath. Classroom air pollution. Built an air brick to monitor air quality that also purifies the air.

Audrey

Aura

With Alexis M, is bringing back the butterflies by planting with yr 7 classes to create habitat for the Australian Painted Lady.

Aurelia

Planned a tree planting event with local council .

I want to take my project further by using the data I gathered to improve my local park's biodiversity

YEC Members and their Projects

Azuki

Planted a nature play area with species native to K.I. which also attract butterflies. Surveyed for butterflies with a reception class.

Billie

Created a poster about the birds at the Pakapakanthi wetland.

Brionny

Created a visual 3D art piece of what happens to all the waste in the oceans where whales feed and how it affects them.

Callum

Ran a presentation to educate Year 7 students on the relationship between the Permian Mass Extinction and the current Climate Crisis

Dhruv

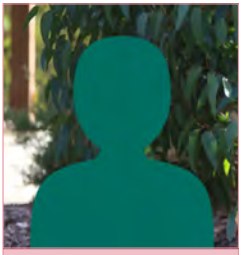
Created an app to provide the same dopamine effect people get while performing tasks. A game designed for the aged or disabled.

Django

Created and restored habitat for Fleurieu birds and other fauna ensuring they have a safe environment for the future.

Eliza

Developed a project and social media presentation: Every drop counts, what's really in the water?



Elyce

Created a sustainable vegetable and native plant garden in the backyard.

Ember

Made a fun video game about the Hooded Plover, highlighting threats they face in the environment.

Esther B

Made a Hakea seed pod artwork from rubbish to raise awareness about the declining Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo population.

Esther M

Created a magazine about the coast and waterways in SA, to showcase issues, actions, indigenous culture and other interesting aspects.

Evie

Held a second planting day to improve understorey in Grey Box Grassy Woodland habitat and inspire locals to plant natives in gardens.

I hope to continue to take action for the environment outside of the YEC

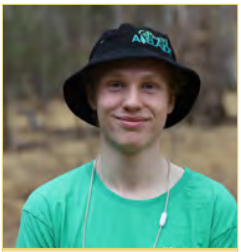
YEC Members and their Projects

Gabi

Taught kids within school community about how to preserve coral reefs.

Harlee

Revegetated with local native plants to help our native animals and increase overall biodiversity at school.



Harry

Participated in civic programs as the Youth Premier in the SA Youth Parliament, leading a government that passed environmental reforms.

Heidi

Researched and started development of a native butterfly garden in school community

Inara

Ivy

Held an online meeting for 13–15-year-olds to feed into a local environmental group.

Jimi

Organise a Carp catching day with the local community and created fertiliser from the fish for revegetation projects.

Joel

Commenced development of a native bush garden and yarning circle to support learning about the importance of native plants.

Kari

While traveling with family, looked at recycling options along their route. Recorded what was available at each of the locations.

Kiara

Engaged a group of high school students to participate in planting native plants in the local community.

Layla

Researched the Algal Bloom and produced an infographic to help locals understand and combat the spread of misinformation.

Leah Mi

Asked people in the community about coral bleaching and wrote an essay on it.

My hope is to keep doing this project and hope I can bring it outside school and bring back the butterflies

YEC Members and their Projects

Lilli

Created a website of outdoor events for young people to connect with each other, the environment and their collective power.

Luci

Continued establishing a youth environment group in the Adelaide Hills.

Luke

Planned to support a local community group with understorey revegetation in the Adelaide Parklands.

Mila

Photographed the St Kilda mangroves then compiled the photos into a photographic essay to raise awareness of that ecosystem.

Nyree

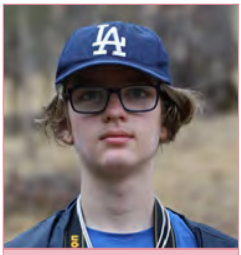
Highlighted the benefits of keeping chooks in your backyard.

Piper

Created a working floating Solar Raft that can be used on farm dams to produce energy and stop algal blooms and evaporation.

Saarim

Developed a prototype of a coral reef restoration submarine that can be used remotely.



Samuel

Created enrichment toys out of discarded clothing for rescued dogs and cats.

Sebastian

Surveyed nocturnal animals around the city to see what a suitable habitat is for them and how we can ensure their preferences are all met.

Shudhit

Undertook landcare in the Dry Creek area. Grew native plants at home and encouraged community members to also grow natives.

Stella S

Made and sold resin jewellery. Donated 60% of the profits to support 'Bees For Development'.

Stella Z

With Adele, researched and made beeswax wraps to encourage others to use fewer single use products.

My next step: write a short novel, even if it takes forever

YEC Members and their Projects

Teesha

Led ongoing efforts to maintain the biodiversity garden established last year and initiated a proposal to revitalise the school oval.

Thu

Held a workshop making accessories out of recycled materials to promote reusing things and encourage correct recycling.

Tia

Organised to teach students at school how we can be more sustainable and look after our ecosystems.

Yasmin

Participated in the Glossy Black Cockatoo census and ran I.D. sessions for 2 junior primary classes. Wrote an article for the school newsletter.

Yiyi

With the SVC group, planted a native garden near some big gum trees in the school to support the biodiversity in the area.

Check out the **YEC projects** pages on our website to learn more about some of the projects undertaken by members over the years:

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

I want to continue making the small changes like reduce, reuse, recycle and to use the beeswax wraps we made

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