



Caring for the places we live, learn and play

Bellbrae Primary is on Wadawurrung Country



- The Wadawurrung believe that “Dja” (country) is more than a place.
- They believe our coast, hinterland and people were all formed by Bunjil and ancestor spirits, who continue to live in the land, water and sky.
- They believe it’s our shared responsibility to care for country, and to work together to make Wadawurrung Country strong. We believe this too.
- When you ride your bike to school, play at the Reserve, or play at school, you are on the ridgeline of the Spring Creek Valley. Spring Creek stretches all the way from the river mouth (next to the Torquay Life Saving Club) to the Otways.
- This valley was an important transport corridor for the Wadawurrung people and provided places for camping, fishing and hunting. Stone artefacts, shell middens and scar trees have been found throughout the valley.
- Before European settlement, the valley would have supported rich and diverse flora and fauna; water birds, fish, eels, turtles and platypus in the creek and billabongs; and kangaroo, wallaby, and possibly emu.
- Some of these plants and animals are still there. If you’re lucky you can see kangaroos, koalas, echidnas and wedge tailed eagles.
- Some of these species are now extinct or endangered. One of the world’s last stands of Bellarine Yellow Gum is on the valley ridgeline. You ride past it!

Bellbrae Grade 5's are going to help to protect and restore part of the Spring Creek Valley Ridgeline

- On Wednesday, we'll be walking to the Bellbrae Reserve and helping to plant native trees next to the bike path.
- We'll be working with other community groups who feel the same way we do, that it's important to care for our local environment.
- Pippa's Dad, Luke, has done a "biodiversity assessment" which helps us understand the different habitats along the ridgeline as well as which plants it's important that we protect.
- Patagonia have given us money to pay for weeding and buying the plants, tree guards and stakes.
- Torquay Landcare and the Surf Coast Energy Group are lending us tree planting equipment and will show us how to plant cypress daisy bushes, flax lily and clematis (the fluffy flowers you see on the cliff top when you go the beach).
- The Surf Coast Shire Council has cleaned up some of the rubbish and helped get rid of the piles of asphalt. They're also going to fix the path so families can ride from Bellbrae to Torquay.
- The Grade 2's have worked with a local artist and Possum Pete to identify which species live in the valley (you will be able to see these at their art exhibition).
- We're hoping some Mums and Dads will come along and help us as well.



We will be planting at the top of the Bellbrae Reserve next to the turnoff to the playground, and the hill you ride down just before you get to Cemetery Road (the dirt road)



Why is it important to care for Spring Creek?

1. Spring Creek is a special place

- Did you know it was there?
- Right next to our school?

2. We want to protect and preserve the biodiversity of the Valley

- Biodiversity means “the variety of life on Earth”. It includes all plant and animal life, as well as the ecosystems that they live in.
- A healthy natural environment provides us with food, clean water, and other resources that we rely on for our everyday needs. It also helps to reduce the impacts of climate change.
- Looking after our local biodiversity is a shared responsibility for us all (even for kids!)



*This is an endangered swamp antechinus
It was discovered in the Spring Creek Valley in January this year*



3. Spending time in nature impacts our health and wellbeing

- Nature can make you feel calmer and less anxious
- Studies have also shown that riding or walking to school in the mornings can make you better at maths! Can you believe it?
- It's fun riding with your friends or family which helps to build healthy relationships

4. We want you to feel safe riding to school

- Do you feel nicer riding to school on a path with rubbish and weeds along it?
Or, on a path that makes you feel like you're in the bush, where you can check out the views and the kangaroos (or sheep?)
- Do you think your parents would be more likely to let you ride if they felt confident you would be safe?