




Forest Education  
Foundation

The stories behind our trees

# YEAR IN REVIEW

2024



The Forest Education Foundation acknowledges the traditional custodians of Lutruwita/ Tasmania, the Palawa and Pakana peoples. We recognise forests are an essential part of our environment, our identity, and the deep connection Palawa and Pakana peoples have with country.

We proudly acknowledge the continuous cultural traditions, knowledge and people that have shaped our forest country. Through education we respect the opportunity to contribute to students' developing an understanding of, and respect for, the value of First Nations peoples' knowledge, culture, and language as they become stewards of the forest, today and into the future.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND MANAGER

Welcome to the Forest Education Foundation (FEF) Year in Review for the period January through to December 2024.

This review provides an insight into the achievements of the FEF programs and activities, addressing the Guiding Principles in the Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026 (refer to page 4).

To maintain the quality of learning programs provided to students the Foundation invested considerable energy and time in reviewing the content of field-based programs and stand-alone resource kits (*Forest in a Box* series), accessed by teachers through a school loan system. This review included updating the supporting resources used by FEF teachers when delivering face-to-face teaching programs. The process involved collaborating with industry members and consulting best practice methodologies in teaching and learning. As a result, we are pleased to introduce a new Primary resource, the *Inquiry Cubes*, and a series of new maps and field experiences supporting Secondary/Senior Secondary Geography and Science. Congratulations to the FEF team in being recognised for these resources with awards granted at the Geography Teachers Association of Australia's national conference in October this year – a significant validation of FEF programs.

The completion of new teaching and learning materials and experiences has enabled the FEF to strengthen existing programs with schools and continue to show growth in key target areas across the upper Primary and Secondary curriculum, particularly through Geography, Science and Agriculture. This has been reinforced through ongoing engagement with University of Tasmania's pre-service teacher training programs, leading to plans for further collaboration and growth in 2025.

The level of industry engagement and collaboration in supporting FEF programs continues to be very encouraging. This support comes in many forms, including; supporting the professional learning of FEF staff, partnering in the delivery of student programs, and sponsoring timber resources for specialised projects. We appreciate the support of those quietly going about the business of encouraging wider industry and government recognition of the Foundation's achievements. This positive engagement is greatly appreciated and worthy of acknowledgment by FEF Directors and staff.

The Foundation has maintained strong support from the core funding partners, Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the Tasmanian Forest Products Association. Along with the ongoing commitment and support of the State Government we have maintained additional financial support through Private Forests Tasmania and the Forest Practices Authority.

Please enjoy the following highlights and, once again, thank you for your support, encouragement, and commitment to the Forest Education Foundation. If you would like the FEF to visit your offices or site to share experiences and explore opportunities for further engagement – Please reach out.

**Steve Luttrell**  
Independent Chair



**Darcy Vickers**  
Manager/Teacher



## OUR PURPOSE

Inspire Tasmanian educators and learners to explore the stories behind our trees.

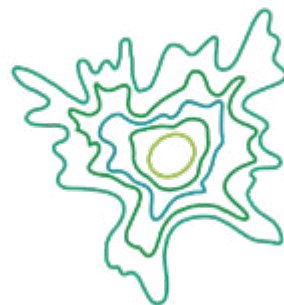
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# ABOUT US

## WHO ARE WE

The Forest Education Foundation (FEF) is a not-for-profit educational institution based in Tasmania. It was established as a joint initiative between Sustainable Timber Tasmania and the Tasmanian Forest Products Association. Additional support is provided through the State Government, Private Forests Tasmania and the Forest Practices Authority.



## OUR MISSION

*Provide authentic educational experiences that develop knowledge about sustainable interactions with forest environments and the resources and services they provide, for today and future generations.*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Encourage and support teachers to explore forest education opportunities aligned to the curriculum, from Primary to Senior Secondary.

Support teachers and students to understand the relationships between people, forests and trees in managed forest environments and agricultural landscapes.

Provide engaging experiences that explore connections between managed landscapes, natural resources, and future career opportunities.

**qualified**  
TEACHERS

**real**  
EXPERIENCES

**industry**  
CONNECTIONS

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

**Independent Chair** Steve Luttrell

**Deputy Chair** Suzette Weeding  
*Sustainable Timber Tasmania*

**Treasurer** Tammy Price  
*Tasmanian Forest Products Association (SFM Forest Products)*

**Director** Dion McKenzie  
*Sustainable Timber Tasmania*

**Director** Nick Steel  
*Tasmanian Forest Products Association*

**Public Officer & Secretary** Darcy Vickers  
*Forest Education Foundation*

**Manager/Teacher** Darcy Vickers

**Teachers** Kate Battishall & Emily Nash

# WHAT WE DO

The FEF, with the support of industry networks, provides schools and communities throughout Tasmania with access to educational resources and experiences designed to engage students in learning about all things forests!



## KEY OBJECTIVES

Provide students throughout Tasmania with quality, hands-on educational experiences



Engage teachers with forest literacy through effective teaching and learning practices



Facilitate industry engagement with education communities



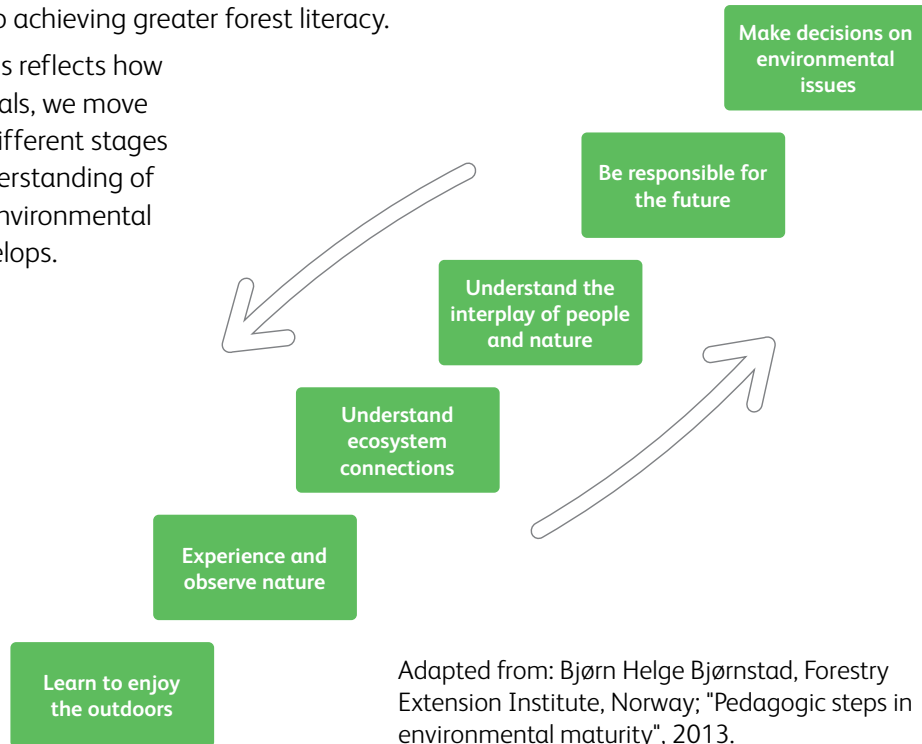
# TASMANIAN FOREST EDUCATION PLAN

The *Tasmanian Forest Education Plan* is a framework for supporting forest education for Prep to Year 12 students in Tasmania. It was developed in collaboration with experts and specialists from across the education sector and forest industries. The framework is founded on environmental education theories that scaffold education for sustainability and outlines the knowledge and skills that support the development of forest literate students in Tasmania.

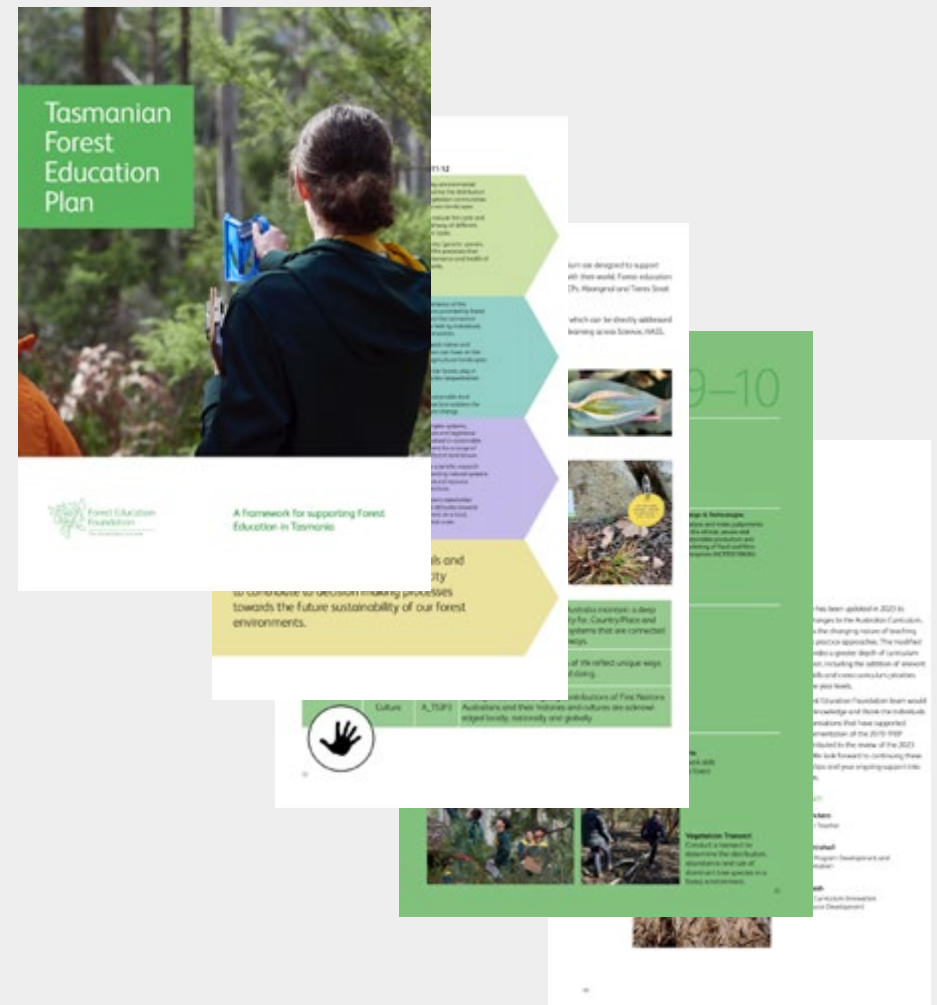
## ENVIRONMENTAL MATURITY MODEL

The *Environmental Maturity Model* is one of the key conceptual models within the plan. It demonstrates a pathway to achieving greater forest literacy.

This model reflects how as individuals, we move between different stages as our understanding of different environmental issues develops.



Adapted from: Bjørn Helge Bjørnstad, Forestry Extension Institute, Norway; "Pedagogic steps in environmental maturity", 2013.



The FEF model all teaching and learning programs around 4 key questions, which complement the *Environmental Maturity Model* outlined in the *Tasmanian Forest Education Plan*. These questions act as a scaffolding tool, helping students to progress from a fundamental awareness to a deeper understanding of forests and our connections to them.



## CONNECTING TO THE CURRICULUM

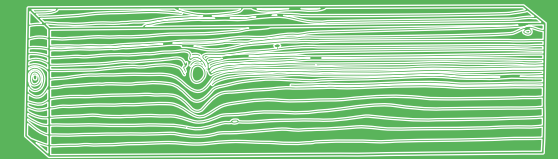


### GEOGRAPHY

- Land management
- Sustainability

### SCIENCE

- Ecosystems
- Climate change



### DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGIES

- Wood products and resources
- Design and innovation

### AGRICULTURE

- Trees on farms
- Careers



# ACHIEVEMENTS





# YEAR IN NUMBERS

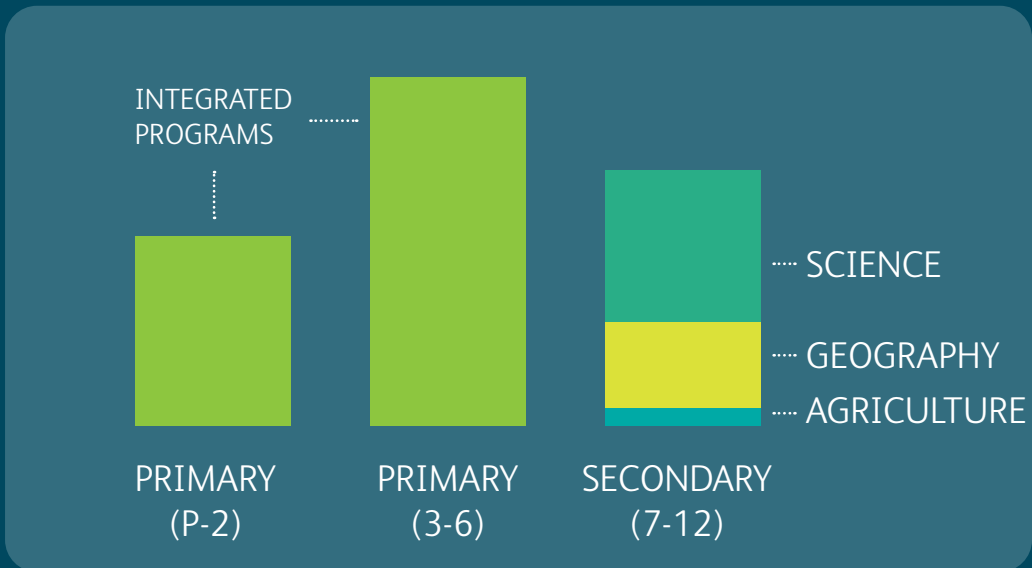
## 2024 CALENDAR YEAR

**6037** PEOPLE INTERACTED DIRECTLY WITH OUR PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

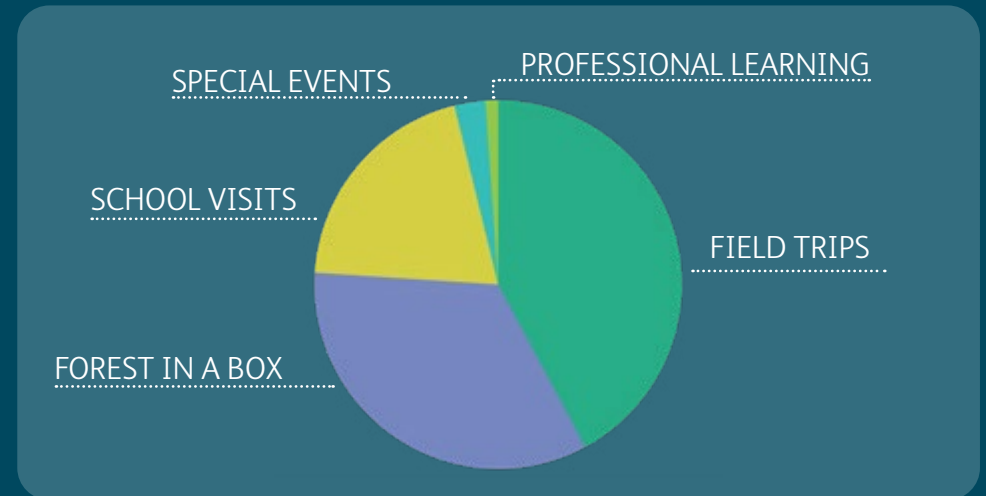
**198** TOTAL SESSIONS



### TEACHING ACROSS THE YEAR LEVELS



### PROGRAMS



# PRIMARY PROGRAMS

OVER  
**1600**  
STUDENTS USED FOREST  
IN A BOX

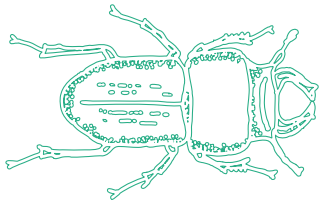
**139** TOTAL  
TEACHING  
SESSIONS

**36** YEAR 5/6  
PROGRAMS  
FACILITATED

Our primary excursion and incursion (school based) programs are designed to align with the Australian Curriculum Science and Geography learning areas for Years Prep through 6.

In 2024, the FEF saw increases in:

- Overall Year 5/6 excursion bookings
- Delivery of Geography focussed programs
- *Forest in a Box* loans
- Delivery at new field sites



## CONNECTING WITH NEW LOCAL PLACES

We know and love our main sites at the Waterworks Reserve (Hobart) and Hollybank Forest Reserve (Launceston), but sometimes we need to reach further afield to connect regional schools to forest landscapes closer to home.

This year we delivered programs at three sites new to the FEF: Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary, The Tasmanian Bushland Gardens, and The Tasmanian Arboretum. All three locations are maintained by volunteers and provide the perfect outdoor classroom for a day.

These sites offer students a range of forest landscapes to learn in as they investigate forest ecosystems first-hand. The magic doesn't end there, with all three sites bringing their own element of wonder to our FEF programs: platypus spotting, wobbly-bridge navigation and an *I Spy* of forest sculptures.



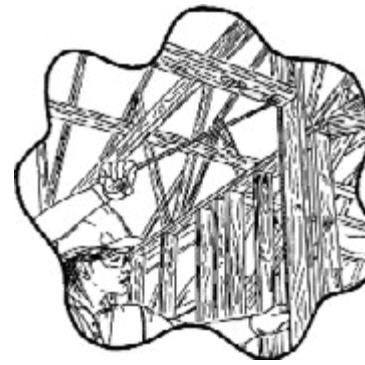
## TOPICS WE EXPLORE...

- Living and non-living features of forest ecosystems
- Mapping, forest types and physical conditions
- Plant and animal life cycles and adaptations
- Forest resources and sustainable management practices

NEW  
RESOURCE



## FOREST VALUES



**Economic**



**Social and Cultural**



**Environmental**

Designed and made in Tasmania to provoke interest and conversation, the *Inquiry Cubes* introduce teachers and their classes to the diverse environmental, social/cultural and economic values of forests. Through exploring these values students consider a wide range of perspectives in addition to their own and build greater understanding of how people interact with forest landscapes and the resources and services they provide.

## THE NEWEST FOREST IN A BOX

*Why are forests important?* That's the question explored through the FEF's newest wooden resource, the *Inquiry Cubes*.

Posed as a mystery that needs solving, the illustrations encourage students to discuss what they see, explain how they connect, share what they know, and consider the local, national and global importance of trees and forest landscapes.

The *Inquiry Cubes* have been trialled with local Year 5/6 students and UTAS pre-service teachers, and initial feedback is overwhelmingly positive. They're a hit! Teachers appreciate the level of engagement and collaborative thinking they promote, and students are thoroughly enjoying the hands-on opportunity to explore big ideas and new perspectives.

Connect with us to access this amazing new resource for your local school.



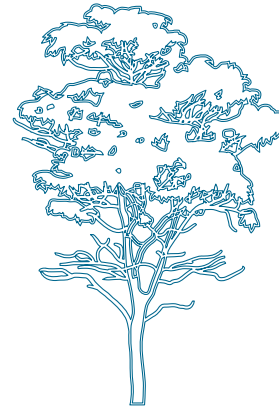
# SECONDARY PROGRAMS

**58** TOTAL TEACHING SESSIONS

**19** GEOGRAPHY PROGRAMS FACILITATED

The FEF continue to grow in the Secondary Geography teaching area, particularly in the delivery of the Year 9 - *Forest Biomes* fieldwork program. This program has been well received by schools and is a great accomplishment despite the subject being an elective only subject in Tasmania.

School based and field experiences for year 11/12 Environmental Science classes continues to be a strong area for the FEF, with various field sites accessed around the State. These programs give students access to a range of forest environments and insights into careers in the forest industry.



## TOPICS WE EXPLORE...

**Biotic and abiotic features of forest ecosystems**

**Food webs and classification**

**Forest management for multiple values**

**Sustainable forest practices**

**First hand investigations and data collection**



## ALL THINGS AGRICULTURE IN THE NORTH WEST

In May this year the FEF, in collaboration with Forico, hosted a camp at the Guildford Lodge for the Exeter High School Year 11/12 Agricultural class. Over two days students visited the TasTAFE Agricultural Training Centre of Excellence in Burnie before heading into the Surrey Hills Estate for a closer exploration of plantation forestry. This included insights into managing for biodiversity and cultural values within a managed forestry landscape.

Students commented on the value of being immersed in the Surrey Hills environment and having the opportunity to meet a variety of people working within the forest industry. From the nursery right through to processing the woodchips at the mill, students experienced 'so many links to agriculture and career pathways all about trees!'

Along with support from industry, this program was made possible through the enthusiasm of Liam Fox (Exeter Ag teacher). The FEF camp complimented the Exeter School Farm shelterbelt planting project with an opportunity to provide a unique learning and team building experience for his students – 'a great experience which continues to be talked about by the students as a highlight of their year'.

## FOREST FIELDWORK

The FEF continue to grow in the Secondary area, particularly as a key provider of high-quality fieldwork experiences. All FEF programs have an emphasis on building competence across a range of field skills, including; data collection, conducting a transect and quadrat, field sketching and mapping. The skills become an important avenue to understanding forest systems and explore future career pathways in the forest industry.



## COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND GEOGRAPHY

The FEF continues to maintain established programs with Year 11/12 students across the State. These programs provide classroom activities and field experiences to explore the ecology of Tasmanian forest environments and the management of native forests as a source of high value forest products.

Through these experiences students explore the complexities and science of human interactions with natural environments, the role of forest practices and the application of research for maintaining multiple values within the working forest landscape.

The FEF are currently working with specialists from the Forest Practices Authority to review program content and identify new opportunities for 2025 delivery.



NEW  
RESOURCE

## A MAP IS WORTH 1000 WORDS

This year the FEF refreshed some of their physical mapping resources, proving to be a worthwhile addition to both school based and field experiences. The maps, developed in collaboration with ESK Spatial, are a fantastic tool that allow students to identify spatial patterns across the Tasmanian landscape.

The maps enable students to consider the important role spatial data plays in managing forest environments, with consideration to people, environments and resources. The maps have also been built into an on-line, interactive platform allowing teachers to continue the learning in their own classroom setting.



# CONNECTING WITH INDUSTRY



## TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES MEET INNOVATIVE DESIGN

Over the past two years the FEF have been collaborating with the University of Tasmania School of Architecture and Design to build a shelterbelt inspired structure. The shelter itself will be located within a planted area at the Hagley School Farm.

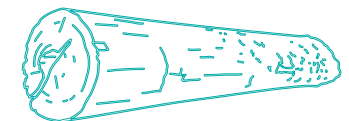
This is going to be a truly unique learning space for many students visiting Hagley and engaging with FEF programs in the coming years. It will be an amazing space to connect students to trees, the benefits they bring to farms and the timber resources they provide.

Without a doubt, it is the collaboration across the industry which has made this project possible, from the initial idea, to scale model, to the current structure. The FEF are very appreciative of the sponsorship and support provided by the industry to supply the timber materials. We are looking forward to launching the shelter and celebrating the collaboration in the new year – stay tuned for further updates and invites to the launch in 2025.



### Architectural Students Stepping Back in Time

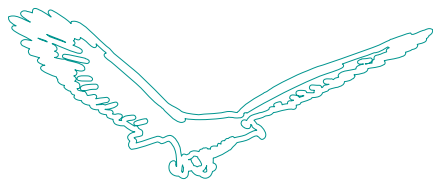
Alec Dean invited FEF staff and UTAS Design by Making students to his property in Whiteford to learn about Tasmanian forests and traditional woodworking practices. For the students and UTAS lecturer alike, this day was a highlight of the Shelter Design Project - a truly memorable experience for all. A special thanks to Alec for sharing his knowledge and passion for retaining these traditional woodworking skills.





### FEF and FPA Collaboration at Agfest

It was another successful year collaborating with the Forest Practices Authority at Agfest in the TFFPN industry tent. Together we shared with the community the importance of the forest practices code across different land tenures. It was great to see young and old interacting with the model forest and appreciating the special values of Tasmanian forests.



### Forico Nursery, Somerset

Agricultural students from Exeter visiting the nursery before exploring the working forests in Surrey Hills as part of a 2 day camp experience.



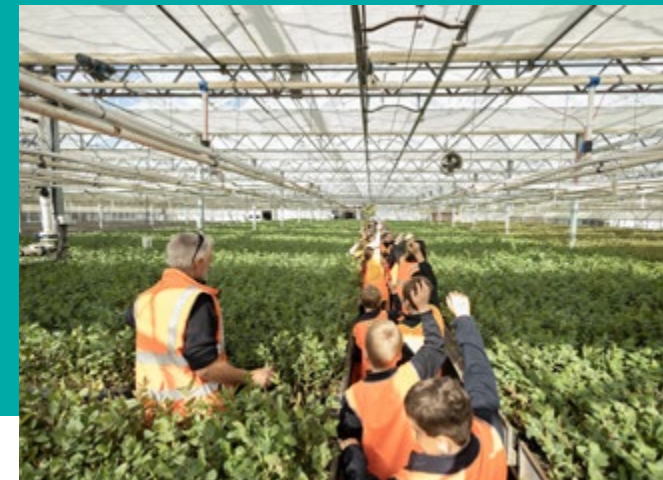
### Wildlife Habitat Clump Course

Professional learning opportunities within the industry ensure the FEF are delivering the most current information and forest practices with students.

### Sustainable Timber Tasmania Nursery & Seed Centre - Schools Tree Day

After the success of previous years, Evandale Primary School was invited to visit the STT Nursery and Seed Centre in Perth for Schools Tree Day, 2024.

The interactive tour of the facilities allowed students to explore how seed is collected and stored to help grow future forests. Students also had the chance to see a STT fire truck up close and find out more about the important role STT play as land managers in Tasmania.



### Designs for Education

The FEF collaborated with STT to produce an interactive resource to gift schools for Tree Day. The life cycle wheel is a great tool to engage students with the story of forest regeneration and management.



# TREES, SCHOOLS, FARMS, FUTURES

## PLANTING TREES ON SCHOOL FARMS

Planting trees on school farms continues to be a very successful example of industry collaboration with the Forest Education Foundation. This year, Sustainable Timber Tasmania contributed to a *Schools Tree Day* planting at Bothwell District High School, with a variety of shrubs and trees planted at the new Agricultural Learning Centre. Plans are in place to establish further examples of shelterbelts on the school farm as part of FEF's 2025 projects.

Exeter High School Farm has also established a significant multi-species shelterbelt as part of their Year 11/12 Agriculture program. This project involved collaboration across the industry and was led by Private Forests Tasmania throughout the planning process. It will continue to be part of the Agricultural learning program for school groups in the future.



**BOTHWELL  
DISTRICT  
SCHOOL**



**EXETER HIGH  
SCHOOL**



Bothwell and Exeter school farms are very open to sharing their sites with industry to host workshop events and showcase the established plantings – Please reach out if interested in learning more.



# MAKING STRIDES IN EDUCATION

## THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PROGRAMS

Contributing to the education sector is a key area for the FEF. This year we connected with Tasmanian pre-service teachers in the north, north west and south of the state, workshoping effective teaching and learning practices for increasing forest literacy in Tasmanian classrooms. Delivering these programs at forest field sites allows early-career teachers to begin building their confidence in taking students outside of the classroom, while also making them aware of the FEF's loanable *Forest in a Box* resources and curriculum-aligned excursion opportunities.



## AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AWARDS

The FEF were honored to receive national recognition in the 2024 AGTA awards. These biennial awards recognise achievement in the development of Geography resources across a range of categories.

The awards are testament to the considered effort the FEF have made over the past few years to develop a wide range of geography based programs and resources to support students and teachers in Tasmania. The Geography curriculum provides multiple avenues to explore forests; from management and conservation to climate change and the use of natural resources.

### WINNER Geography Fieldworks Programs

**Forest Education Foundation**  
Year 9, 2024

**Forest Biomes - Fieldwork Program**

<p><b>Site 1 - Dry Eucalypt Forest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a range of fieldwork tools and skills, conduct a quadrat study to determine the key characteristics of a Dry Eucalypt Forest.</li> <li>Visit a site that has been managed with fire and complete a field sketch.</li> <li>Conduct a belt transect to determine the density of trees in a given area.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Geographical Inquiry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the key features and characteristics of Tasmanian forests?</li> <li>What are the key environmental factors that influence where forests grow?</li> <li>How and why are people dependent on forests?</li> <li>What are the impacts of people on forest biomes and how can they be managed?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Site 2 - Wet Eucalypt Forest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a quadrat study to determine the key characteristics of a Wet Eucalypt Forest.</li> <li>Explore a range of maps and consider how forests in Tasmania change on a local and regional scale.</li> <li>Take part in a hands-on activity to understand how people interact with forests for resources, environmental services, well-being (and more!)</li> </ul>		<p><b>Curriculum Links</b></p> <p><b>Geography</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The distribution and characteristics of biomes as regions with distinctive climates, soils, vegetation and productivity (AC9HG901)</li> <li>collect, represent and compare data and information from primary research methods, including fieldwork and secondary research methods, using geospatial technologies and digital tools as appropriate (AC9HG902)</li> <li>evaluate geographical data and information to make generalisations and predictions, explain patterns and trends and infer relationships (AC9HG903)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Site 3 - Sub-alpine Vegetation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare and contrast this vegetation to the Dry and Wet Eucalypt Forest.</li> <li>Record data to highlight the key differences in physical conditions at site 3.</li> <li>Explore forest environments on a landscape level and consider the ways people interact with forest environments - impacts/management/employment etc.</li> </ul>		

*'An excellent fieldwork resource with an extensive range of activities across a range of complexities. Outstanding diagrams and its user-friendly approach enable its ready application to a variety of sites.'*

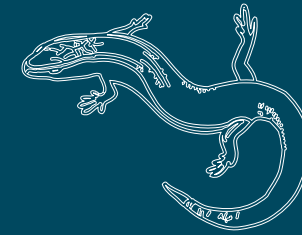
### HIGHLY COMMENDED Geographic Education Resource

**Tasmanian Forest Education Plan**

Forest Education Foundation  
A framework for supporting Forest Education in Tasmania

*'This is a highly commended resource for its wide range of materials with impressive graphics and alignment to key learning areas.'*

# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025



## Forest Discovery Days for the schools in the North West

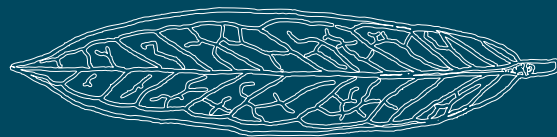
The FEF is passionate about finding ways to better support schools in the North West of Tasmania to access FEF programs and resources. Given the challenges associated with bus transport costs and proximity to FEF field sites, FEF is taking the forest to the schools for a *Forest Discovery Day*. This hands-on, interactive experience will enable multiple year levels to participate in an FEF experience at their own school. Expressions of Interest have been sent out, with schools booked to participate in 2025.



## Lights, Camera, ACTION!

The FEF work with the University of Tasmania pre-service teaching students (Primary and Secondary) across the State each year. With a majority of teaching students opting to study online, the FEF are developing video resource material that will support and compliment the face-to-face field experience they offer students across the 3 campuses.

The video resources will reflect the *Tasmanian Forest Education Plan*, connecting pre-service teachers with the knowledge and skills required to integrate forest literacy in the classroom setting.





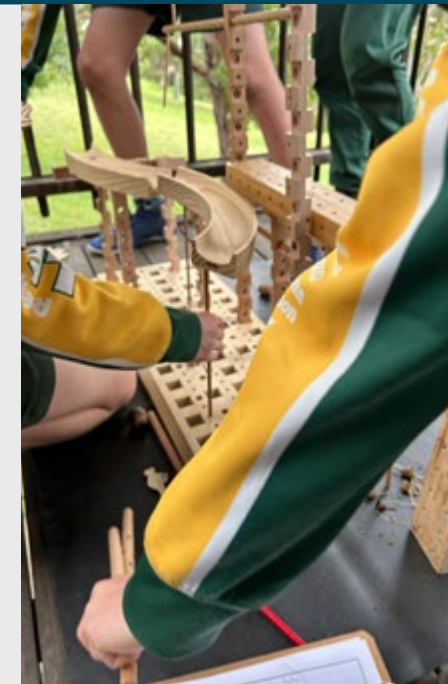
### Scottsdale School Farm - Shelterbelt planting

Staff of Scottsdale High School, Private Forests Tasmania and the FEF are collaborating in the design of a new shelterbelt on the school farm. This shelterbelt will celebrate the amazing benefits of trees on farms and become an ongoing, hands-on learning opportunity for students of Scottsdale High School and the wider community. This project will be a celebration of the amazing collaborations with the forest industry in Tasmania.

### Revision of Design and Make

Since the conception of *Forest in a Box - Design and Make* in 2019, the resource has been widely used by teachers and students across Tasmania. The resource has proved to be a fantastic avenue to explore design thinking and the properties of timber as a building resource, particularly across the STEM subjects in schools.

The FEF are collaborating with UTAS School of Architecture and Design again in 2025 to refine the resource and build on its strengths with some new, novel additions to the kit. This is based on feedback from teachers, students and FEF staff who have interacted with the kit over the past 5 years.



### Connect with the FEF

The success of the FEF is thanks to the ongoing support of the forest industry in Tasmania. We value the authentic and enriching experiences students have when given the chance to meet face to face with members of industry. Whether it is sharing knowledge, hosting a site visit or helping the FEF to develop resources, these interactions can have a significant impact on the outcomes of forest education experiences.

Reach out to the FEF if you are interested in sharing '*The Stories Behind Our Trees*'.

[info@forest-education.com](mailto:info@forest-education.com)



**About FEF**

The Forest Education Foundation Inc. (FEF) is a not-for-profit educational institution staffed by qualified and experienced teachers. The Foundation provides learning

experiences for teachers and students throughout Tasmania.

For more information on all our programs, visit our website:

[www.forest-education.com](http://www.forest-education.com)

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