

# Return and Earn Program Leader

# LORETTA RAPA

*highly commended*

Loretta Rapa, a teacher and environmental leader at Catholic Schools Broken Bay, has driven the success of the schools Return and Earn program through her passion for environmental sustainability. Over the last three years she has led the SRC with a strong environmental focus, spearheading campaigns like Return and Earn, Earth Hour and World Environment Day.

The school Return and Earn program has raised over \$500 with all proceeds reinvested in sustainability projects. Under Loretta's guidance, Stage 3 Environmental Leaders regularly monitor, collect, and sort the containers, ensuring they are ready for return. Through involving the entire school community there is a collective sense of responsibility, making Return and Earn a truly collaborative effort.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# Return and Earn Program Leader

# DAVID BATEMAN

*winner*

David Bateman, Geography teacher at Dapto High School, founded a "Green Group" of more than 50 students that has led projects such as tree planting, rubbish and recycling collection, and the Return and Earn program. David is passionate, dedicated, and willing to complete any and all tasks. He is respected immensely by the students and community for his actions and commitment to the environment.

Since 2019 the schools Return and Earn program has recycled approximately 250,000 containers, with the money raised going toward chilled water dispensers, shelter, tree planting, improved seating, and sunscreen dispensers.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# Sustainable Schools NSW Teacher of the Year

# REBECCA DANIELL

*highly commended*

Rebecca Daniell is an enthusiastic, committed sustainability champion leading her school community. Within school she is teaching students across all stages, collecting data, organising grants & winning a range of school awards - thinking about recycling, saving water, creating gardens, and biodiversity. Rebecca led her school community achieving their Eco Schools Green Flag, for their ongoing holistic approach to school sustainability. Their zero-waste approach has seen the community reduce rubbish from 3,000 to under 250 pieces a day.

Rebecca is extending her environmental education into community outreach, collaborating with other schools and local environment groups for the successful Watershed Landcare Green Day.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# Sustainable Schools NSW Teacher of the Year

# SHANE ROBERTS

*winner*

Shane Roberts, Principal of Belltrees Public School (BPS) is leading his school community to embrace sustainability, with a keen focus on regenerative agriculture. Shane has implemented practical ongoing works that improve the school environment, addressing issues around flood protection and water capture through landscape management. Through their Ponds System project, BPS are diverting runoff to the school's pond where planted grasses have welcomed frogs, birds, & bug life. Water runs through the pond, travels over their orchard for further processing & through leaky weirs, slowing water flow allowing the system to process chemical buildup & capture vital topsoil before returning the water to the Hunter River.

Students are regularly participating in environmental initiatives – and winning a range of school sustainability awards! Shane is extending his educational leadership skills, organising excursions and field days for regional teachers and local farmers, encouraging uptake of regenerative farming practices.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# Sustainable Schools NSW School of the Year

## ASCHAM SCHOOL

*highly commended*

Ascham School is taking a broad ranging approach to their sustainability commitments guided by their *Roadmap to 2030*. With impressive Executive school leadership and vision, there is ongoing data collection and monitoring across the spectrum of the school and promotion through various channels to a range of audiences. This approach ensures everyone is invested and feels empowered to play their part creating a culture of commitment and ongoing practice.

Student leadership teams across the Senior and Junior school are supporting sustainability action, and student learning is supported by integration sustainability at different stages across different subject areas, encouraging advocacy for the environment.

NSW ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION AWARDS  
2024

# Sustainable Schools NSW School of the Year

## FISHER ROAD SCHOOL

*highly commended*

Fisher Road School recognises the opportunities and benefits for its students to be engaged in sustainable practices and the outdoors developing an impressive array of skills and knowledge. Students are encouraged to take on leadership roles and responsibilities for the benefit of the entire school led by passionate and committed staff who value the importance of nature and caring for the planet. Along with the students, the leadership and staff are always looking for more ways to collaboratively and effectively engage the students and their families in school and community efforts to decrease their environmental footprint.

NSW ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION AWARDS  
2024

# Sustainable Schools NSW School of the Year

# MUMBULLA SCHOOL

## FOR RUDOLF STEINER EDUCATION

*winner*

Mumbulla School's approach to sustainability is holistic and pervasive throughout the school and beyond, with ambition and action to continually improve their practices and reduce their impact. This can be seen across all aspects of the school from infrastructure measures in place, helping to minimise their environmental footprint, to curriculum integration across all years as well as a strong commitment to community engagement and outreach.

The school has effective systems in place to manage and re-use waste, including composting, worm farming, kitchen gardens and chickens. Students and families support waste-free lunches, and school events aim for zero waste through BYO policies and a waste-efficiency crew. Solar panels feed into the grid, reducing the school's carbon footprint. Lessons regularly take place outside, and students develop a connection to place through field trips to local rivers, parks and beaches. Teachers participate in ongoing professional development on sustainability practices, and the school engages in partnerships with local environment groups.

The school is leading by example in their philosophy and commitment demonstrating impressive leadership for the students, their families and the community.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# Sustainability Connect Business of the Year

## SYDNEY ZOO

*winner*

Sydney Zoo provides curriculum-linked education workshops, focused on sustainability to 40,000 student visitors each year. The first Species Survival Festival in Science Week 2024 engaged more than 10,000 people over 9 days. Sydney Zoo ensures visitors learn about a variety of issues through campaigns focusing sustainability messaging on specific outcomes and species. First Nations cultural perspectives are taught to all visitors through interpretive design and trained team members, while the zoo's construction and running embody sustainable practices; habitat regeneration and new wetlands host 100 sited native species, rainwater is collected, the zoo has a carbon neutral footprint through 600 solar panels and carbon offsets, recycling and composting. All visitors leave with one action for sustainable environmental change - from the mantra Choose, Change Contribute.

NSW ENVIRONMENTAL  
EDUCATION AWARDS  
2024



# Sustainability Connect Business of the Year

## JANE GOODALL INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA *highly commended*



The Jane Goodall Institute Australia runs several signature conservation and biodiversity programs and provides mentoring, leadership and advocacy skills development for youth locally and abroad. Each year, nearly 4,000 schools benefit from the Resource Box - providing free lesson plans and environmental books. *ReWild Your School* is a program aligned to the curriculum, utilising a 'champion animal' as a case study to build an intrinsic awareness of local biodiversity.

The Institute's work is guided through the proactive lens that through education we can alleviate both environmental pressures and poverty - using the APE Framework of Animals, People and a shared Environment.



## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# NSW Emerging Leader in Environmental Education

# AMY NAICKER

*highly commended*

Amy Naicker has made a significant impact as an Education Officer at Sydney Zoo, bringing her science background and science communication skills to create engaging, conservation-focused programs. Her dedication and passion for sustainability shine through, with positive feedback from students and visitors alike, describing her as inspiring and highly engaging. Through the Cadet Zookeeper program, she mentors, educates and inspires young people to become involved in wildlife conservation. Amy is supporting new team members with compassion and sharing valuable insights from her research background to enhance the team's knowledge on climate change and wildlife conservation.

Beyond her work at the zoo, Amy contributes to Wildlife Health Australia, creating educational fact sheets on issues like climate change impacts on wildlife and Chytrid fungus in frogs. She recently presented her wildlife research on Echidnas at the 2023 Australian Mammal Society conference.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# NSW Emerging Leader in Environmental Education

# YASMIN ANDREWS

*winner*

Yasmin has shown a strong commitment to environmental sustainability through their leadership as Education Programs Developer at Reverse Garbage (RG). Yasmin spearheaded the development and management of RG educational programmes, embedding reuse and sustainability at the core of each initiative. By developing engaging workshops that emphasise practical, hands-on learning, they have inspired thousands of participants to think sustainably. Their efforts have helped Reverse Garbage divert nearly 60,000 tonnes of waste annually, reinforcing their commitment to sustainability and meaningful environmental action.

Yasmin's leadership extends to mentoring casual educators at Reverse Garbage, fostering a team passionate about reuse and sustainability. Yasmin also represents Reverse Garbage at numerous conferences, advocating for the importance of creative reuse in education.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

## BETH RIOLO

*highly commended*

Beth established and leads the Wollongong Environmental Network (WEN), empowering each school community in the Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong to take meaningful environmental actions, including the transition to renewable energy and significantly reducing their carbon footprint. Beth has spearheaded the integration of School Environmental Management Plans, a system of accreditation that ensures sustainable practices are embedded within schools.

Beth creates educational resources for teachers, including videos and guides, is a mentor to staff in other diocesan education offices, and works internationally through the *Laudato Si' Action Platform*.

# NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024

# ABBIE MITCHELL

*winner*

In her role as Education Resources Manager at the Jane Goodall Institute Australia, Abbie has authored environmental education book titles that have been shared with 3800 schools and home schools across Australia. These include two volumes of *Living Landscapes* which showcases 19 indigenous communities, and *Planet for Life* which teaches primary students about all aspects of the environment and how to create sustainability solutions. Abbie has also created a comprehensive term-long environmental education program called *ReWild Your School* for years 5 & 6 students, which has a 10-part lesson sequence that assists students in applying practical and repeatable solutions to nurture local biodiversity.

Outside of her work with the Jane Goodall Institute, Abbie has authored an award nominated book through the CSIRO called *A Hollow is a Home* and also runs her own business *Kids Connecting Nature* where she provides environmental education workshops to schools, community groups and by special arrangement with the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney.

## NSW ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS 2024