

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST



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NEWSLETTER - JULY 2009



Jeanette Stewart

Learning through Nature is four months old – still in its infancy but I would like to let you know how things are progressing.

Before telling you all the news a **BIG THANK YOU** for all the words of encouragement and belief in this new environmental education enterprise. The words of advice, coaching, long e-mails and continuous interest shown - all these are thoroughly appreciated.

From the diverse portfolio of environmental education activities that **LEARNING THROUGH NATURE offers certain areas are leading the way:**

- ◆ **Environmental Education Training**
- ◆ **Assessment**
- ◆ **Activities at schools**
- ◆ **Programme development and**
- ◆ **Writing articles**

There are certain aspects of environmental education that require specific services and skills which **Learning through Nature** offers and this has led to some possible long-term contracts which is most encouraging.

There is a great need for **teacher education** and I have been working directly with the KZN Education Department, private organisations, the local municipality, NGO's and local schools as well as home schools. Environmental education is often perceived as extra work but this need not be the case if one links the curriculum to practical activities which can be carried out in the school grounds and gardens. It's easy to integrate environmental education into the different learning areas and this enhances the learning experience for both educators and learners.



Environmental Education activities with St. Charles Gd O during Science Week,



The July Environmental Educators Course participants at the Twinstreams Environmental Education Centre - Mtunzini

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developing working relationships with people who can make use of what **Learning through Nature** has to offer.

“Learning through nature” – understanding the world around us and how we can learn to use resources wisely and develop a caring and positive attitude to our environment.



The July Environmental Educators Course participants above the trees at Dlinza Forest – Eshowe.

An article appeared in the **Meander Chronicle**, launching **Learning through Nature**. Since then I have written monthly articles “Greening our Home” which has got people talking and thinking about greener lifestyle choices. A number of productive phone calls and e-mails have followed these articles.

We are committed to developing in learners of every age a sense of wonder, joy, fun, inspiration and creativity. We encourage learning through practical activities in natural and cultural settings.

Additions to the **Learning through Nature** portfolio are a **National Certificate in Tourism Guiding**, a **First Aid certificate** and **registration with THETA** as an assessor of various aspects of tourism, hospitality and conservation as well as assessment in Early Childhood Education.

The global recession and climate change are making us think twice about how we spend our money and what our impacts are on the earth. With this in mind **Learning through Nature** is about to develop a course titled **“Taking Environmental Action”**. This course will encourage people of all ages to take practical steps to live more sustainably.

Marketing and networking are ongoing processes and vital for keeping **Learning through Nature** at the top of people’s minds. I look forward to maintaining and

For teachers from pre-school to high school Learning through Nature offers ...

Green-school programmes

- **Greening your School** – environmental policy and practice in schools
- **Greening your Classroom** – teaching environment AND the curriculum
- **Greening your Teaching** – creative ideas to enrich your lessons and teaching materials in all subjects, from language and maths to life sciences and music
- **Greening your Year** – celebrating environmental days, from World Wetlands Day to Big Birding Day

For the agriculture, environment and tourism & hospitality sectors Learning through Nature offers ...

Enviro-learning programmes

- **Exploring Ecosystems** – hands-on learning about and for local ecosystems, from forests and grasslands to rivers and wetlands
- **Greening your Business** – making your business sustainable and ethical
- **Train the Eco-Trainers** – supporting trainers in the environmental field to develop NQF-based training courses and materials and assessment of portfolios.

For families Learning through Nature offers ...

Eco-family programmes

- **Greening your Home** – practical things you can do to make your home healthy, happy and sustainable
- **Greening your Neighbourhood** – practical things you can do to green your community
- **Green Hour Activities** – time out outdoors (night and day) for the whole family, holiday courses and aided walks

Jeanette Stewart

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