

Hokies Abroad: Australia and New Zealand

Sustainability and Conservation-Based Service-Learning – Summer Session 1

Itinerary Highlights

Day 1 – 5 Tauranga and Omanawa

Tour the local watershed catchment and estuary

Visit natural areas and intensively developed zones as you travel from the highest reaches of the catchment area to the sea, which includes the city's domestic water supply. Complete transect surveys to collect data on the impacts of catchment management and learn about Kaitiakitanga (guardianship and responsibility to future generations) and the relationship of this to Wai-ora (healthy waters).

Conservation service-learning

Assist with growing, potting and planting native trees and plants on reforestation and re-vegetation projects. Help to protect downstream water quality, stabilize the land, and restore habitat for native species while offsetting carbon to balance the impact of your travel.

Coast care project with local primary school

Form buddy groups at a local primary school (ages 5 – 10) and spend time together in class. Then, teach your buddies to plant dune grass, while learning why and how to protect these crucial coastal environments.



Marae visit and Māori cultural experience

Be formally welcomed to the marae (Māori meeting house) and learn about traditional indigenous practices. Explore this stunning, remote location during the day by swimming or kayaking the cool waterhole, and in the evening, take a forest walk to see glowworms. You will also assist with a local conservation project.

Day 6 – 7 Rotorua

Conservation of New Zealand's native wildlife

Take a guided tour of a Kiwi house to learn about the plight of this endangered flightless bird and the efforts being made to save it from extinction. Visit a wildlife sanctuary set up as a "mainland island", a protected habitat for native flora and fauna, free from introduced pest species.

Day 8 – 11 Magnetic Island

Bungalow Bay and koala population survey

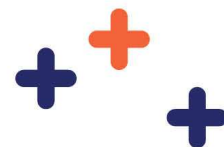
During your stay at Bungalow Bay Koala Village you will learn about their tourism operation and island conservation. You will have free time to explore the wildlife sanctuary and hike through diverse habitats that are home to over 75 species of reptiles, mammals, and birds. And participate in a field-based study surveying the local koala population while enjoying them in the wild. You will also receive a seminar on Koala biology and ecology.



Day 12 – 13 Hidden Valley

Hidden Valley Cabins ecotourism

Stay at a family-run ecotourism business with hosts that are passionate about the natural environment. They will share their experience of operating a sustainable, 100% solar powered business in a remote region. Your guide will lead you on hikes through rainforests and to spectacular gorges. You will swim in stunning creeks and rivers, go platypus spotting, and enjoy delicious barbecue dinners.



Australian Wildlife Conservancy (AWC)

Spend the day working on a range of service-learning activities, such as bush fire control methods of clearing brush, or business assessment and monitoring.

Day 14 – 15 Mission Beach

Aboriginal cultural experience

Learn about Nywaigi Aboriginal culture and try your hand at traditional activities such as throwing boomerangs and spears. Take part in a service-learning project on the Mungalla wetlands.



Day 16 – 19 Port Douglas

Beach clean-up service learning

Undertake a beach clean-up service-learning project focused on the health of the marine environment. Sort and count the debris then enter the data into a nationwide database used to develop strategies to prevent dumping.

Great Barrier Reef study and snorkel

Spend two full days snorkeling on the Great Barrier Reef completing an underwater transect data survey! See

schools of tropical fish and coral gardens, and keep an eye out for sea turtles, eels, reef sharks, and much more!



Day 20 – 22 Cape Tribulation

Daintree Rainforest Observatory

Visit a research station in the rainforest with the highest biodiversity in Australia, and a Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. Take a gondola up into the forest canopy and participate in a service-learning project to survey and monitor a revegetation plot.

Day 23 – 24 Mt Molloy

Camping at Sheoak Ridge

Spend two nights in tents under the stars in a nature reserve to truly experience the beauty of a remote Australian location. Your hosts are an entomologist/ecologist and a jack of all trades (geologist/zoologist/botanist and more) and they will share what they know about the local area. Complete an ant diversity study and learn how this is a bioindicator of ecosystem health following fire regimes.

Day 25 – 26 Cairns

Final exam and free time

Once you have wrapped up the academic portion of the program and aced your exam, you will have a free afternoon to explore this tourism-based town. Then enjoy your final group dinner together on your last evening.

Day 27 Return to USA

Transfer from accommodation to Cairns Airport