



NAGOYA JAPAN

GEELONG DAYS'16 PEOPLE, NATURE AND FUTURE LINKED BY TIDAL FLATS

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GEELONG AUSTRALIA

Geelong Days'16

PEOPLE, NATURE AND FUTURE
LINKED BY TIDAL FLATS

GEELONG DAYS '16 REPORT

FY2015 Student Dispatch Program based on the Wetland
Affiliation Agreement with the City of Greater Geelong, Australia

Introduction

In March 2016, 18 junior high school students from Nagoya visited Geelong City, Australia, which has a Wetland Affiliation Agreement with Nagoya City.

The students visited wildlife protection facilities, interacted with the local people, and of course entered the wetland. They had a variety of experiences and nourished their environmental minds in this foreign land, where everything they saw and touched was new to them.

This report was written by the students themselves (in Japanese), describing what they saw and heard. We hope that as many readers as possible will share what they felt in Geelong.



Migrant birds tie the knot between Nagoya and Geelong

- Student Dispatch Program based on the Wetland Affiliation Agreement with the City of Greater Geelong, Australia -

The Fujimae Tidal Flat is located in Nagoya City, and is an important relay point where many migrant birds land while they travel between the northern hemisphere and the southern hemisphere. After they rest their wings and take advantage of the abundance of rich food in this place, they depart for Australia, Siberia and other destinations.

Nagoya and Geelong concluded a wetland affiliation agreement on May 22, 2007, led by the tie knotted by migrant birds. Since then, the two cities have promoted the conservation and utilization of wetlands through concerted efforts.



To develop human resources capable of promoting environmental conservation activities, the Nagoya municipal government sends junior high school students who live and study in the city once every two years. This is the fifth dispatch. To date, 86 students crossed the sea to deepen ties with Geelong.



This is Geelong City

Port city blessed with a rich natural environment

Geelong City is the second largest city in Victoria, located in the southeastern part of Australia, and has a population of 230,000. The city has a warm mild climate, and a Japanese professional baseball team, the Chiba Lotte Marines, once held a spring camp in Geelong. The city faces the sea, and has a rich natural environment and beautiful scenery. A number of cottages and tourist spots have been established in the city. Automobile production, oil refining and other heavy industries are also prosperous.



This is Melbourne City

We visited Melbourne on the first day. Melbourne is the capital of Victoria, where approx. 4.3 million people live. Melbourne is about one hour away by land from Geelong. Melbourne is also called a "Garden City", because it has parks everywhere. Melbourne was once selected as the best city to live in the world.



Six days of learning and finding through observation, contact and experience

The journey from Nagoya to Australia was long, taking nearly 15 hours for flight only. The 18 junior high school students did not show fatigue, but proactively engaged themselves in various events, including facility tours, contact with animals, and interactions with the local people.

Itinerary

<p>Sat., Mar. 26th Day 1</p> <p>Departure</p> <p>Chubu Centrair International Airport ▶ Changi Airport, Singapore ▶ For Melbourne</p>	<p>Sun., Mar. 27th Day 2</p> <p>Arrived at Melbourne Airport. Visited Melbourne City and surrounding areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> St Patrick's Cathedral <input type="checkbox"/> Fitzroy Gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Cook's Cottage <input type="checkbox"/> Conservatory <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Museum <input type="checkbox"/> Little Italy <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Victoria Market <input type="checkbox"/> Phillip Island Nature Park 	<p>Mon., Mar. 28th Day 3</p> <p>To Melbourne City and to Geelong City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Experienced the tram <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Central Station <input type="checkbox"/> State Library of Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Chinatown Travel to Geelong by bus <input type="checkbox"/> Serendip Sanctuary
<p>Tue., Mar. 29th Day 4</p> <p>Interacted with elementary school children, their families and the faculty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre <input type="checkbox"/> The Swan Bay Tidal Flats <input type="checkbox"/> Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary 	<p>Tue., Mar. 30th Day 5</p> <p>Paid a courtesy call to Geelong City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Geelong Town Hall <input type="checkbox"/> Geelong Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> National Wool Museum Melbourne Airport ▶ Changi Airport 	<p>Thu., Mar. 31st Day 6</p> <p>Return to Japan</p> <p>Changi Airport ▶ Chubu Centrair International Airport</p>

Report by Junior High School Students ①

Some experiences are only available in Australia

Learning the preciousness of nature through contact with wildlife - Serendip Sanctuary and Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary -



In the two sanctuaries that we visited, there were koalas, kangaroos, extremely colorful birds, etc. In these sanctuaries, initiatives are undertaken to rescue injured animals, and return them to the wild after recovery.

We were surprised that animals were not caged in the Serendip Sanctuary. There were cages in the Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary, but we could see animals from very close. We could also contact koalas there.

I hope that the injured animals would recover soon and return to the wild.

We had a variety of experiences that are only available in Australia, such as contacting with animals in a sanctuary where animals are not caged, and observing wild penguins.

Life of penguins that cannot be observed in a zoo - Phillip Island Nature Park -

The penguin parade in the Phillip Island Nature Park enables visitors to observe little penguins, the smallest kind of penguin in the world, at night. We could see penguins move their small bodies and earnestly walk toward their nests.

We learned that as many as 40 penguins were eaten by foxes every day. It was brought home to me that wild animals needed to survive every day.

In the facilities, care was taken to protect penguins, such as prohibiting photographing and refraining from excessive lighting. We thought that these measures were very meaningful.



Summary

Through our visits to the Serendip Sanctuary, the Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Phillip Island Nature Park, we learned the importance of establishing an environment considerate of living things. We thought that considerations from the human side were indispensable for realizing a world where humans and animals could coexist.

We strongly recognized that such facilities should be increased in Japan, so that many people would think about and take interest in the natural environment.



Report by Junior High School Students ②

Swan Bay Tidal Flats Loved by Primary School Children



Clean tidal flats where no piece of trash was found - Swan Bay Tidal Flats -

More than 100 wetlands are located in Geelong City. We visited one of them, the Swan Bay Tidal Flats. We heard that some migrant birds fly over here after taking a rest in the Fujimae Tidal Flat in Nagoya.

We felt that it was colder in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats than in Nagoya, because of wind from the South Pole. Not a piece of trash was found in the tidal flats. No articles were washed ashore either, unlike in the Fujimae Tidal Flat. The smell of the coast in the Fujimae Tidal Flat was also absent in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats.

We looked for living things in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats together with local primary school children. The children were extremely familiar with the tidal flats, and knew very much about them. Just like these children, I hoped that children in Nagoya would also get to know and like the Fujimae Tidal Flat more in their hometown.



We visited the Swan Bay Tidal Flats and the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre together with local primary school children. Their high environmental awareness surprised us.

Learning considerations for living things from primary school children - Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre -



In the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre, creatures in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats were exhibited. We took a tour around the centre in pairs with local primary school children. We were surprised that, not only older children, but also small children in the first grade knew very well about living things.

The Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre has a unique appearance that blends into the natural environment. The centre was like an aquarium exhibiting a large number of marine living things.



Summary

The Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre had a water basin where visitors could touch marine life with their bare hands. The local primary school children always washed their hands before touching, in order not to transfer bacteria to living things. We were impressed that children smaller than us not only knew very well about living things, but also had deep considerations for them.

Report by Junior High School Students ③ Culture and Environment in Australia

Melbourne, the city exists in harmony with nature



In Melbourne, the natural environment, humans and art exist in harmony. We were surprised that trash buckets were installed at an interval of ten meters in the city, and hardly any trash could be found. Several times as many trees lined the streets compared to Nagoya, suggesting that the city achieved good harmony with the natural environment.

We thought that Australia was abundant in wild animals because cities were filled with nature and humans maintained the natural environment with high awareness. We hope to establish an environment friendly to living things in Nagoya.



Melbourne

Comparative review of two cultures



Nagoya

We would like to share the differences between Japan and Australia that we recognized on the spot.

Common points

- There were people who earnestly cared about the environment, and were endeavoring to protect the tidal flat.
- We found that cars had steering wheels on the right and kept to the left, just as in Japan.



Differences

- People in Australia were from more diverse origins than in Japan, and were living in a multi-cultural society.
- We were surprised that people could ride the sightseeing tram free of charge.
- Earthquakes are rare in Australia, and therefore many historic buildings remained to date.
- Traffic signs changed very frequently.



In this report, we share our findings about Australia, including cultural differences with Japan and environmental initiatives that are not present in Japan.

Two flags that could be seen in the town



In Melbourne, the flag of Australia and the flag of the Aborigines were put up side by side in places. We learned that these flags were intended to prevent people from forgetting the history of persecution of the Aborigines.

We thought that lessons could be learned from how people of different origins learned from history and respected each other in their present life.

Aborigine quiz

Q. What do the three colors on the Aborigine flag respectively represent? (See the answers at the bottom)



Courtesy call to the Geelong Town Hall

We were very nervous during the courtesy call, but managed to make a speech in English addressed to the staff of the Geelong Town Hall. Subsequently, we sang a Japanese folk song "Furusato (hometown)", enjoyed Origami and Kendama together with them, and shared some Japanese culture with people in Geelong. We were amazed at some people who could play Kendama better than us! We were also surprised that Japanese culture was known to remote foreign countries.



A. Black represents the skin color of the Aborigine people, yellow represents the sun, and red represents the blood shed by Aborigine people in the past.

Report by Junior High School Students ④

What we learned about the Fujimae Tidal Flat

We learned that our city, Nagoya, also has a precious natural environment, the Fujimae Tidal Flat, and that there were problems to be resolved concerning the tidal flat.

1. What is the Fujimae Tidal Flat?

It is a tidal flat of approx. 300 hectares, expanding in the estuary of the Shonai River, the Shinkawa River, and the Nikko River, which all empty into Nagoya Port. The tidal flat is a treasure house of natural environment abundant in wildlife. It was placed on the list of the Ramsar Convention (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat) in 2002.

Before we were born, the Fujimae Tidal Flat was nearly turned into a waste landfill site. Citizens of Nagoya repeated discussions, and finally decided to conserve the tidal flat, and to take efforts for classifying and recycling waste. The precious tidal flat was protected through concerted efforts of citizens to substantially reduce waste generation.

2. Present status of the Fujimae Tidal Flat

At present, the Fujimae Tidal Flat faces a problem: littering. Its natural environment has been polluted by illegal dumping by inconsiderate persons, objects that have been seemingly conveyed by the rivers, and other types of waste. In addition, microplastics(*) are drawing attention as a new environmental problem.

※“Microplastics” refers to plastics with the size of up to 5 mm, or to even finer plastics. There are concerns about the effect of invisible microplastics that float in the sea in the ecosystem.

Learn about the Fujimae Tidal Flat at:

■ **Fujimae Active Center,**
Ministry of the Environment
TEL : 052-309-7260

Access : 15 minutes by foot after getting off a Mie Kotsu bus for Sun Beach Nikko-gawa at the “Nan’yo-cho Fujimae” stop.

■ **Inae Visitor Center,**
Ministry of the Environment
TEL : 052-389-5821

Access : 10 minutes by foot after getting off at “Noseki Station” of the Aonami Line; alternatively, 10 minutes by foot after getting off a municipal bus at the “Noseki Station” stop.

■ **Nagoya City Wild Bird Observation Center**
TEL : 052-381-0160
Access : Same as the Inae Visitor Center



Living things in the Fujimae Tidal Flat



Crab(Macrophthalmus japonicus de Haan)/松本美朝



Mudskipper(Periophthalmus modestus)/達知恵吾



Snipe(Numenius phaeopus)/高須茂美



Duck(Anas acuta)/吉田英史



Ducks/高須洋子



Study Meetings and the Sharing of Outcomes

The junior high school students continued to learn from each other after returning to Japan. We would like to share what they learned on different occasions, so that many people will know the outcomes of the trip.

To share what students learned with many people - Post-trip study meetings -

After returning to Japan, the junior high school students held seven post-trip study meetings in order to look back on the project and further learn from each other. The students divided themselves into three groups, and each group summarized what they learned and what they wanted to share.



Pre-trip study meetings were also held

To achieve a more fulfilling exchange, pre-trip study meetings were held before the students left for Geelong. They experienced the natural environment in the Fujimae Tidal Flat, and also practiced English for introducing themselves and culture in Nagoya to the Geelong residents.



Debriefing to mayors across Japan

On July 7, 2016, the Domestic Ramsar Committee for Relevant Municipalities held a meeting session of municipalities that had wetlands registered under the Ramsar Convention.

The junior high school students participated in this session, and shared what they learned with Takashi Kawamura, Mayor of Nagoya City, and many other heads of municipalities. The entire audience was interested in the students' presentation, and earnestly listened to them.



Engaged in the editing of the report

The students were also engaged in the preparation of this report. They held editing meetings, presented layout ideas to make an easily visible and understandable report, and also drafted articles. This wonderful booklet that summarizes inputs from the students was completed in this way.

Created a PR video of the Fujimae Tidal Flat

So that more people would know about the Fujimae Tidal Flat, the students created a video for advocating for the tidal flat, together with their predecessors.

Observations by Students

What did the 18 junior high school students learn and feel in Geelong? We asked each of them to share their observations.

Geelong became my second hometown!?

Toko Junior High School
Sakura Akimoto

My most vivid memory is about our meeting with local primary school children. At first, we made a presentation before the children. We prepared for the presentation in advance, and our group's theme was food culture in Japan. I explained why "Oni manju (devil cake)" is called so, and the ingredients used for it. I was happy about sharing with them Japanese cuisine and Nagoya food.

At the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre, a guide boy earnestly explained to us about large fish, and about starfish and sea cucumbers that we found in the touchable area. Because our feet sank in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, even walking became difficult. I could only catch one crab, while the boy caught a number of living things. It was fun to look for life together with the boy. When we played "Furusato (hometown)" with English flutes, the local residents said, "This place has become your hometown, too."

If I had better English proficiency, I could have explained Japanese culture more understandably to the local residents, and had more conversations concerning the environment. Still, I could learn so many things during the trip. I am extremely glad about participating in it.

Hoping to incorporate this wonderful experience in my future life

Shidami Junior High School
Rin Ageishi

This was my first overseas trip. I woke up on the departing morning in a mixture of expectation and nervousness. Over the six days from that morning, I felt that I grew up substantially.

Beautiful townscape, the tidal flats free from litter, the meeting at the Geelong Town Hall ... Everything I saw was fresh and bright. My recognition of environmental conservation was also substantially changed during this trip. It enabled me to broaden my vision to include global environmental issues. After returning to Japan, I was surprised at myself when I spontaneously picked up trash from the ground, saved water and electricity, and did many actions to protect the environment. I also learned many other things through this trip, including the preciousness of our team and friendship that I recognized while staying together, difficulty in communicating with foreign people, and the importance of acting with responsibility as a member of the dispatched team. I believe that all of these will be incorporated into my future life.

These six days brought to me a precious once-in-a-lifetime experience. I would like to thank all people related to this project, and will leverage this wonderful experience to develop my future life with my own power.

Observations by Students

Taking the first step toward developing a wonderful environment

Itaka Junior High School
Yusuke Onodera

Question: Have you visited a zoo where animals are not caged? We visited the Serendip Sanctuary, where animals were not caged and could be observed from very close. In the Phillip Island Nature Park, we could observe from close how wild penguins returned home from fishing. I was excited at watching such wonderful scenes, while recognizing that, to continue protecting penguins, it was important that each person refrained from littering and make a point of 3R (Reuse, Reduce and Recycle) in their life.

I could effectively attain my goal during the trip to make the best memories through cooperation with each other on the team. I thank all persons who supported our trip.

In conclusion, I think that I have a mission as the ex-member of the dispatch team to Geelong: to share with others what I learned and felt in Geelong, concerning living things, the environment, and so on. After sharing, I believe that the people will start thinking about nature and the future environment. This must be the first step toward developing a wonderful environment.

My two findings in Australia

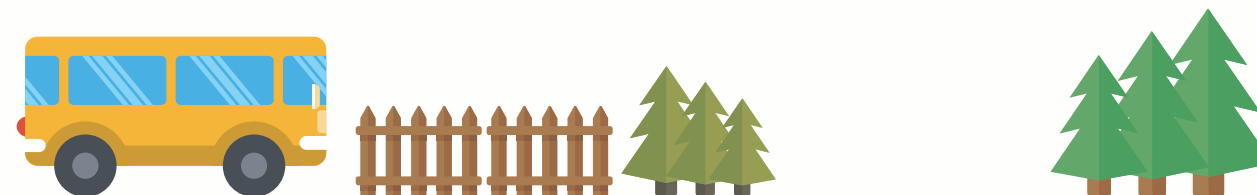
Nagoya University School of Education
Affiliated Lower Secondary School
Naoya Kito

I learned many things in Australia. Among them, I would like to share the two most remarkable findings.

The first one was that nature and culture existed in harmony in the city of Melbourne. While maintaining historic streets, people effectively introduced new buildings with high design quality. It was also impressive that a large park was located at the center of the city, and people were jogging in it. I thought that it would be preferable that we in Japan could also develop our towns while valuing aged buildings.

The second finding was that I could talk with foreign people better than I had expected. Although I had thought that I was not good at English, I could make myself understood with gestures or with short phrases during my visit to Australia. Of course, more studies would be required to have more fluent conversations, but I could have confidence that even I could communicate with foreign people.

During this trip, I could also recognize some good points of Japan that were difficult to notice in our daily life in Japan. I also met precious teammates who had the same idea as me. I would like to thank people who provided us with such a wonderful opportunity.



Hoping to share with many people what I learned in Geelong

Wakamizu Junior High School
Tamaki Kogaito

Have you ever experienced difficulty in communicating? I felt the difficulty on various occasions during this trip to Australia.

For example, during shopping at a supermarket, I not only needed to tell clerks what I wanted in English, but also had to listen and understand their responses, which made me a little nervous. This became a good opportunity for checking my English proficiency. During a courtesy call to the Geelong Town Hall, we presented in English about the wonderful Japanese culture. We enjoyed origami and kendama together with people at the town hall. I learned to communicate well with gestures and simple English.

It is nonsense to contain these experiences within me. I think it is most important to share them with various people. Whenever I have an opportunity, I will share what I learned and felt during this trip, and help other people to know more about Australia and imitate good points, so that Japan will become an even more wonderful country. During this trip, I experienced various activities and learned many things from the local culture, people's lives, living things, nature, and so on. I would like to share these with as many people as possible.

Australians were upbeat and friendly

Nanzan Girls' Junior High School
Erika Kondo

"I want to observe how Australians are living and to actively interact with them!" - this was my secret goal for this trip, apart from its objectives to learn environmental initiatives in Australia and learn environmental issues in Nagoya. Therefore, they became extremely valuable and pleasant experiences for me to shop in a local supermarket and to interact with local primary school children.

Two things in Australia particularly amazed me. One was that everything was much larger. The building of the local supermarket was large-sized, and its ceiling had a height equivalent to that of our school gymnasium. The aisles were also wide, and the carts were big sized, too! The cookies that we bought for a girl's party were too large for us to consume (the pack was approximately four times as large as the ones in Japan). The other thing that surprised me was the personality of the local people. Everybody whom we met in the supermarket or on the airplane was upbeat and friendly, and pleased us with jokes without getting nervous around us as foreigners. I wanted to learn from their open attitude to communicate with others.

This trip was filled with new findings, and was extremely significant for me. I would like to thank the people who planned this trip and those who guided us in Australia. Thank you. I will revisit the place again when possible.

Observations by Students

Nagoya University of Economics
Takakura Junior High School

Seven days of seeing, hearing and feeling Takumi Sugimura

My goal for the Geelong trip was to see well, hear well and feel well the culture and the environment in Australia.

Firstly, I “saw” that Australia was surrounded by the sea, just as Japan, but was more like a continent than an island. Most people were well-built, and products in supermarkets were also large-sized. Streets and parks were also large and spacious. Secondly, I touched koalas and wombats for the first time in the Jirrahlinga Koala & Wildlife Sanctuary, and “felt” that they were coarse. It was a surprise for me, because I had assumed a prickly feeling. Earth in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats was muddy. It was colder than I had anticipated, and also surprised me. It was extremely cold there, due to wind from the South Pole. This reminded me of the roundness of the earth, upsetting my assumption that it would be hot in southern countries. Thirdly, “hearing” was the most difficult for me. I could only understand what we were told in half, and had to imagine what people meant in the other half. The most impressive among what I heard was penguin’s cries. They sounded far wilder than their appearance.

Surprises and findings came to me in waves, and stimulated my brain throughout the week. The trip was very exciting, and I could also make good friends.

Various valuable experiences broadened my view

Tenpaku Junior High School
Yota Seguchi

I participated in the Student Dispatch Program to Geelong, and had many experiences. Firstly, this was technically the first overseas trip for me, because I only visited overseas once when I was small. It was a rare and good experience for me to use English for shopping.

Secondly, we interacted with local people. In the pre-trip study meeting, our group gave a presentation concerning Japanese food culture, in preparation for communicating with local people. The people who listened to our presentation commented that it was very understandable. There was a participant who previously went to a kendama school, which impressed me of their close relationship with Japan. Unlike before, when I had no interest in talking with foreign people, now I am keen to have conversations with them.

Thirdly, after the trip, I shared opinions with teammates at the post-trip study meeting. Some opinions were the same as mine, while other opinions referred to points that I missed. I think that listening to views from teammates broadened my view.

To help other people know about beautiful tidal flats and natural environment, I will continue vigorous environmental activities, and would like to participate in many exchange events on other occasions.



Shiroyama Junior High School

Penguins are like ‘Mona Lisa’ in that... Yui Nakajima

“Penguins are somewhat like ‘Mona Lisa’ - that was what impressed me most during this trip. In the Phillip Island Nature Park, we saw a penguin parade, which was comprised of wild penguins that returned to their nest at night. To prevent damaging the penguin’s habitat, observation points were clearly marked, and no photography was allowed. When people appreciate Leonardo da Vinci’s ‘Mona Lisa’ at the Louvre Museum in Paris, they have to stand slightly away from the work to prevent damaging it, and no photography is allowed. This is why I felt that penguins were like ‘Mona Lisa’.

To protect the life of penguins, we need to know about them and about the ecosystem. We had an exchange with primary school children in Geelong, and they confidently told us about life in the local tidal flats and the ecosystem. I guess it would be more exciting to have some knowledge about ‘Mona Lisa’ before appreciating it.

Once damaged, it would be impossible to restore ‘Mona Lisa’ to a completely original state. The case is the same with the ecosystem of penguins. ‘Mona Lisa’ is valued to be handed down to later generations as a treasure of humankind. Similarly, I thought that these penguins must be valued, and handed down to later generations as they were, as a treasure of this planet.

What we can do to protect the Fujimae Tidal Flat

Mita Junior High School
Azusa Nakamura

I learned two things through this trip. One was that Australian people had a very high awareness against littering. Their cities and streets were kept clean without any piece of trash. In our town, Nagoya, streets are always littered. I hope that each person in Nagoya learns from Australia and refrains from littering streets, thereby making Nagoya another trash-free city.

The second thing I learned was the importance of the Fujimae Tidal Flat. In the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, I saw a large number of birds. I learned that some of them also come to the Fujimae Tidal Flat, and fly further north after stopping in Fujimae. I knew that the Fujimae Tidal Flat was preserved to protect this stopping point for birds, and that a plan for turning it into a waste landfill site was cancelled for this purpose. Seeing birds in Australia refreshed my recognition that the Fujimae Tidal Flat was an invaluable place for them.

Just as in the streets, no piece of trash was found on the Swan Bay Tidal Flats. I supposed that this was because of people’s high awareness against littering, and of their mind to preserve the natural environment. I also wanted to preserve the natural environment with enhanced respect. I must start with myself, improving awareness concerning waste, deepening my knowledge, and taking actions. I would like to thank the older generations for preserving the Fujimae Tidal Flat, and to continue protecting the valuable natural environment.

Observations by Students

Taking pride in preventing the destruction of the Fujimae Tidal Flat

Tsukata Junior High School
Mifuka Nakamura

In Australia, I was impressed that the natural environment was richer than in Japan, and people had higher environmental awareness. In the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, local primary school children guided us. I was surprised that they knew very well about the ecosystem and environment in the tidal flats, and valued them very much. Although Nagoya has the Fujimae Tidal Flat, I suspect that most people in Nagoya have never visited it. At least, few people around me have. When a plan was suggested to turn the Fujimae Tidal Flat into a waste landfill site, citizens protected the tidal flats through an opposition movement. In Australia, I strongly hoped that more people of Nagoya would know more about the Fujimae Tidal Flat, taking pride in preventing its destruction.

During the penguin parade, I recognized that considerations were taken to protect the animals, such as refraining from intense lighting, and prohibiting flash photography by visitors. I also learned that there were many wildlife sanctuaries, and animals were protected there. If humans destroy the environment and damage the ecosystem, the outcome would extend to humans. To avoid this, it is important that each person should learn about the environment and take actions. To learn about the natural environment, I think it is very important to actually see and feel it. I suspect that there are not many places in Japan where people can closely feel the natural environment. To help many people take interest in the environment, I would like to vigorously promote information provision.

A wonderful opportunity for earnestly thinking about environmental issues

Shioji Junior High School
Taiyo Hattori

Through participation in this program, I recognized my low awareness of environmental pollution. In Australia, trash cans were installed everywhere, and very few pieces of trash were found in the town. No conspicuous trash was observed in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, either, and I was surprised at the difference from the Fujimae Tidal Flat. Before this trip, I had assumed that the cleanliness of the town and of the tidal flats would not differ much between Japan and Australia. I was substantially shocked to see the remarkable difference with my own eyes.

Today, everybody knows that Japan and all other parts of the world are faced with environmental pollution. How many people have acted for improvement? Including me before this trip, most people have turned blind eyes to environmental pollution, even though they know its seriousness. Through participation in this program, I recognized that it was important to take some type of interest in environmental issues, and to take some action.

This tour became a wonderful opportunity for me to earnestly think about environmental issues. I recognized and learned many things. I would like to maintain interest in environmental issues, without forgetting what I learned through this trip. I would like to extend gratitude for having such a wonderful opportunity to participate in this program. Thank you very much.



Looking back at the precious experience in Australia

Moriyama Junior High School
Megu Fujii

My goal for this trip was to feel the differences between Japan and Australia with my five senses, including awareness concerning tidal flats and environmental conservation. I actually had many findings.

There were three things that particularly impressed me. Firstly, not a piece of trash was found in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats. The entire waterside was extremely clean. Secondly, in the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre, I was paired up with a girl in the first grade of primary school, and she had interest in the history of tidal flats and life there. I was extremely impressed by this small girl. Lastly, I could closely observe and touch wallabies and kangaroos in the Serendip Sanctuary. Animals were not caged there, and only fences were put up around the facility for enabling rescued animals to live just as they did in the wild.

Over those six days, I recognized that Australia was filled with greenery, and the natural environment was maintained to help wildlife. I also strongly felt that many generations, from children to adults, had high environmental awareness. I believe that it is also required in Japan, just as in Australia, to inherit, as our culture, to take efforts for protecting the natural environment. I would like to share what I learned through this trip with people around me, and to proactively take more environmentally conscious actions in my daily life.

Memory of a boy who knows very well about tidal flats

Sakuragaoka Junior High School
Yoshino Mizutani

We interacted with primary school children in Geelong. First, we visited together the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre. I was paired up with a boy in the first grade. He was filled with cheer, and it was difficult for me to follow him when he ran around here and there. In front of each showcase, he provided detailed explanation about crabs, shrimps and other local living things. Although his English was sometimes difficult for me, I could figure out what he meant through many gestures. This must have been possible because he had detailed knowledge about local living things.

Subsequently, we visited the Swan Bay Tidal Flats. He quickly caught living things with a net. The net appeared to be filled with seaweed and sea grass*, and I could see no moving things in it, but he skillfully took out and showed crabs and small fish. In the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, I saw not only fish and shellfish, but also silver gulls and many other migrant birds. I recognized that tidal flats were a precious place for living things.

He and all other local children knew very well about the ecosystem, terrain and currents in the tidal flats, even though they were smaller than us. I believe that they knew so well because they loved the tidal flats. I thought that, to protect the Fujimae Tidal Flat, it is important that we like it more.

*Eelgrass and other seed plants that grow in marine are called "sea grass", while kelp and wakame are categorized as "seaweed".

Observations by Students

Moved by migrant birds that flew over a long distance

Yamada higashi Junior High School
Atsuro Murase

What impressed me most during this trip was that all living things in Australia were lively. For example, black swans and seagulls leisurely swam in the tidal flats. Wallabies casually walked on the road in a desert-like field. I was amazed by this view that would never be seen in Japan. The scene was vividly imprinted into my eyes.

It took one whole day from the Chubu Centrair International Airport until we arrived in Australia. I got tired even though I was just onboard the plane. It is moving that migrant birds in the Fujimae Tidal Flat in Nagoya, our hometown, fly all the way by themselves over a mind-boggling distance of approximately 6,800 kilometers (straight line).

When I actually visited Australia, and saw the wonderful natural environment and how local people valued it, I thought that we should follow their example. I hope that the Fujimae Tidal Flat will be filled with rich nature, and that many living things gather there, just as we saw in Australia. Australia was actually a very wonderful place. I hoped that our interactions with local people would be further deepened, and environmental recognition in both countries would be further nourished through that exchange.

Hoping to grow together with wonderful teammates

Hojin Junior High School
Nozomi Yamada

Participation in this program became a precious experience that I will not forget in all my life. There were many things that I could only experience, recognize and feel by actually visiting Australia. Among them, I would like to share two things that impressed me most.

The first was that the entire town was spattered with natural beings, animals, humans, art works, new buildings and old buildings, and that each of them had a vivid presence but coexisted in harmony without ruining others. I saw people of various origins in the town, and they seemed to live with respect for each other. The second impressive thing was the deep environmental considerations and a variety of ideas for that purpose. Many animals live and abundant nature is preserved in Australia. I think that this is because people carefully maintain the natural environment and each person has high environmental awareness. I wanted to continue sharing information concerning environmental issues, improvement measures for them, and possible activities in everyday life, so that more people in Nagoya would have higher environmental awareness.

Another important thing in this trip was that I met wonderful teammates. I was encouraged many times when I saw these teammates had their own opinions and confidently presented them. I hope to grow together with them, who want to help conserving the natural environment, just like me.



Learning more under the theme of how tidal flats are and should be

Marunouchi Junior High School
Ruri Yamanaka

Through this program, I learned under the theme of how tidal flats are and should be in Australia and in Japan. First of all, I was surprised that the Swan Bay Tidal Flats were far less littered than the Fujimae Tidal Flat. A local child from the Queenscliff Primary School knew the names of so many living things, probably because he frequently visited the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre (MFDC). It was surprising that he was still in a low grade of primary school. I was also impressed that he had already had many contacts with living things in the tidal flats.

Why do tidal flats exist, and what is the Ramsar Convention all about? How many people around me can promptly answer these questions when asked? Probably few. Through this program, I learned that tidal flats are important places as habitats for a variety of living things, and that the Ramsar Convention pertained to wetlands that were internationally valuable as habitat for waterfowls. To share what I learned with more people, I would like to leverage various opportunities for presentation, and communicate the importance and roles of tidal flats to as many people as possible. I will continue studying earnestly so that I can share with those who will be dispatched in the next tour to help them develop their own views about many things.

Our interaction with local primary children became my best memory

Kikko Junior High School
Akimu Yamamoto

I felt that the six days in Australia flew away. This means that the trip was such a wonderful experience. Among others, meeting with local primary school children gave me extremely vivid memories. I was surprised that children smaller than us knew so much about the tidal flats and life there. I took a tour around the Marina and Freshwater Discovery Centre in a pair with one of them. His earnest explanations pleased me more than anything else.

When we entered the Swan Bay Tidal Flats, I was surprised that the local children were so much familiarized with the tidal flats. Because the earth in the tidal flats was extremely muddy, I had my feet caught and could not pull them out. The children helped me out. One of them advised me to run, raising my legs high. We looked for living things in the Swan Bay Tidal Flats. This was difficult because of a large amount of seaweed, but the local children quickly found living things, which surprised me again. I hoped that children in Nagoya would also get familiarized with tidal flats as much as these children.

During this trip, I experienced a lot of Australian culture, but I recognized that my English skills had a long way to go. I will continue studying and retry again. We will become the next generation to protect the environment. I would also like to continue participating in environmental protection activities.