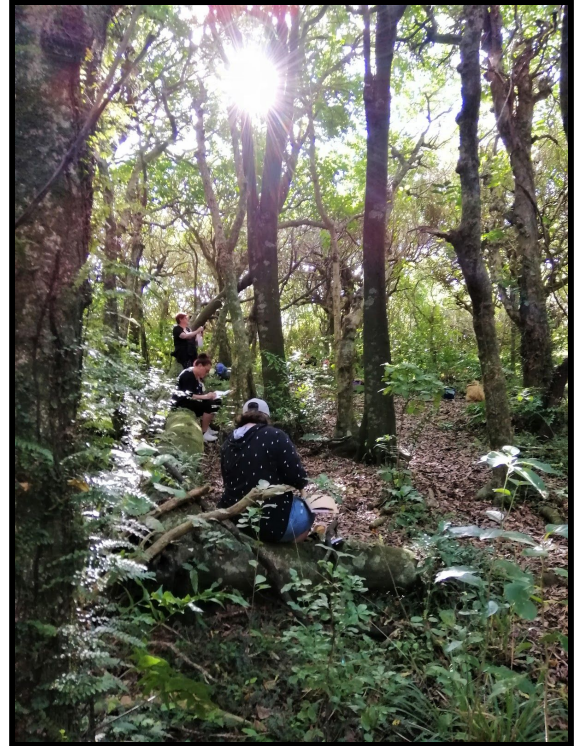


‘Nature is Our Classroom’

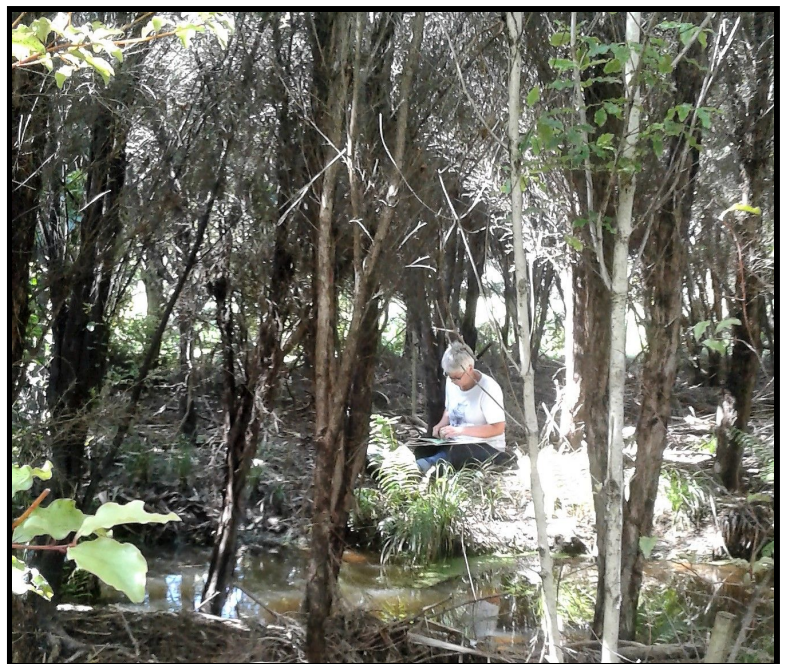
Key Tips for a Successful Teacher Professional Development Programme

- **Involving mana whenua to ground the learning in the culture of the place.** Although mana whenua may not always be able to be present, we can acknowledge and use appropriate references that recognise them in their absence.
- **Starting with a catchment-wide view.** “Actually being there is quite different than just looking at a map.” Good relationships with the 4WD club in Porirua have enabled participants to reach otherwise challenging places to get to.
- **Exploring at a pace slow enough to allow curiosity.** Teachers really appreciate the opportunity to connect with and fully experience the environment.
- **Allowing chatting time.** Conversations move to another level when participants are walking in the environment.
- **Including community knowledge and resources.** Forest and Bird provided valuable stories, anecdotes and years of accumulated knowledge for the group visiting Pāuatahanui inlet and all participants value the associated DOC resources shared.



- **Having fun.** Nature provides boundless opportunities for a good time and some belly laughs, for example using blindfolds to focus the senses with Leo from Nature School NZ.
- **Connecting to the curriculum.** Natural experiences and objects can be used for literacy and numeracy activities.

- **Opportunities to try out ideas with colleagues.** Working together means everyone benefits from multiple and diverse ideas and perspectives.
- **Creativity.** Pātaka educators have joined the group to demonstrate nature-journaling using sketches, rubbings (leaf, bark), poetry, diary entries and observations.



- **Solo time.** At the end of the day when everyone is feeling more comfortable and connected, quiet time alone in the bush was highly valued by teachers.

- **Time for teachers to explore, with other schools or centres located close to them,** how they could work together to enable more learning time outdoors.