

# Environmental activity day in QB

Local Roots and Shoots program celebrates success with children

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When parents tell kids to go and play outside, they would probably be surprised about what they can learn out there.

Milner Gardens and Woodland's Roots and Shoots program is an environmental education program, that kids love, said children's co-ordinator Charlene Forrest.

They love it so much she said, that they had to have another event to close the fall program and bring the kids back one more time.

"I wanted to make something that the kids could show the parents what they've learned," said Forrest, and of course show other kids what can be learned from the natural woodland.

Forrest explained that during the fall program 180 kids learned about the Hug-a-Tree program with the Arrowsmith Search and Rescue.

They also became Wildlife Detectives and set up sand traps to find out about wildlife traffic.

There was even a sasquatch print one day, laughs Forrest. They then set up a remote camera to



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

**MEMBERS OF THE Milner Gardens and Woodland Roots and Shoots program pose in the Children's Garden on the property (above). Below, one participant shows her interest in the Roots part of the nature group.**

capture animals as they walk past.

Forrest explained that the program is an adaptation from a inter-generational gardening program in California.

"It's just been expanding to fit Milner, to suit this property," said Forrest, explaining that it still includes the support of adult volunteer mentors.

She also adds that they have just become an official group in Jane Goodall's

Roots and Shoots program which will increase the community-impact focus of the group.

By combining teaching and crafts with games and activities, the kids have fun while learning about the B.C. coast's environment and its cycles and systems, said Forrest.

Saturday's open house event will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Qualicum Beach Community Hall.

Activities will be orga-

nized by various groups including the Stream Keepers, Spirit Bear Youth Coalition, the Wildlife Tree Stewardship Program as well as Urus Environmental Consulting.

Admission is by donation, and open to everyone who is interested.

"It's pretty open and easy-going," said Forrest.

These kids may take over though, warned Forrest, as they will be very excited to prove their knowledge.

