Murray River Educational Nature Tours
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or write to;
Murray River Educational Nature Tours
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Introduction:

The Murray River is South Australia's life line watering over 50% of our irrigated crops and sustaining more than 75% of the state's domestic consumption. The Murray also holds significant cultural and recreational importance for many South Australians.

In 2000, Murray River Educational Nature Tours developed an educational camp/study program specifically for school students.

OBJECTIVES

1] To develop in young South Australians an understanding of the importance of the Murray River as a natural resource.

2] To develop an understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the Murray River.

3] To increase awareness of the human impacts on our environment.

4] To highlight our responsibilities towards the Murray River.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, the program is designed to be GREAT FUN!

Please take the time to look through this web-site which describes the ILLAWONGA CAMP and the field activities on offer.
Illawonga Camp Facilities

ILLAWONGA CAMP is near SWAN REACH on the MURRAY RIVER
Approximately 2 hours drive from ADELAIDE.

Accommodation is provided for up to 64 people in 7 separate sleeping areas, 2 rooms of 18 bunks, a separate air-conditioned 8 bunk cabin and 4 air-conditioned 5 berth rooms.

The recreation room features a pool table, a table tennis table, small library and games.

The air-conditioned gymnasium features sports equipment supplied by ACROMAT and features a large foam filled landing pit.

The Illawonga property consists of the camp site, large river frontage ideal for all sorts of water sports and an 1800 acre mallee reserve.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Adelaide, take the no.1 highway to Verdun, Balhannah, Woodside, Mt Torrens, Birdwood, Mt.Pleasant, Cambrai and Sedan. One km before Swan Reach, Turn right at the electricity sub station and follow the dirt road for 5km. Camp signs are posted from the main road.
Camp Living Area & Floor Plan:
Illawonga Camp

[Diagram of floor plan showing living areas, dormitories, bathrooms, kitchen, and recreational areas.]

- 5 BEDS
- 5 BEDS
- 5 BEDS

Staff Bathroom

6 BEDS

- Void for Gymnasium foam filled pit
- Dormitory
- 18 BEDS
- Bathroom

- Dining Room
- Archery Range 20m

Illawonga Camp
Main Living Area

Recreation Room 30m
Property Layout:
Murray River Ecology:

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:
1] "THE MILEWA". The Pre-European Murray River.
2] EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT. Why the river was regulated, steam boats, irrigation, locks, dams, weirs, reservoirs etc.
3] MANAGING THE RIVER INTO THE FUTURE.

* Our tour boat has been specifically designed for Murray River Educational Nature Tours by ALUFARM MARINE, Goolwa. The boat is surveyed annually by the Department of Transport, Marine Safety Division to Passenger Vessel class 1E standard. The boat is equipped with an approved life jacket for each passenger. Our operators are all experienced boat handlers with appropriate Murray River & Inland Waters certificates of competency
Animals of the Murray Mallee:
A nocturnal bus tour through Devon Downs Station to view Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats and Kangaroos

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:
1] WOMBAT AND KANGAROO BIOLOGY.
2] ABORIGINAL LEGEND. 'How the marsupials came to have pouches'.

* This tour features a high quality recorded commentary incorporating information, music and stories. Our bus is equipped with remote spotlights on the roof. Devon Downs station has a very high wombat population and on most tours you can expect to see several wombats and kangaroos.
Murray Mallee Ecology:
A safari trailer ride through Illawonga's 1800 Acre Mallee Reserve.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:
1] BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF THE MURRAY MALLEE.
2] WHY DID THE EARLY SETTLERS CLEAR THE MALLEE TREES?
3] HOW HAS CLEARING THE MALLEE EFFECTED SALINITY LEVELS IN THE MURRAY RIVER?

Illawonga offers a beautiful 1800 acre mallee reserve which has been allowed to regenerate free from the pressures of farming, for over 20 years. The property is home to hundreds of wombats and kangaroos and a host of native bird species. Students will be guided through an interpretive program explaining why the early settlers cleared the mallee trees and what effects this has had on Murray River.
Irrigation and Produce:
A bus tour around Swan Reach including Murray Aquaculture and Cudgee Almonds.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:
1) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MURRAY DARLING BASIN TO AUSTRALIA’S PRIMARY PRODUCERS.
2) YABBIE FARMING. breeding, biology and marketing.
3) THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF AQUACULTURE. Why Australia stands to benefit in the future.
4) ALMOND PRODUCTION. Harvesting, processing and marketing.
5) OTHER PRODUCTS. Onions, potatoes, citrus, stone fruit and flowers.

This activity is great fun. It includes a chance for kids to catch yabbies! Watch the onboard video about almond production. There are work sheets available for students to complete back at camp.
Fossil Hunting:
Learn about how the Murray River Cliffs were formed.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:
1) Fossils found in the cliffs of the Lower Murray
2) Geology – How the Lower Murray River Valley was Formed

* This is a great "hands on" activity to provide students with an understanding of the Geological processes of how the cliffs were formed on the Lower Murray.
Recreational Activities:
Illawonga Camp offers a large number of fun activities during your stay.

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

1] Archery.
2] Rowing.
6] 8 Ball and table tennis.
7] Camp fires.
Sample Itinerary:

Illawonga Camp Sample 3 day itinerary.

Day 1
09.10 ; Bus arrives.
09.25 ; Depart School.
10.15 ; Morning recess stop enroute to camp.
11.30 ; Arrive Illawonga Camp. Welcome & settle in.
12.30 ; Lunch.
1.30 ; Irrigation & Produce. Bus tour around Swan Reach including Murray Aquaculture & Cudgee Almonds. (Yabbie fishing.)
5.00 ; Recreational time. Pool/table tennis etc.
6.30 ; Dinner & discussion
7.30 ; Fun in the gym. Games in the foam filled pit.
8.30 ; Camp fire.
9.30 ; Supper & bed time.

Day 2
07.30 ; Breakfast.
08.30 ; Group A. Murray River Ecology boat tour.
Group B. Murray Mallee Ecology safari trailer ride.
10.30 ; Groups A & B rotate.
12.30 ; Lunch
1.30 ; Group A. Rowing.
Group B. Archery.
2.30 ; Groups A & B rotate.
3.30 ; Bus ride to Sunnydale Station Woolshed.
6.30 ; Dinner and discussion.
8.00 ; Animals of the Murray Mallee. A bus ride to see wombats & kangaroos.
9.30 ; Supper & bed time

Day 3
07.30 ; Breakfast.
08.30 ; Group A. Fossil Hunting
Group B. Gym
10.00 ; Groups A & B rotate.
12.00 ; Lunch and final discussion, awards etc.
1.00 ; Depart Camp.
3.00 ; Arrive School.

Note: 2, 4 & 5 day itineraries available.
Food & Catering:
ILLAWONGA CAMP CATERING SERVICE.

We know the importance of good nutrition for young children. Our food is fresh, fun and nutritional! We have no problems catering for vegetarians or other special dietary requirements.

Sample menu:

**Breakfast.**
- cereals, toast, pancakes, fruit juice/milk. or -
- Cereals, toast, scrambled eggs, hash browns, fruit juice/milk.

**Lunch.**
- Tacos, fruit and cake. or -
- Sandwiches, fruit and cake. or -
- Home made pizza, salads, fruit and cake.

**Dinner.**
- BBQ sausages and chicken patties, potato wedges and salads.
- Jelly, fruit and ice cream. or -
- Spaghetti Bolognaise, ice-cream cone.

**Supper.**
- Fruit, cake and chocolate milk.

*Note:* Students will be expected to help our staff with table setting and clearing, and washing/drying of dishes.
Coach Transfers:

Murray River Educational Nature Tours have contracted Adelaide Coachlines to carry out all transfers from your school to Illawonga Camp and return. The primary vehicle used for this service is a very modern Scania coach featuring 57 seats (all with lap/sash safety belts), air conditioning, TV & video.

Murray River Educational Nature Tours will make all transfer arrangements and the cost is included in your price.
Preparing children for camp:

Some of your primary school students may have never been away from home before and might feel nervous about what to expect. Teachers may need to help prepare children and parents to ensure that their first camp is a happy and rewarding experience.

Pre Camp Briefing:
- Remember that if it is the children's first time away from home, then it is also a first for their parents. The parents may be more nervous than their children.
- Be very organized and knowledgeable about all aspects of the camp. You want to inspire confidence and show parents that you are capable of taking good care of their children.
- Be very clear in your own mind about the educational goals you intend the camping experience will help their children to achieve. If you are convinced about the worth of the experience this will come across in your discussions with the parents.

Things to discuss:
- The camp itinerary and location.
- The staff attending the camp and any special roles, especially first aiders in charge of giving medication.
- Transport arrangements, especially drop off and pick up times.
- Catering arrangements and menus. Ask parents to let you know of any special dietary requirements in writing.
- Sleeping arrangements. e.g. The locality of staff in relation to dormitories, cabins.
- Showering arrangements. Suggest that children practice adjusting the water temperature, keeping hair dry etc. at home before the camp.
- Clothing and equipment required. Stress that all items must be named and that children must be able to carry their own bags.
- Discuss behavioral expectations and procedures for dealing with any problems should they arise.
- Policy on pocket money, lollies, valuables from home etc.

Allow plenty of time for questions.

Activities which can be carried out in the class room pre-camp:
- Setting the table and sandwich making
- Discuss the different ways that families may eat, where they eat and what types of food they eat.
- Emphasize that people do things differently and that there is not necessarily a right and wrong way
- Discuss what clothing might be worn on the various camp activities. This can be made into a game to discuss what clothing might be appropriate in various situations.

Problem solving. Sample problems:
* You don't like the food on your plate.
* You forgot your tooth brush.
* Everybody in your room is talking and you can't get to sleep.
* Someone in your room wants to sleep with the light on.
* You have to take medicine and Mum usually gives it to you.
* You usually sleep with your teddy and you're scared everyone will laugh.
* You lose your new hair brush at camp and you're scared that Mum's going to be really mad.
Bookings & Enquiries:
How to get more information about our Murray River study/camp program.

1. Fill in your details and fax them to 08 8570 2005. Alternatively, e-mail the required information to stixjody@yahoo.com.au

2. We will then send you a price, confirmation of available dates and a sample itinerary.

3. If you decide to proceed, contact us to confirm your interest. We will then send you a Camp Administration Manual that will lead you through the process of arranging your camp. The manual will include the following items:
   ✓ Your camp contract which you will need to sign and mail back to us with your $300.00 deposit to confirm the booking
   ✓ Instructions for sending parents an initial camp letter
   ✓ A detailed map to Illawonga Camp
   ✓ Camp floor plan
   ✓ Your itinerary
   ✓ All the necessary student consent forms for parents to sign
   ✓ What students need to bring to camp
   ✓ How to set up your duty and activity groups
   ✓ General information/advice regarding camp.

4. Once we have received your Camp Booking Form and deposit, your booking is confirmed.

*Staff are welcome to inspect the camp site. Please call us to arrange a suitable time.
Sample Letter:

The following is a sample letter to parents of students planning to attend Illawonga camp. It may be used as a guideline for your personalised letter.

Harbour Primary School (Letterhead)
45 Lambert Street
Holdings Bay SA 5079
Phone: 1234567  Fax: 2345678

Circular to parents of year 5 students attending the Murray River camp in Term 2, Week 5, 2007.

This year our year 5 students will be attending Illawonga Camp, a nature based educational camp program focusing on the Murray River.

Objectives:

- To develop an understanding of the importance of the Murray River as a natural resource.
- To develop an understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the Murray River.
- To increase awareness of the human impacts on our environment.
- To highlight our responsibilities towards the Murray River.

When:
Term 2, Week 5, which is Wednesday 24th to Friday 26th May, 2007.

Transport:
Illawonga Camp provides a modern luxury coach with seat belts for student transfers.

Type of accommodation:
Dormitories.

Food:
This is a fully catered camp. Please read the student dietary requirement form provided.

How long is the camp?
Students will depart school at 9.15am on Wednesday 24th and return to school by 3.00pm on Friday afternoon. This gives the students 3 days and 2 nights away.

Where is Illawonga Camp?
Illawonga camp is near Swan Reach on the Murray River about 2 hours drive from Adelaide.

Activities:
The activities at Illawonga Camp are varied and are based on a study of river ecology, animals & the Murray Mallee. Information about wombats, Kangaroos, irrigation and aquaculture are included. The learning takes place in a fun environment whilst students go yabbie fishing, visit the Punyelroo Cave, ride on a tour barge and go spotlighting from a bus. The camp also has a gymnasium with a huge foam filled pit. Other activities include team rowing in a large boat, campfires, archery, pool and table tennis. (I have provided you with a copy of the camp itinerary.)

Staff attending Camp.
There will be 4 staff attending the camp. Mrs. Jones is the camp coordinator and Mrs. Peters is in charge of 1st aid and medical requirements. Mr. Symes and Mr. Bolte will also be attending.

Safety
Safety on camp is paramount. For all activities on or near the river, students must wear buoyancy vests which are supplied by Illawonga camp. As well as Mrs. Peters, the Illawonga camp staff all hold senior 1st aid certificates. The Swan Reach Ambulance Service is on 24hr standby for serious problems.

Cost
The cost of the camp is $000.00 per student. This includes bus transport, food, accommodation and activities.
Payment Options
You may pay in full by cheque to: Harbour Primary School, or by weekly payments of $10.00. Please contact Mrs. Read at the school office on 1234567 for information about a weekly payment schedule. All camp money must be received in full before Friday 5th May.

Consent Forms and other information
To ensure that we are able to take good care of your child, please fill in the 4 forms provided with this letter. (If your child does not have any particular dietary requirements you do not need to fill out the Dietary Form) The other consent forms must be completed and returned to Mrs. Jones before Friday 5th May. I have also provided you with a What Students Need to Bring to Illawonga Camp form. Please keep this in a safe place so you can refer to it when it comes time to pack.

Preparing for camp
This is quite likely the first camp your child has attended so naturally they might be a little apprehensive. Please be assured that we will do everything we can to help your child overcome any anxiety before or on the camp. Class teachers are already conducting discussion sessions and doing activities at school to reduce uncertainties so that the children feel comfortable with going on camp and will in fact look forward to it with enthusiasm and excitement.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at school on 1234567 between 3.00pm and 4.00pm on weekdays.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. P. Jones on behalf of the organizing committee
News:

**Illawonga Camp**

Thank you to all the schools who have sent us photos, thank you letters and gifts. It was great to have all the regular schools visit us again and we look forward to seeing you next year. We have had many new faces at Illawonga camp this year with all the new schools visiting. Raft building is a new activity for this year. It's a fun way for our secondary students to learn how to work as a team, build the raft and challenge each other to a race.

**Recreational Aquatics Camps.**

Murray River Educational Nature Tours are offering recreational aquatics camps in terms one and four of 2010. This is a fun program introducing students to a variety of water sports in a very safe environment. Lots of swimming, boating, tubing and knee boarding! Limited dates available so book soon.

**Who came to Illawonga Camp in 2009?**
