

Clemson in Australia and New Zealand

Itinerary Highlights

Day 1 – 5 Tauranga, New Zealand

Group flight arrives in Auckland

Then travel the scenic route to Tauranga with your guide.

Guided tour of local watershed

This watershed area, from the sea to the highest reaches of the catchment, includes the domestic water for the city of Tauranga and you'll visit natural zones as well as intensively developed areas with your guide explaining the impacts of each.



Lower catchments: restoration action

Assist with the restoration of a wetland area on the fringe of Tauranga by planting new native saplings of species that are appropriate for the local conditions. The valley being restored is close enough to the city to be used by local residents. Improvements in water control and quality are already being felt and you will see the results as you complete an estuary study.

Other discussions and lectures

- Climate change and sustainability
- Business and community partnerships
- Understanding natural processes
- Understanding the New Zealand education system — politics, economics and equity
- Eradication of invasive species

Immersion program at low decile primary school

First, learn the concepts of coastal dune restoration and how to plant appropriate vegetation to secure this crucial landform. Then, work together with local primary school children, getting your hands dirty planting dune grasses. It's a great chance for some cross-cultural exchange.



Guided tour of Tauranga

Learn about local Maori and European history and geography as you visit places like the Gate Pa memorial battle site

Formal Powhiri welcome onto Waitaia Lodge

Waitaia Lodge is owned by local Maori and is a place of learning and respect, where you will learn about their approach to the relationship between humans and the natural world. The use of this lodge and experience has been chosen specifically to engender a sense of connection with nature through experiencing a spectacular ancient rainforest surrounding mountain lakes.



Service-learning project

Extend the concept of 'Waiora' to complete conservation work in this pristine upper watershed site to contribute to an important local environmental restoration project.



Day 6 – 9 Rotorua and Auckland

Visit Kaituna river and follow its course up into the hinterland and eventually to Rotorua

Visit Lake Rotorua and Lake Rotoiti and compare the water quality issues with those of the Great Lakes in the USA.

Guided Tour of Te Puia

Te Puia is the Maori cultural and geothermal centre of New Zealand. The concept of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) is demonstrated here, with Maori bringing to life their mandate to nurture both human and natural resources – water, air, food and culture.



Tour and Presentation at Maungatautari Mainland Island Visitor Centre

Learn how the concept of creating a virtual island on the mainland can be an effective tool for managing indigenous fauna and flora.

A free afternoon in Rotorua will allow you to book your own tour to the Hobbiton Movie Set if you wish.

Travel to Auckland for a night before you fly to Australia.

Day 10 – 11 Townsville, Australia

"Eye on the Reef" Rapid Monitoring Program

Receive training from the education team at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on how they manage the Marine Park and about their citizen science "Eye on the Reef Rapid Monitoring Program." This community assessment tool enables visitors to participate in monitoring the health of the Great Barrier Reef. This session prepares you to identify fish and coral and to collect data on the health of the highly diverse and amazing reef communities found on the Great Barrier Reef.

Billabong Sanctuary

Billabong Sanctuary is a leader in conservation; their excellent corporate management behavior ensures the long-term sustainability of the business and its lasting

contribution to environmental causes. Learn about the Australian Dingo and get up close and personal with the famous "Aussie" animals.



Other discussions and lectures

- Aboriginal history and traditional values and beliefs
- Management of culturally significant wetlands

Day 12 – 14 Hidden Valley

Guided walks

Take a rainforest trail walk taking in beautiful views of the coast and the World Heritage-listed Wet Tropics. Your guide will teach you about local plants and ecosystems. Visit drier ecosystems and eucalypt forests and you may even spot the elusive platypus in the wild.

Wallaman Falls hike and master plan development

Hike to a 305-meter sheer drop waterfall, the largest in the southern hemisphere, and enjoy a picnic lunch at the base of the falls before returning to the summit.

Mungalla Aboriginal Tours cultural experience

Starting with a cultural session introducing you to the Nywaigi Aboriginal culture, you may be able to try your hand at traditional activities such as throwing boomerangs and spears. During a "Captive Lives" session, you will hear the story of the ancestors of the Aboriginal people from Mungalla Station and surrounding areas. You will also complete a beach cleanup service-learning project.





Day 15 – 17 Mission Beach to Atherton

Mamu Tropical Skywalk

Visit the Wooroonooran National Park, a wet tropics World Heritage Area. The cantilever Skywalk and observation tower suspends you over the rainforest to explore the rainforest canopy as your botanical guide provides information about the local flora and fauna.

Spend a day with a local farming family

Complete an ethnographic study as you help out your hosts in their daily routines and activities, such as working with crops, cattle or cooking.

Day 18 – 19 Cape Tribulation

Cape Tribulation rainforest night walk

This interpretive hike will explore one of the coastal tracks or boardwalks which provides access to the dense lowland rainforest. With good footing and flat walking conditions, the group will look for the unusual animals that come out after dark. Flashlights can pick up the eye-shine of possums, gliders, spiders and many other nocturnal creatures.

Daintree Rainforest Observatory visit

During your visit to the Daintree Rainforest Observatory, you will receive a lecture on research activities and citizen science at the observatory. Following this, you will have the opportunity to go up into the canopy in a gondola, while the rest of the group will see some of the station's scientific equipment and revegetation projects.



Other discussions and lectures

- Development issues in North Queensland
- Connections between mangroves, the reef and the rainforest

Day 20 – 22 Port Douglas

Snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef

Spend an afternoon preparing for your day on the Great Barrier Reef meeting your research boat staff, learning

about the evolution and phylogeny of coral reefs, and completing an ID exercise on the marine fauna and flora. Then spend a full day out on the reef completing your underwater data surveys and enjoying free time at three different reef snorkel sites.



Ngadiku Dreamtime Guided Walk

The Ngadiku Dreamtime Walks are conducted by the local Indigenous people. Ngadiku (Nar-di-gul) means "stories and legends from a long time ago" in the local Kuku Yalanji language. The walks take visitors to culturally significant sites, traditional bark shelters, and over rainforest streams. The walk includes a traditional smoking ceremony, visit to traditional huts (humpies), identification of edible and medicinal plants, demonstration of bush soap making and ochre painting, and sampling of bush tea and damper.

Day 23 – 24 Cairns

Program wrap-up, group scientific paper due

Group farewell dinner

Day 25 Depart for USA

Or extend your stay and include your own leisure travel