

Sustainable Futures Biodiversity Guardian Challenge

Mission Handbook

Complete missions, earn points and explore how biodiversity, people and the economy are connected.

 **Biodiversity Guardian Champion Prize:** \$100 Prezzy Card

How to Enter

1. Choose missions from any of the six challenge themes.
2. Complete missions worth at least 5 points.
3. Record your missions in the Mission Log & Entry Form.
4. Collect evidence such as photos, videos, drawings, posters, models, presentations, written reflections, interview notes, voice recordings, or parent/teacher confirmation.
5. Complete the Champion Reflection Question and missions from at least 3 different themes if you wish to be considered for the Biodiversity Guardian Champion Prize.
6. Submit your entry before the closing date.

Challenge Opens: 1 September 2026

Challenge Closes: 29 January 2027

Winner Announced: 12 March 2027

Mission Levels

 **Green Missions** = 1 Point

 **Yellow Missions** = 2 Points

 **Red Missions** = 5 Points

 **Native Species Bonus** = +1 Point (earn an extra point when your mission includes a native New Zealand species)

Nature • People • Economy

A big part of becoming a Biodiversity Guardian is understanding how biodiversity connects to people and the economy.

As you complete your missions, ask yourself:

- How does this affect nature?
- How does this affect people?
- How does this affect the economy?

The strongest entries will show connections between all three.

The Six Challenge Themes

Choose missions from any of these six themes. If you want to be eligible for the Biodiversity Guardian Champion Prize, you must complete missions from at least 3 different themes.

Champion Tip:

Try to complete missions from several different themes. The Biodiversity Guardian Champion must complete missions from at least 3 themes.

1. 🌱 Adaptation Explorer

● Adaptation Detective (1 Point)

What to do: Find a plant or animal adaptation.

Tell us: How does this adaptation help the plant or animal survive?

● Survival Matchmaker (1 Point)

What to do: Match a species to its habitat.

Tell us: Why does it live there?

● Adaptation Showdown (2 Points)

What to do: Compare two species and their adaptations.

Tell us: Which adaptation is most impressive and why?

● Design a Survivor (2 Points)

What to do: Invent a new NZ plant or animal.

Tell us: What adaptations help it survive?

● Evolution Engineer (5 Points)

What to do: Investigate several adaptations.

Tell us: How do these adaptations help species survive?

2. Ecosystem Detective

Food Chain Finder (1 Point)

What to do: Create a food chain using local plants and animals.

Tell us: Who eats whom?

Habitat Hunt (1 Point)

What to do: Find a habitat and identify its food, water, shelter and space:

Tell us: Why are food, water, shelter and space important?

Web of Life (2 Points)

What to do: Create a food web showing how species are connected.

Tell us: Why is each species important in the food web?

Ripple Effect Challenge (2 Points)

What to do: Choose a species and think about its impact on nature, people and the economy.

Tell us: What might happen if this species disappeared?

Ecosystem Investigator (5 Points)

What to do: Investigate a local ecosystem such as a farm, wetland, river, native bush or beach.

Tell us: Give examples of how at least three living things in this ecosystem depend on each other.

3. 🏛️ Sustainability Decision Maker

● Trade-Off Detective (1 Point)

What to do: Find an example where people need to balance nature, people and development.

Tell us: What are the pros and cons?

● Different Perspectives (1 Point)

What to do: Ask two people their opinions on an environmental issue.

Tell us: What were the different viewpoints and why did each person think that way?

● Supply Chain Detective (2 Points)

What to do: Choose a plant-based product like paper, timber, honey, fruit juice or cotton clothing.

Tell us: Who is the producer, processor, transporter and seller?

● Community Judge (2 Points)

What to do: Investigate a local sustainability issue.

Tell us: What different viewpoints exist?

● Mini Conservation Court (5 Points)

What to do: Create your own Conservation Court case and include the issue, supporting views, opposing views, and your final decision.

Tell us: What decision did you make and why?

● **Future Decision Maker (5 Points)**

What to do: Design an idea that helps nature, people and the economy:

Tell us: Why is your idea sustainable?

4. 🌿 **Biodiversity Hero**

● **Native Species Spotlight (1 Point)**

What to do: Research a native NZ species.

Tell us: Where does it live and why is it important?

● **Weed Warrior (1 Point)**

What to do: Remove an invasive weed with adult permission.

Tell us: Why can weeds can be a problem?

● **Biodiversity Photographer (1 Point)**

What to do: Take your best biodiversity photograph.

Tell us: Why did you choose this photo?

● **Plant for Nature (2 Points)**

What to do: Plant either a tree, native plant, vegetable, herb or flower.

Tell us: How could it help biodiversity?

● **Predator Free Champion (2 Points)**

What to do: Learn about predator control.

Tell us: Why does it matter and what species does it protect?

● **Habitat Hero (5 Points)**

What to do: Create habitat for wildlife. Ideas could be a bee hotel, wētā hotel, bird bath, lizard refuge or a native garden.

Tell us: How will this habitat help wildlife?

5. 🧪 **Young Scientist**

● **Nature Observer (1 Point)**

What to do: Observe a plant or animal.

Tell us: What did you notice?

● **MRS GREN Mission (1 Point)**

What to do: Choose a living thing and explain how it follows MRS GREN.

Tell us: How does this living thing follow MRS GREN?

● **Pollinator Survey (2 Points)**

What to do: Spend 10 minutes observing flowers and count the pollinators that visit. Examples could include bees, butterflies, flies or birds.

Tell us: Which pollinators did you find and what patterns did you notice?

● Tree Detective (2 Points)

What to do: Investigate a tree.

Tell us: What species it is and what wildlife uses it?

● Biodiversity Recorder (2 Points)

What to do: Record at least 3 plant species, 2 animal species and 1 insect species.

Tell us: What species did you record and where did you find them?

● Backyard Scientist (5 Points)

What to do: Create and carry out your own nature investigation. Examples could be which area has the most insects, which flowers attract the most pollinators, or which soil holds water best.

Tell us: What did your investigation discover?

6. **● Community Connector**

● Nature Teacher (1 Point)

What to do: Teach someone something you learned through SFYP.

Tell us: What did you teach?

● Interview a Kaitiaki (1 Point)

What to do: Interview someone helping nature.

Tell us: What did you learn?

● **Family Nature Challenge (2 Points)**

What to do: Complete a biodiversity activity with your family. Examples could include a nature walk, planting, bird count, composting, or a clean-up.

Tell us: What activity did you complete and what happened?

● **Community Kindness for Nature (2 Points)**

What to do: Take positive action for biodiversity in your community.

Tell us: What did you do and how did it help biodiversity?

● **Community Champion (5 Points)**

What to do: Lead an environmental action involving at least three other people. Examples could include a clean-up, planting day, nature campaign, or a biodiversity project.

Tell us: What action did you lead and what was the outcome?

Biodiversity Guardian Glossary

Adaptation

A special feature or behaviour that helps a plant or animal survive in its environment.

Biodiversity

The variety of living things in an area, including plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms.

Community

A group of people living, working or learning together.

Ecosystem

A community of living things and their environment working together.

Food Chain

A pathway showing who eats whom in nature.

Food Web

A network of connected food chains showing how species depend on each other.

Habitat

The natural home of a plant or animal where it finds food, water, shelter and space.

Invasive Weed

A plant that spreads quickly and can harm native species or habitats.

Kaitiaki

A person who helps care for and protect the environment, land, water and living things.

MRS GREN

The seven life processes shared by all living things:

- Movement
- Respiration
- Sensitivity
- Growth
- Reproduction
- Excretion
- Nutrition

Native Species

A plant or animal that naturally belongs in New Zealand.

Predator Control

Managing introduced predators to help protect native wildlife.

Sustainability

Making choices that help people live well now and in the future while caring for nature and using resources wisely.

Sustainability Thinking

Thinking about how decisions affect:

- Nature
- People
- The Economy
- Future Generations

Trade-Off

A decision where there are benefits and disadvantages to consider.

★ Champion Reflection

To be eligible for the Biodiversity Guardian Champion Prize, students must:

- ✓ Complete missions worth at least 5 points
- ✓ Complete missions from at least 3 different themes
- ✓ Answer the Champion Reflection Question:

Champion Reflection Question

What did your missions teach you about the connections between biodiversity, people and the economy?

Evidence Ideas

You can submit:

- Photos
- Videos
- Drawings
- Posters
- Models
- Presentations

- Written reflections
 - Interview notes
 - Voice recordings
 - Parent or teacher confirmation
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How Will the Winner Be Chosen?

The winner will **not** be selected simply by who earns the most points.

- Judges will look for:
- Understanding
- Effort
- Creativity
- Impact
- Sustainability Thinking

The strongest entries will explain:

- What they did
 - What they learned
 - Why it matters
 - How it connects to nature, people and the economy
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Good luck Biodiversity Guardians!    