

# Yarra Ranges Council

## Summer Family Fun Activities

### Summer Verse

Welcoming each season with family traditions like reading a seasonal verse at meal time or whilst on nature walks connects children to the changing seasonal environment. Try sharing this verse with your child each day through Summer.

Summer Summer,  
We're glad you're here,  
Let's get outside to spread some cheer,  
Time for water play and nature fun,  
Let's be warmed by the golden sun!

### Summer Nature Experiences

Summer in the Yarra Ranges is an exciting time for children. In these warmer months spending time getting active together outside will support children's wellbeing, development and learning. Let's get outside to explore and enjoy the wonders of nature. What might your family add to this list?

- Find a special walking stick on a sunny bush walk
- Plant sunflower seedlings, or tomatoes and watch them grow
- Dip your toes in cool water on a warm day
- Make footprints in the mud by a river or in the sand on a beach
- Find a Summer-Sit-Spot and tune in to nature
- Pitch a tent in your garden and enjoy a camp out
- Go on a bug hunt to discover mini creatures in your yard
- Take your shoes off and walk on green grass



### Summer Outdoor Nature Fun

#### Nature Ice-blocks Art

A simple Summer sensory experience for children is playing with ice. Sensory play supports brain development and builds motor skills and this activity is a fun way to cool down on a hot day.

Assist your child to collect flower petals and leafy herbs – making sure to avoid plants that are poisonous. Place these into different sized containers, fill with water, and freeze. Once frozen, remove the ice-blocks from the containers and place them outside for your child to play with.

#### Nature Confetti

Nature confetti is created from found natural items and is safe and biodegradable. Head outside and collect coloured leaves - gum leaves work well. Use a hole punch to cut your confetti from the leaves and collect the pieces. You might like to sprinkle it on gifts or in cards, use in an outdoor play kitchen or add to ice-block art.



Yarra Ranges Council is a Child Safe Organisation



## Summer Outdoor Nature Studies

Encourage children to explore different roles in nature, and record their activities in a nature journal! **We can be...**

1. **Botanists** - We will study plants. Together look closely at the trees, plants and flowers you see during a nature walk. Notice the shapes, textures, and colours and talk together about the different parts and their purpose. For example, bark is like a suit of armour protecting the tree.
2. **Herpetologists** - We will study reptiles or amphibians. Explore your backyard or local park looking carefully for lizards. The best place to find them is in sunny spots where they'll sit very still and warm their cold-blooded bodies. Skinks are common. Observe their behaviour. Children might like to imagine that they are a lizard and create a story about one!
3. **Ornithologists** - We will study birds. Spend 10 minutes outside spotting birds. How many different species can your child see? Can you identify them? You might like to start a list of all the birds you encounter in your local area.
4. **Lepidopterists** - We will study butterflies. Wander outside and watch carefully for butterflies. Pay attention to their size, wing shape, textures and colours. Invite your child to draw and decorate a butterfly in their nature journal.



## Summer Seasonal Table

Creating a nature-based Summer seasonal table together can connect your child to the season and offer routine and a sense of security in a cosy corner of your home.

### Materials:

- Natural items - shells, leaves, stones, twigs, feathers, flowers or seed pods
- Small table or surface
- Coloured fabric that signifies summer
- A small vase or jar to display flowers
- Summer themed books or crafted objects, or things that grow in summer



### Instructions:

1. **Colour is a vital ingredient:** To start, find a plain coloured cloth to place over a small table. Think: green for grass, blue for water, or yellow for sand.
2. **Collect seasonal treasures on walks**
3. **Display the nature items on your table:** Together, create a summer scene such as a river, mountains or a beach scene with the treasures you've collected.
4. **Keep adding to your table:** Perhaps new blooms, a Summer fruit, Summer themed books you can read together or a Summer craft you've created?

**Tip:** As Summer ends store away your items in a treasure box so your child can rediscover and enjoy them again next Summer.

For more information about free and low cost activities and events for children and families please follow us on Facebook at [Yarra Ranges Families](https://www.facebook.com/YarraRangesFamilies), visit our website at [www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Family](http://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Community/Family) or call us on 1300 368 333.