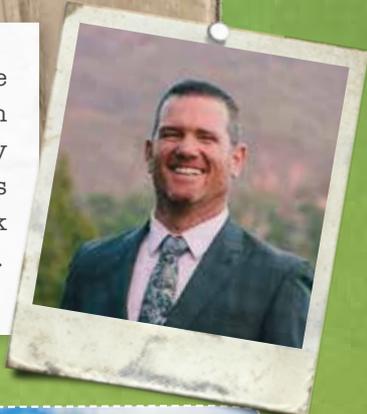


# CASE STUDY 5

Enhancing Eco-Tourism  
In Queensland

**Outdoor Education Provider:** ..... Mt Barney Lodge  
**Contact:** ..... Innes Larkin  
**Location:** ..... Mt Barney  
**Age of Children:** ..... 5 to 13 years  
**Number of Children Involved:** ... 30 -100 per week  
**Nature Play QLD Involvement:**.....  
 Nature Play Passports



Mt Barney Lodge is a successful and unique Advanced Ecotourism-certified destination within the Scenic Rim, which has operated continuously as a family business for the past 25 years. It has developed an outstanding reputation as an authentic and ethical provider of outdoor activities and programs.

An official Nature Play QLD Activity Provider, Mt Barney Lodge is heavily involved with the Nature Play Passport program, which they use to complement their extensive adventure programs for kids.

Mt Barney owner Innes Larkin says the passports help them to get the kids excited about going out into nature again, and attributes the success of the program to the growing number of parents searching for ways to disconnect their children from digital devices. Mr Larkin says this has resulted in a corresponding thirst for genuine outdoor experiences.

Among the many programs they have developed over the last 10 years is the Kids Bushcraft and Survival Camp, the CREATE Kids Program (Children's Recreational and Eco Activities That Educate) and Nature Play.

Mt Barney Lodge was an early adopter of Nature Play QLD, stating that the Nature Play QLD resources and passports helped to focus the existing kids' adventure program, as well as serve as a catalyst to develop new kids' activities and resources to help connect them with nature.



On the program, Mr Larkin said the passports, "Give kids a goal to go out into the outdoors. By having these missions, there is something a little exciting about it."

"It gives mums and dads an idea of what to do with kids in nature too," he said, stating that, "So much of this disconnect is a lack of time, so it helps having those lists and resources there ready to go."

Mt Barney Lodge now conducts a free Nature Play brief each Saturday, allowing for families to understand the concept and facilitate the kids to brainstorm unstructured play ideas for the weekend.

Mt Barney Lodge heavily promotes the Nature Play Passports as a way to facilitate these unstructured play ideas, and have them available for collection anytime during their office hours. To date, they have handed out and facilitated activities for 500 passports to excited and engaged kids.

"We think that nature play is crucial for the current generation and provides the perfect digital detox for a cohort that is vicariously experiencing life through glass without the lessons that nature provides."

"We think that nature play is crucial for the current generation and provides the perfect digital detox for a cohort that is vicariously experiencing life through glass without the lessons that nature provides," says Mr Larkin.

"On an average week, we would see up to 30 children and introduce the passport or Nature Play to them. In school holiday periods, that would swell to 100 per week. Many of our guests actually arrive with their own passports and fill

them in further whilst they are here, and then we also have our return guests who come to us 2-3 times per year with dog-eared passports that we replace or they require a new one because it is full," he says.

In May 2016, Australia's highest rated outdoor adventure television program, Creek to Coast, featured a story on Mt Barney Lodge's use of the Nature Play Passports, describing the outdoor education provider as a 'passionate advocate for a program that aims to plug young people back into the natural world'.

