

Permaculture Partners Newsletter



Term 1 2018

Autumn in our Permaculture Gardens



Warrwong High School

Warrwong High School will be offering all students Years 7 to 10 an opportunity to deepen their understanding of Permaculture. This term Year 7 spent four sessions covering Permaculture ethics, Permaculture principles, garden orientation, "hands on" soil building, a visit to Green Connect Urban Farm and a lunchtime wood-fired pizza feast.

Year 8 TAS has been test running the new "Paddock to Plate" curriculum. The students have redesigned the kitchen vegetable beds, built the soil organically, planted winter vegetables and made compost. These lessons have been successful in inspiring students to start organic gardening at home.



The Intensive English Centre students have been typically brilliant. Classes 3 and 4 have been developing the main four season vegetable garden and preparing it for the winter planting. The Permaculture Engagement students are small in number and big in ability. These young men have been shouldering the "lion's share" of the post summer garden maintenance. Nathan Dimitrovski and Andre Ivanovski have demonstrated initiative, worked independently and mentored younger students. This is the spirit of Warrwong Permaculture.

Look out for the Year 8 S Science class who are preparing for another exciting "Kids teaching Kids" day. This year, the theme is renewable energy, leading the younger folk through workshops that will demonstrate renewable solutions for water, waste, power and food production.



Port Kembla Public School

Term 1 at the Port Kembla Public School Living Classroom has been a busy time for the 2017 Garden Ambassadors. The happy gardeners have been preparing for the autumn season using Permaculture practices whilst the endless summer weather pattern has continued.

In a change of focus for PKPS, all of the Stage 2 & 3 classes have been working with the 2017 Garden Ambassadors. Term 2 will see a new Garden Ambassador team who demonstrate a real passion for Permaculture and school leadership.



Parents and family members are welcome to visit and support the student learning in the garden. The new vision is to support emerging Permaculturalists on their learning pathway to Warrwong HS or Five Islands Secondary College.

A special thank you to Leah Leishman who has been brilliant in assisting the Garden Ambassadors with their seasonal lunches. The heirloom pumpkin soup has been particularly popular!



Cringila Public School

The Garden Ambassadors have returned to the greatness of former years that Cringila PS is renowned for. In a matter of four visits the students are self-organising and initiating learning in their thriving Living Classroom.

The autumn soil building is complete and the garden beds are sprouting healthy brassicas, leafy greens, fresh herbs and garlic. Mohammed B has been superb with his passion and in motivating his team to start maintaining the aerobic compost piles. Isobel too, is the ideal Ambassador. She is kind, mature and always helps new students and volunteers.

The macadamia nuts have yielded a bumper crop this autumn. There is a constant rhythm of nuts being cracked and "one for the jar one for me" approach with the sweet kernels. The macadamia nut and grumachama cookies will be a treat for Term 2. The big news for Cringila PS is the research and planning for a small flock of chickens.

These birds will be a welcome addition to our plant systems, an effective waste strategy and a popular element for the children and the wider school community. Special thanks for Miss Doe and her enthusiasm and support. She is particularly talented with "chop & drop".



 **Lake Heights Public School**

After a bumper summer crop of cabbages and cherry tomatoes, Lake Heights Public School is heading towards starting a new fresh crop. The last of the marigolds are hanging in there as are a number of capsicum plants.



But before we get stuck into preparing the beds for our winter crops, we have been using our garden beds for creative play and outdoor games. We are looking forward to preparing our beds for herbs, lavender and succulents.

 **Warrawong Public School**

We returned from a long hot dry summer to find the garden in good form - a testament to excellent permaculture design! The dry weather meant the weeds were slow to invade over the summer months, whilst the garden beds continued to produce delicious fruits and vegetables despite being visited only a couple of times during the break.

The standouts were the lettuce and cucumbers - dozens of them! The cucumber vines kept producing lovely fresh crunchy fruit which have become the students' new favourite. As a treat, the Boys Groups have been making avocado dip to go with them - very popular!

We have also been watching our lovely Perron's Tree Frogs. This happy couple have been living in the garden for a few years but their location was kept secret.

Now we have 'Frog Friends' who act as guardians to our pest-eating, colour changing 'Maniacal Cackle' frogs as they are also known. The students even spotted a frog spawn in another location within the garden, so hopefully our frog family is growing!



The new garden beds are now rebuilt and were just planted out in time for all the wonderful soaking Autumn rain. Hopefully this is the start of another productive term in the garden.

 **Five Islands Secondary College**

What a busy term it has been in our garden! We returned from the break and we were off to a flying start to the year with Australia's first ever Stage 6 Permaculture class up and running with 21 keen students. With an abundance of tomatoes, zucchinis, cucumbers, herbs and pumpkins the class were thrown straight in to the fun part of harvesting a yield from their garden.

The Permaculture class along with their teacher Cheyne, Aaron Sorenson, our Team Green students and some of our amazing community volunteers have been extremely busy over the past few weeks, harvesting produce, mulching paths and rebuilding the no-dig beds ready to put our autumn crops in. The class have even been making their own recycled t-shirt bags to take their produce home in.

It looks like it's going to be a busy year here at FISC with work looking to start on our outdoor kitchen and some exciting projects to come from our Permaculture class. Watch this space!



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