

Permaculture Partners Newsletter



Term 3 2016

Winter in our Permaculture Gardens

The aim of this newsletter is that each term the schools will give an update on progress with Environmental Initiatives at their school that focus around their Permaculture gardens.



Cringila Public School

Cringila's Permaculture Garden, which is now over 10 years old, is a magnificent sight to see. Our South American food forest and the native nut and fruit tree forests are reaching full production and there will be excess yields this Spring.

The Garden Ambassadors have been continuing the culture of best practice soil building and in turn, growing an abundance of annual herbs and vegetables which have been prepared fortnightly for tasty meals by 3/4T. The current Garden Ambassadors have matured into a superb group of gardeners and are potential leaders for future Ambassadors. Cringila PS students were fantastic Ambassadors during the "Kids Teaching Kids" Biodiversity Day at Warrawong High School.



Warrawong High School

Permaculture has rolled out in "Small & Slow" steps as the context for learning has been expanded to the upper catchment of Lake Illawarra. The southern bank of the garden is being transformed from a vine weed plant community to the remnant Berkeley Brush rainforest.

Year 7S Science class has embraced the challenge with full gusto, building a flowing tyre and blue metal staircase to access the ephemeral creek line. The Permaculture engagement class and the IEC have commenced patterning the re-vegetation with the best practice "Bush Care Squared" method. Already over 200 plants have been planted in the former coral tree and lantana area.



Look out Warrawong Public School, our garden is approaching your boundary as our students continue to roll out rainforest and food forest transformation.



Port Kembla Public School

The PKPS Garden Ambassadors have been transforming their garden since the new fence has gone up. The front line coastal planting has begun in order to protect the salt wind sensitive vegetables and fruit trees, whilst providing habitat for the diverse bird and reptile communities.

In true Garden Ambassador fashion, the students have been working through some of their breaks to mentor future gardeners from K-3 in soil alchemy and plant whispering Port style. It was with much cheer that the Garden Ambassadors shared a bumper crop of winter vegetables and herbs. It was rumoured that even the old school gardening grandparents had a touch of pride when The other thing that is getting the students excited is the seasonal

their respective grandchildren arrived home with their arms full of organic mega flora!

If you are in the Port Kembla area at lunchtime, please drop-in for the best toastie in the Illawarra, Ambassador grown and Ambassador prepared.



Warrawong Public School

We have had a great winter with regular rainfall and lovely mild weather. As a result, the garden has been growing like it was spring! There were many standouts – the leeks were large enough to play baseball with, the fennel was bushy enough you could use it as cover in a game of hide and seek, and the rainbow chard was so vibrant, it could have been used as props for Sydney's Vivid Festival of Light! In fact the chard was the standout, with armfuls of harvest cooked or distributed amongst staff (see below).



We have now cleared, replenished and replanted most of the beds, except for those containing potatoes, which are not yet ready to harvest. The students are getting really excited about digging for potato treasure!

return of the white mulberry and all the other summer fruits. Our garden is in full bloom with heavenly scents of citrus blossom, cascades of macadamia flowers and tantalising mulberries abounding.

It has been great to run 'garden classes' for many of the classes that don't usually get a chance to visit the garden, and this will continue next term. Meanwhile, the Green Team and Arvo Mob keep things ticking along, however the Support Unit classes have been the engine for Term 2 and we couldn't have made the garden look as good as it does without their hard yakka! They adore being in the 'Living Classroom' and we always get the job done and then have a snack from the garden to celebrate.



Lake Heights Public School

This term the garden group has been busy harvesting the fresh, organic produce so that the cooking group could whip up some delicious and healthy meals, like Pad Thai. Some of the vegetables and fruits collected were radish, turnips, celery and juicy strawberries. We have also been getting the garden ready for the Celebration event which will be in Term 4. We have repainted the garden seats, mulched and planted an abundance of spring vegetables such as corn, tomatoes, kale, pumpkin and passionfruit.

The Lake Heights "living classroom" has also been utilised by our new Syrian students in their ESL English education to expand their vocabulary knowledge as well as giving them an opportunity to explore and participate in the garden.



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