

Spring Garden Newsletter 2021



We had a lovely, busy time in the garden at the end of term 3.

All the classes used the Tui Planting Calendar to help them to make choices for their spring/summer planting.

We have planted beans, peas, corn, potatoes, cucumbers, courgette, aubergine, lettuce, carrots, radish and silverbeet.



Hopefully the warm spring sunshine will help the plants to grow quickly.

The slugs and snails love delicious young pea plants and they gave ours a good munch. During the holidays I put some pots around our peas to try and slow down the slugs and snails.



We have been the lucky recipients of a plastic house donated by Rita-Mae Moore. The children have helped Brendon dig out the foundations and set up the plastic house. Brendon will help to lay a path down the middle of the two planting beds.



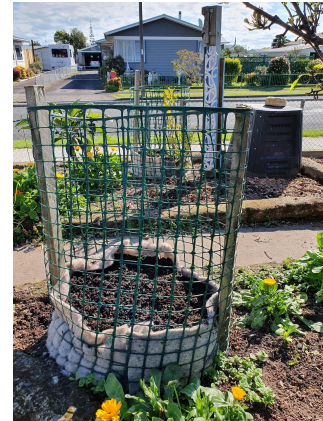
Inside our new greenhouse we have planted a variety of different tomatoes and a capsicum. Look how much they have grown over the holidays! They love the greenhouse.



Room 5 and Room 9 have built potato towers to plant their potatoes in. Caspian and Boston worked very hard on these, well done! Hopefully we have lots of potatoes to harvest before the end of term.



As the potatoes grow tall and leafy we will add more dirt to the tower. The potatoes will grow almost to the top of the tower. We will be able to tell when the potatoes are ready to harvest because the plants will have flowers or the leaves will die. This will take about three months.



Mr Winter and Brendon have been busy during the holidays installing the irrigation system. This is part of the project from the Sustainability Contestable Fund that Julie secured a grant from.

The irrigation system will allow the whole garden to be watered easily all at once. This will really help our plants grow over the drier months.



Mr Winter and Brendon have built special wooden platforms to protect the irrigation hose from being run over by the wheelbarrows and the mower and so that we don't trip over it.

The blue hose will snake all around our garden and will have little attachments which spray the garden with water.

The Bird of the Year 2021 competition is here!

<https://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz/>

Last years winner was the Kakapo, who will win this year I wonder?

Remember to have a look at the Forest and Bird website and cast your vote. It is a great way to help raise awareness for our endangered birds and learn a little more about them.

Voting is open from 18-31 October 2021. You can vote for up to 5 birds (rank them in the order you would like to vote for them). Go to the Bird of the Year website to vote.

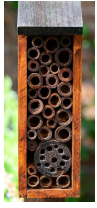


November the 4th is a special day this term as it is Global Outdoor Classroom Day

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/conservation-education/outdoor-classroom-day/>

Outdoor Classroom Day is a global movement encouraging schools to teach outside.

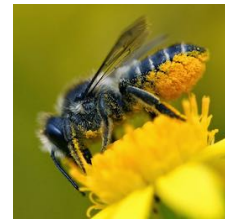
Outdoor Classroom Day happens twice a year in May and November. There are some fun nature activities on the DOC website that were launched in May 2021.



November the 4th is also special as Room 7 has rescheduled their Forest Project Day to this date. Room 7 has been working hard all year on rejuvenating our little native forest. On Thursday the 4th the students will be assembling, painting and putting in place nesting boxes, insect homes, butterfly houses, pest control stations, a bird bath, signs and some seating. They will also be tending to the trees and ensuring there is enough mulch around the trees to see them through the hot summer. It will be a very busy and productive day!



Very soon we should be receiving our Leafcutter bee cocoons from Beegap <https://beegap.co.nz/> . We will place the pre-incubated cocoons into the little bee house in the room 4 garden. As the weather warms up we will be able to watch them hatch out and get to work pollinating our garden.



<https://www.ruraldelivery.net.nz/stories/Leafcutting-Bees-and-Lucerne>

Brendon has built a lovely new place for the room 4 mussel buoy gardens, the gardens will get more sun and the room 4 children have more space to walk on their path again. Thanks Brendon.



Mr Brock has made a recent purchase for use in our garden, a PocketLab Air <https://sitech.co.nz/products/Pocket-Lab-Air> . This is an all-in-one science lab for investigating climate change and air pollution in our environment. The small (pocket sized) device will be mounted on a tripod in the garden and will measure carbon dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, temperature, humidity, barometric pressure and light. This is great way for our senior students to learn about science in a real context. The students may communicate some of the results on the radio.

We have lots of plants to look after and many jobs to do this term, I hope that we have sunny days to enjoy the garden together.
Claire Nankivell