

FLEMINGTON FOOD FOREST - TEACHER'S NOTES

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Educational signage made possible with the support of Moonee Valley City Council

Introduction

The Flemington Food Forest was created in 2013 as a community edible garden which looks to the natural structure of a forest to gain high yields with minimum maintenance and human inputs.

We have created the Flemington Food Forest primarily as a living playground for local children and their families to explore their natural world and gain basic knowledge about growing fresh, local and healthy food.

When compared to a traditional market garden a Food Forest is much closer to a natural balanced ecosystem and for this reason it is abundant with possibilities for connecting with the AusVELS Level 3 science curriculum. No pesticides or chemical fertilisers are used within the Food Forest and it is the habitat for a variety of birds, lizards, insects, bugs and other living organisms.

This "Living Classroom" has three areas that are particularly relevant to the science curriculum:

- Biological sciences: Living things can be grouped on the basis of observable features and can be distinguished from nonliving things (ACSSU044)
- Nature and development of science: Science involves making predictions and describing patterns and relationships (ACSHE050)
- Use and influence of science: Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions (ACSHE051)

Orientation

There is a paved gathering area around the sign to the Food Forest where the teacher can explain what a Food Forest is and explain the days activities.

An A4 pdf of the sign is attached to these teacher's notes. It includes a basic plan of the garden and a key of symbols which will aid the children in reading the 20 flip top signs located in the Food Forest.

This link provides background on Food Forests and explains in more detail the "7 Layers" illustrated on the signs.

<http://permaculturenews.org/2011/10/21/why-food-forests/>

Lessons

We have provided some example lessons that help connect students with the garden. We hope to make this experience as engaging and fun as it is educational and welcome any additional ideas or feedback. Teachers are encouraged to cherry pick which lessons and activities they wish to explore.

A pdf of the hinged signs has also been included so teachers can expand upon the activities provided as the signs are a starting point for a wealth of lessons. Each sign refers to a plant that is in the Food Forest.

Activities can be done in small groups and provide a variety of options to suit a range of competencies. The signs are highly visual using symbols so activities can be tailored to children of differing literacy levels. "Extra challenge" sections allows activities to be expanded.