

School gardening notes for January/February



Nótaí garraíodóireachta scoile do Mhí Eanáir agus Feabhra

Diary

Looking forward to another spring. Each one precious. We hold onto life by thin threads. So ... we will savour this one each day in every way that we can as we have always done. We marvel once more as life slowly creeps up the hazels, alders and willows that offer their catkins for pollination to the passing winds.

Training

- ✂ SEED (www.schoolearthed.ie) provide training in the basic skills of school gardening to whole school staffs. See www.schoolearthed.ie
- ✂ Plant fruit bushes such as apples, thornless blackberries and autumn-fruiting raspberries. Dig holes, add a few handfuls of compost, mix the soil and compost together in hole, put in plant, put soil back, firm with feet, place several layers of wet newspaper on ground around stem (c. 1 sq m.), cover with compost.
- ✂ Prune Autumn-fruiting raspberries to near ground-level.

General

All my previous *InTouch* articles are now available on www.schoolearthed.ie/intouch-pdfs.html as well as on the INTO website

Class

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| <p>Junior In. Will sow mange tout or sugar snap peas later. Make a light box with them. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-jan-light-box.html</p> <p>Senior In. Will sow ordinary peas later. Purchase gutter pipes and duct tape for sowing same. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-mar-peas-gutter.html</p> <p>First Will sow radishes and beet-root later. Dig compost into the raised bed and cover with polythene to warm it up. See www.videojug.com/film/how-to-grow-radish</p> <p>Second Will sow lettuce and spring onions later. Dig compost into the raised bed and cover with polythene. See www.videojug.com/film/how-to-plant-spring-onions</p> <p>Third Will sow early potatoes later. Dig compost into the raised bed and cover with polythene. Chit potatoes indoors. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-seed-potatoes.html</p> | <p>Fourth</p> <p>Fifth</p> <p>Sixth</p> | <p>Will sow carrots later. Purchase two dustbins and drill drainage holes in the bottoms.</p> <p>Will sow early potatoes and do an experiment on them later. Purchase four potato grow bags. Chit potatoes indoors. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-seed-potatoes.html</p> <p>Will grow lettuces later and do tests on them. Dig compost into the raised bed and cover with polythene. They will make scarecrows for the vegetable beds. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-jan-scarecrow.html</p> |
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Light box



Fair test on potatoes



Fair test on potato growing mediums



Sprouting potatoes



Carrots in dustbin



Slug deterrent test



Mrs Campbell

It's a time of in between. Nature begins to stir. Use the rest period to prepare for the growing season ahead. Late January/February is a good time to start sprouting new potatoes for March sowing.

Making a solitary bee home in St Joseph's, Tullamore.



PADDY MADDEN lectures on SESE in the Marino Institute of Education. He also gives short courses to whole staffs on school gardening. His book **Go Wild At School**, has recently been reprinted. Available for €18 from paddy.madden@mie.ie (Includes p&p).

Living things

- ✎ See www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Education/Wildlife_in_Schools.pdf for a list of plants and animals suitable for each class.
- ✎ All classes: make ecology tanks to investigate frog spawn. See www.schoolearthead.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-tank.html
- ✎ All classes: make nurseries for solitary bees. See www.schoolearthead.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-bee-nursery.html



Frogspawn

Literacy/Litearthacht

Chitting potatoes/Prátaí a gheamhrú: A method of getting potatoes to sprout by placing them in egg cartons in a cool part of the classroom that doesn't get direct sunlight. *Modh chun prátaí a gheamhrú trí iad a chur in ubhchartáin in áit fhionnuar sa seomra ranga nach bhfaigheann solas díreach ón ngrian.*

Thornless blackberry/Dris gan dealg: Cultivated blackberry bush that produce no prickly thorns. *Dris gharraí nach mbíonn dealga deilgneacha ar bith uirthi.*

Ecology tank/Tanc éiceolaíochta: A tank which is set up indoors to imitate an outdoor wildlife pond. *Tanc atá suite laistigh agus atá réitithe ar aon dul le lochán fiadhúlra amuigh faoin spéir.*

Solitary bees/Beach aonair: There are c.70 species of these non-community bees in Ireland. They are useful pollinators. *Tá thart ar 70 speiceas in Éirinn de na beacha seo nach mbaineann le coirceog. Is pailneoirí áisiúla iad.*

Buíochas do Marie Whelton (MIE) don aistriúchán.

Cookery

Make savoury leek pancakes. See www.growingschools.org.uk/Resources/Downloads/GrowingSchools_YearPlanner.pdf

Biodiversity

- ✎ See activities for December. Continue with those.
- ✎ Plant snowdrops. See: www.schoolearthead.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-snowdrops.html

