

School gardening notes for September



Nótaí garraíodóireachta scoile do Mhí Mheán Fómhair

Ear of wheat



Diary

- ➔ Foggy, spider-webbed morning. Bright, sunny day.
- ➔ Inspected webs with fat spiders on fly-alert.
- ➔ Harvested wheat. Children threshed it on flagstones. Winnowed same by blowing at fistfuls on their hands.
- ➔ Broke capsules of poppies and corn cockle. Found lots of earwigs sheltering inside.
- ➔ Sowed cornfield annuals.



Onion harvest



Teachers

- ✎ Plan for the cultivation beds/boxes/grow-bags. A possible vegetable cultivation plan for an eight teacher school:

Class Vegetables

Junior	Mange tout peas: See www.blackrockec.ie/node/124
Senior infants	Ordinary peas: See www.blackrockec.ie/node/125
First	Radishes/Beetroot: See www.youtube.com/watch?v=9U1LcUf-JCA and www.videojug.com/film/how-to-plant-beetroot
Second	Lettuce/spring onions: See www.schoolearthed.ie/pdf/intouch/ZoomVegetables_March2012.pdf and www.videojug.com/film/how-to-plant-spring-onions
Third	Early potatoes: See www.blackrockec.ie/content/march-early-spuds
Fourth	Carrots: See www.schoolearthed.ie/pdf/intouch/ZoomVegetables_March2012.pdf
Fifth	Garden Science: See www.blackrockec.ie/content/march-fair-test-potato-growth
Sixth	Garden Science: See www.blackrockec.ie/node/140

- ✎ Have a supply of hand-tools and gardening gloves per class. Hard plastic trowels/forks are safest.

- ✎ Training: SEED (www.schoolearthed.ie) will present training workshops at their second School Gardening Conference on 4 October in Marino Institute of Education. See www.schoolearthed.ie
- ✎ Organise a Garden Patrol from sixth class. Provide luminous 'Garden Patrol' vests. Choose c.4 weekly and allocate general gardening tasks such as collecting compost material and weeding.
- ✎ After year one be more ambitious! For a more detailed plan see www.bordbia.ie/consumer/gardening/organicgardening/Worksheets/Garden%20maintenance,%20allocating%20projects%20and%20community%20involvement.pdf



Science in garden

Sleeping beds, Lucan Education Together



Literacy/Litearthacht

Edible plants/Plandaí inite: Plants in which there are parts that can be eaten such as leaves, seeds etc.

Plandaí a bhfuil codanna iontu atá inite – duilleoga, síolta agus araile.

Garden patrol/Patról Gairdín: A group of children selected for general garden work. Grúpa de pháistí a roghnaítear d'obair ghinearálta ghairdín.

Hardy annuals/Bliantóg chrua: Frost-resistant plants that grow, flower and seed in one year. Plandaí a mhaireann tríd an síoc. Fásann siad, bláthaíonn siad agus síolaíonn siad in aon bhliain amháin.

Green manure/Leasú glas: Plants grown in a bed to keep it weed-free and add nutrients to the soil.

Plandaí a fhástar i gceapach chun é a choinneáil saor ó fhiailí agus chun an ithir a shabhrú le coithaigh.

Buíochas do Marie Whelton (MIE) don aistriúchán.

Pupils

- ✎ If beds are for vegetables, weed and dig in compost/well-rotted manure. Cover with black polythene or sow green manure. See www.bbc.co.uk/gardening/basics/techniques/soil_growgreenmanure1.shtml and www.blackrockec.ie/content/september. Second class could plant onion sets now to harvest in June; relevant classes could also plant new potatoes to harvest in December!
- ✎ If used for flowers, sow hardy annuals such as calendula, sandytuft and love-in-a-mist. See www.blackrockec.ie/content/september
- ✎ If is used for strawberries, plant now. See www.videojug.com/film/how-to-plant-strawberries-2

plant-strawberries-2

- ✎ If used for sowing wheat, do so now. See www.schoolearthed.ie/pdf/intouch/TipsSept10_SESE_TandemSept.pdf
- ✎ Make a daffodil maze. See www.blackrockec.ie/content/september
- ✎ Sow wildflower seeds. See www.blackrockec.ie/content/how-grow-wild-flowers-seeds



Raised beds, Loreto, Dalkey



It can be disheartening to return and find beds overgrown with weeds. Planning now will ensure this won't happen again.

Living things

☞ Study wasps, spiders, bird migration, cabbage white butterfly. See www.naturedetectives.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3B182A6A-BD8C-499C-8CCB-CEDF228822FD/o/nest_wasp.pdf and www.blackrockec.ie/content/september for make and observe activities.

☞ Study horse chestnut (junior infants); spider (senior infants); oak (first class); ash and squirrel (second class); hawthorn and swallow (third class); elder and badger (fourth class); hazel and kestrel (fifth class); birch and wasp (sixth class). See www.heritagecouncil.ie/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/Education/Wildlife_in_Schools.pdf

General

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

Biodiversity

Sow a cornfield meadow. See www.wildflower.org.uk/how-to-sow-cornfield-annual-seeds
Also chapter two of *Go Wild at School*.

Cookery

Grind wheat in a food processor and make scones if wheat was sown the previous September.



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