

# ENVIROBULLETIN

Issue 6 - February 2010

Tawa  
Montessori  
Preschool is a  
Silver Award  
member of  
Enviroschools



## The richness I achieve comes from Nature the source of my inspiration

Claude Monet

A lot has happened since we wrote the last Enviro bulletin in June. In September we opened Little Earth Montessori, our new Montessori enviro preschool in Kapiti. Little Earth has been awarded a runner up in the [National Sustainability Award](#). We are now busy working with the children and the community to make this preschool a true enviro preschool, not only in the hand, but also in the mind and in the heart.

In October last year, Anja attended the Sustainability and the Early Years conference in Melbourne. This conference, about early childhood education for sustainability, brought together professionals from Australia and New Zealand with

guest speakers from Canada and Sweden. The focus lay on how to [engage, empower and enact](#) and Anja has come back with lots of ideas and new knowledge to share.

In upcoming April, Anja will be presenting a workshop about creating a sustainable early childhood community at the national Montessori conference, In Service of the Child, in Christchurch. Brochures for those who are interested in attending this conference are available from our office or from the [MANZ website](#).

Our blog [Eyes on Nature](#) continues to grow and is followed by readers all over the world. The blog gives you a

closer look at what our children are busy with an what they achieve in a days work in our preschool garden, a garden which is “an eye opening treasure trove of experiences”, according to one of our parents. You can read her perspective in the blog post [The greatest gift](#).

As an enviro school we are dedicated to providing our young children with the opportunity to explore the natural world through hands-on, educational experiences. We use our natural garden as a tool for fostering creativity, discovery, personal development and social and academic skills. The richness we achieve truly comes from Nature.





We like to thank Common Sense Organics for their donations as part of their School Gardening Scheme. Please mention Tawa Montessori Preschool when you shop at Common Sense Organics. Their donations help us buying more flowers to help our insects, more vegetables for our organic garden and recently we have been able to buy timber to make a bird table for our feathered friends.

If you want to know more about the disappearance of bees and how you can help, please watch [Dennis van Engelsdorp 2008 TED talk "A plea for bees"](#).



## Insects are the sun's kisses a bug hilton at preschool

*"Just living is not enough," said the butterfly. "One must have sunshine, freedom, and a little flower."* These words, written more than a century ago, by Hans Christian Andersen are more true today than ever before. Unfortunately, many of our insects are under threat from pesticides, spreading suburbia and agriculture. Providing a secure haven in our garden allows these crawlies an excuse to make our garden their permanent home. They seem to prefer individual tunnels to either lay eggs or hibernate in during the winter months. To help our insects we have made an insect hotel in our garden, using bark and other natural resources.

You may have noticed the decrease in butterflies and bees in your garden

this summer. While the weather plays a role in this, other environmental factors also have an impact on the live of our insects. Insects are very important to our ecosystem. Scientists estimate that about one in three bites of food we eat is directly or indirectly pollinated by insects. Insects need flowers. So at preschool, we have started planting more flowers, creating an insect garden. The children love the garden; they smell the flowers, they watch the insects, they touch the leaves. They water, they weed, they care. This beautiful insect garden is a wonderful way of reconnecting to our environment.

We have also been busy creating our no dig garden. This project is still going. While the herbs seem to enjoy

the new gardens, the vegetables, especially the tomatoes, are not thriving just yet. It needs to be seen whether this is due to the poor summer weather, the location of the new gardens, or most likely, a combination of both.

Much to our delight, the potting shed has finally been installed, and has already produced many seedlings. The sunflower seedlings have been planted into our garden and have started their race to the sun. Currently we are nurturing our bean seeds, waiting for them to sprout, ready to be planted in time for winter. The potting shed is proving to be a place of peace and quietness, with the children adamant that this is where their teachers sleep. We wish!