



Project Reflections cont.

Mason Bee Condos - Katherine Turcios, Westridge Elementary



Last year, when my class was learning about mason bees, we got in contact with the City of Burnaby to install a mason bee condo. Unfortunately, we were not able to get it installed by the school year's end.

This year, they contacted us and asked if we would still be interested in having one. Of course, we said yes! We agreed to meet at our forest, a section of brush that is located along the Drummond's Walk Urban Trail, behind our school.

City workers brought cocoons and trays for us to place in the condo. We had to wait until the weather was above 13 degrees before placing the cocoons inside. They told us that we needed to monitor the condo to see how many holes are mudded up. They also told us not to worry if nothing happens because it might mean that the bees have made their home elsewhere.

In the fall, we will collect the cocoons and trays and have them ready for the following year. We will be monitoring the mason bee condo and hope that this will help in increasing pollination in our much-loved forest.





TAKE ME OUTSIDE WEEK OCT. 18-22

Project Reflections cont.

Exploring Plants at Suncrest - Marta Raymond, Suncrest Elementary

Grant money can boost your outdoor education program. Get in touch with B Outside to see if there is possible funding for your place-based learning needs. Marta Raymond, primary teacher at Suncrest Elementary, shared how helpful it was during the 2022-2023 school year.

“Exploring Plants at Suncrest”, by Marta Raymond, Suncrest Elementary

At Suncrest, we are a community of learners who love exploring our local environment through outdoor play.

This year, we wanted to learn more about the plants we would be growing. We were able to move our planting troughs to a new space outside of our classrooms. We wanted to have them in an accessible and visible location that encouraged family involvement.

While we were waiting for our troughs to be moved, we decided to plant some wildflowers for a pollinator garden. We had butterfly pupae in our classroom, so we excitedly watched as they developed alongside the plants outside. We wished for the flowers to help our butterflies thrive once they left our classroom.

Students took a lot of pride in watching the flowers grow and shared with their families why they were so important. Unfortunately, somebody dumped our flowers and stole our small planting box before we could transplant them into the troughs.

We were very disappointed by this, but we worked together to collect our seedlings and replant them. We overcame that obstacle together.

We are so fortunate to have accessed this grant money. We spend a lot of time learning outside with many of us being new teachers. This funding has facilitated staff to learn more about gardening and get a mix of seeds, soil, and other gardening materials.



Join our B Outside Community!

Connect to resources, events, and a network of Burnaby educators [here](#).



Project Reflections cont.

Finding Joy Outdoors - Vanessa Lundgren, Westridge Elementary

"Do we reeeally have to go outside?" lamented one of my Grade 2 students. On that October day, the sky was slate grey and promised heavy rainfall. Some of my students had forgotten to pack extra clothes and were already soggy from splashing in puddles at recess.

When it comes to our outdoor education program, there is always a period of adjustment early in the school year. As the fall season brings chillier temperatures and wetter conditions, it can be hard to be motivated to go outside.

In both a literal and figurative sense, we need to acclimatize to learning outside. Students often learn the hard way that it is essential to bring spare socks, pants, and proper rain gear. Eventually, they also realize that learning outside is not just about play and exploration. There are often specific tasks to complete.

With each passing week, I notice my students' mindset towards being outside changing. They come to expect the weekly nature outings and, when they miss them due to Pro D or holiday scheduling, many often miss them. As the days get longer, brighter, and warmer, it is such a treat to be outside. We have earned these moments of joy in fresh air.

We come to appreciate being outside, having endured the tough stuff, like slipping in mud or bearing with that damp chill that so efficiently cuts through layers. When the first crocuses pop out of the earth, students delight in knowing that their local environment is showing signs of life. By now, they know a few more plants and animals by name, as if they have become friends.

Now that the salmonberry blooms, I know that the school year is winding down. We water our garden troughs, waiting for the nodding onion seeds to germinate. A European starling has made its annual nest in a hole in our school's roof edge. The cycle of life continues outside, and we have found joy there. It took practice but we found it, right outside our classroom walls.





Project Reflections cont.



Empowering Students through Green Teams - Kristina Carley, University Highlands Elementary

Green Teams are an opportunity to encourage and empower students to share their voices and to be involved in change in their communities. Anaya, a powerful voice of the UHE Green Team, shares her thoughts about the actions they have taken this year:

“At University Highlands Elementary, we have Green Team, and one of our projects was planting a pollinator garden at our school. We planted a pollinator garden to encourage biodiversity and climate resilience. We also assembled our pollinator garden for our animal friends to have a place to live and grow. An expert on native plant species came to our school to educate us on how to make a pollinator garden that incorporates all the native plants that our animal friends need to survive. When we're helping animals to live and thrive happily, we are the ones who are going to benefit because it's all a circle of life. We all loved making a pollinator garden and making a major difference. This proves that no matter how old or young you are, you can always make a difference.” - Anaya, grade 5

The UHE Green Team is excited about continuing to implement a wide variety of projects that impact our school and larger community through modelling, educating, and bringing in community members to walk alongside us. This year, the Burnaby Youth Sustainability Network (BYSN) hosted a Climate Challenge, and UHE students loved sharing their plans and being inspired by the stories of Teams from Burnaby Mountain, Burnaby South, and Moscrop Secondary!

Find out more [here](#), and stay tuned for ways to become connected to Green Teams throughout the district next year!

