



Caitlin and Harrison - Bee hotels to boost biodiversity

What was your goal and what did you achieve?

Our aims and goals were to educate people about native bees and to make an on-ground difference. So we ended up making bee hotels by getting kids from Faith and Tanunda Primary School.

Harrison spread the word at Faith and we got some teachers who were interested and they came over, and the Tanunda Primary School students came too.

We had the two year seven classes come over. It was a half-day workshop, but the whole prep and set up and pack up took about the whole day.

How did you plan the workshop?

There were many meetings and prototypes. I think there were seven prototypes that were involved, so there was a lot of planning and constructing before actually getting a final product.

And I had to cut the vine canes to various lengths because we didn't know what we wanted at the beginning so we had to swap them around and change them up.

What happened at the workshop?

At the beginning we had multiple different groups of kids and they would go into the hall and we would give them a talk.

At the beginning Jenny Deans got up, our guest speaker, and we got up and said some stuff, so we had a big talk at the beginning, and then each small group came in and got a talk about how to make the bee hotels and then they went out and made them.

The bee hotels are made with a big square of wood. We've used the same size pieces of wood but different types of wood, and Caitlin and I have used common reed, bamboo, pine cones, and Jenny Deans brought along some fennel.

Biggest outcome?

We made at least 40 bee hotels. We gave away a bunch of flyers about how to make native bee hotels so I reckon a bunch of those kids might make their own. There were about sixty students who came along and they were all enthused with making the bee hotels, they were very excited.

What will happen to the bee hotels now?

The bee hotels got distributed around the Tanunda Urban Forest to help boost the ecosystem and the biodiversity. Bush for Life, the Tanunda Urban Forest group, Tanunda Primary School and Faith also got some to spread around the school.

What will happen now?

I think a lot of those students will have taken on board what we've said and might tell their parents and their parents might spread the word to their friends and then it will continue to go throughout, and it was also in newspaper so I'm hoping that a lot of people that have seen it and want to help make a difference and make more bee hotels and I'm thinking that this is a really interesting project and that I might continue it next year if I can.

To add to that, we can also monitor our bee hotels so the ones we've already made, we can see what's going into them. I ride past one of them everyday on my way home from school so I'm watching that one.

What have you enjoyed most?

I enjoyed how much I learnt, I learnt so many new things and it opened my mind quite a bit. I hadn't really thought about the fact that European bees weren't here and that the native bees were our original pollinators, and I thought about that and it's really interesting. And I didn't know that there were 1,500 types of native bees either. It was enjoyable to see the amount of people who actually came to the event, from one little meeting that started everything.

Your advice to other students?

Be open minded. Go with the flow. If you feel like you want to do a project, get stuck in. Do it. You can do whatever you put your mind to if you want it badly enough.

This case study was transcribed from an interview. These are Caitlin and Harrison's words and opinions.