

Buzzing with innovation in Australian Pollinator Week

This week is Australian Pollinator Week, where at Meriden we celebrate the impact of bees on local ecosystems and communities. Appropriately, STEM Captains Annabelle Desmond and Anjana Kailasanathan have been developing a long-term project to introduce and encourage more pollinators in the Strathfield area and the local ecosystem.

The STEM Captains' project was inspired by this year's National Science Week theme, "Species Survival – More Than Just Sustainability". They thought carefully about the local community and worked hard to produce a detailed proposal to Mrs Lisa Brown about the viability of the project, which will boost local food chains, biodiversity and survival, and support our local native bee populations.

After careful research and consultation with local beekeepers, Annabelle and Anjana began raising awareness of our lovely local bees by hosting a bee hotel building activity during STEM Week in conjunction with the Design and Creative Arts Captains, and by running a candy bee guessing competition. Congratulations to Year 11 students Alexandra Katanasho, Angela Li, Celeste Ryan, and Selina Wang for correctly guessing 312 bees!

While most students are familiar with European yellow and black striped honey bees, they are unaware of the myriad of native Australian bee species, from the blue banded bee to the fuzzy solitary teddy bear bee.

The goal of this project is to introduce a colony of the beautiful, stingless and safe Australian sugarbag bees to our campus once the DaCA building is complete, as a way of celebrating and boosting our local population of Australian pollinators.

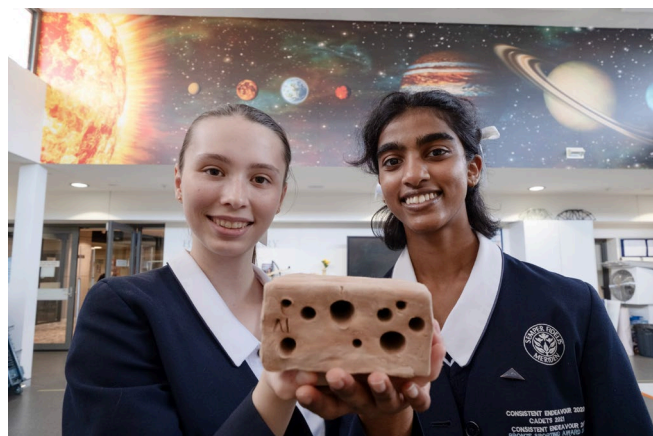
It has been inspiring to watch Annabelle and Anjana work together to come up with ideas and propose a local solution to a global problem. The engagement of students and staff across the campus in the proposal, planning and activities has highlighted our community's collaborative efforts to assess risks, evaluate viability, identify areas for innovation and, of course, "bee all we can bee".

Mrs Alexandra Phillips

Coordinator of Learning Link – Innovation



Bee hotels under construction during STEM Week



STEM Captains Annabelle and Anjana with a completed bee hotel