

# Sweet Porridge



December 2025



Little Yarra Steiner School is situated on Wurundjeri Country. We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work, learn, and play, and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We are honoured to share in the continued care of this land, with its wetlands and river, its stones that sleep in the depths of the Earth, its plants and trees that reach for the Sun, and all the creatures that know it as home. We respectfully acknowledge the ancient and enduring culture of those who have walked this land in the past, which will continue to enrich the lives of our community into the future.



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☎ 0410 951 128

✉ [sandrarosa.info@gmail.com](mailto:sandrarosa.info@gmail.com)

Instagram: [@sandrarosa.welcome](https://www.instagram.com/sandrarosa.welcome)

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As a parent of 4 LYSS students, I've seen first hand how energy healing (Reiki) can transform stress, anxiety, depression, and learning challenges into confidence and well-being. I also offer Kinesiology, where your body guides the way to lasting change, releasing old traumas, patterns and conditionings.

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## Season's Greetings

As we reach the final weeks of the year, the long Australian summer days and the spirit of Christmas bring a special warmth to our school. December invites us to pause, reflect, and appreciate the growth and creativity our students have shown throughout the year.

Thank you to our teachers, families, and community for your dedication and support. May this season bring you rest, joy, and connection.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas and a rejuvenating summer break.

**Warmly, Karli**

At the turning-point of time,  
The Spirit-Light of the World  
Entered the stream of Earthly Evolution.  
Darkness of Night had held its sway;  
Day-radiant Light poured into the souls of men,  
Light that gave warmth to simple  
shepherds' hearts,  
Light that enlightened the wise heads of kings.

O Light Divine! O Sun of Christ!  
Warm Thou our hearts,  
Enlighten Thou our heads,  
That good may become  
What from our hearts we would found  
And from our heads direct  
With single purpose.

Rudolf Steiner, Christmas, 1923.



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## Gunyang – Kangaroo-apple Season (December)

- Changeable, thundery weather.
- Dhuling (Goannas) are active.
- Buliyong (bats) are catching insects in flight.
- Days are long and nights are short.
- 'Usually when a storm's coming, rain birds, black cockatoos, yellow crested, they come down from the mountains. And you can bet on it within two or three days it rains. Never fails. Two days and it rains. And they make a racket.' Brian Paterson, 1999
- Fruits appear on Kangaroo-apple bushes. Bali (Cherry Ballart) is fruiting. Bundjil (Wedge-tailed Eagles) are breeding. Bunjil, the Creation Being, is also referred to as the 'eaglehawk'.



Source: [museums.victoria.com.au](http://museums.victoria.com.au)

Kangaroo Apple (*Solanum aviculare*)





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## Craft: Little Angel

### MATERIALS

- Wooden doll 2 3/4 in (7 cm) high
- Pieces of felt
- Little beads
- Carded fleece
- Gold foil



From: **Feltcraft: Making Dolls, Gifts and Toys**  
by Petra Berger

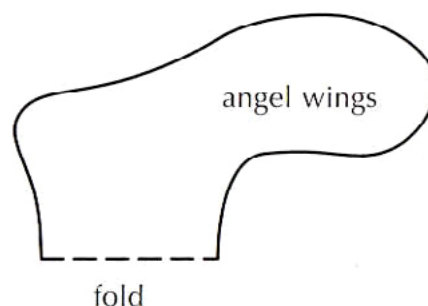
### METHOD

Clothe the body with a piece of white felt.

Trim the bottom of the angel's dress with a thin strip of felt or some beads.

Cut out the wings (Figure 10). Decorate them either with little beads or with different coloured pieces of felt with matching designs cut into them (Figure 11). These pieces can be glued on to the wings.

Use teased wool for the hair. You can give the angel a hairband and a little star.



10



# Guiding Families

## Connecting Stories

### *More Than Property: Suzie's Steiner School Connection*

**Suzie Brannelly** – Suzie has a deep appreciation for the values, philosophy and spirit that make Steiner education so unique. Suzie is a long time member of the Steiner School community, as wife to Little Yarra Steiner School's Prep/Kinder teacher Sharlee, mother to past student Jaz, and previously on the Board of Governors for the Dandenong Ranges Steiner School. Her connection to the school isn't just personal – It informs the way she approaches her work, with care, integrity and a genuine focus on people.

“

Being part of this community has taught me that real estate is about more than property. It's about people, stories and helping families find their place in the world. ”

With nearly 20 years of real estate experience, Suzie is known not only for her professionalism and award-winning results, but also for her warmth, humour and unwavering support throughout the buying or selling journey. Her love for the Upper Yarra Valley and her intimate knowledge of the local community means she doesn't just understand property, she understands the families and stories behind every home.



“

I love helping families start the next chapter of their lives in a place where they can truly belong. ”



It was a pleasure to work with Suzie. She gave us confidence in the process of selling our home of 37 years. She was always available for questions and a wonderful support in all areas.

**Sandy & Philip** – Seville East

**Reach out to Suzie on 0422 847 773**  
**She's here to help every step of the way!**

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# A St. Nicholas Story or the Fiercest Little Animal in the Forest

by Terri Reinhart, illustrated by Patrick Reinhart

The pine marten was the fiercest little animal in the forest.

When other animals came near him, he growled and snarled and snapped at them. Then the animals ran away.

When people walked through the forest, he hid in the bushes growling and snarling and snapping at them as they traveled by his bush. Then the people would walk a little faster to get away from the fierce little animal.

One day the pine marten heard people coming.

There were lots of people marching straight through his forest!

The pine marten hid in a bush by the path. As the people passed him he began to growl and snarl and snap his teeth.



The people all rushed past the pine marten . . . except one man. He stopped and looked down at the fierce little animal.

Suddenly, the pine marten did not feel so fierce. He tried to run away but was caught in the brambles of the bush.

St. Nicholas puts pine marten into his bag

The man bent down and picked up the pine marten and put him in his pocket.

"I am St. Nicholas and you, my friend, are coming with me."

The fiercest little animal started to scrabble and scratch, but it was no use. He stayed in St. Nicholas' pocket all the way through the forest.

He stayed in St. Nicholas' pocket when everyone boarded a ship and they sailed all the way across the sea.

When they finally arrived on the other shore, St. Nicholas' helpers carried bags filled with flour, apples, nuts, and honey cakes.

They traveled to a town where the people were very poor and very hungry.

St. Nicholas and his helpers left food on each and every doorstep.

St. Nicholas took the pine marten out of his pocket and looked him squarely in the eye.

"No more growling. No more snarling and no more snapping.

I have work for you to do."

St. Nicholas sent the pine marten into each house with a coin. Inside each house, he dropped the coin into a stocking that hung by the fire.

He worked all night long.

When morning came and he was finished with his work, he was very tired. He was happy to go back inside St. Nicholas' pocket.



The little pine marten was so very sleepy that he did not know when they boarded the ship and sailed across the sea for home.

He did not even wake up when they arrived at his forest.

When they arrived at the pine marten's home, St. Nicholas lifted him out of his pocket and put him down on the ground.

St. Nicholas and pine marten

"Your work is done now, my little friend. You can go free."

But the little pine marten wanted to stay with St. Nicholas.

From that time on, the pine marten lived in the woods close to St. Nicholas' house.

Whenever St. Nicholas needed his help he was always right there.

YARRA VALLEY

**ecoss** Presents:

# Ecotopia

## Summer Twilight Market



**MUSIC FOOD STALLS**

**FRIDAY 12TH DEC 2025**

**3.30-9PM**

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### Violin

1/2 size violin. Comes in hard foam case. Very good condition. \$450. Contact Crystal 0416 361 012. Located in Warburton or can bring to school.

1/2 size violin, it is an Enrico brand, with hard carry case, shoulder rest, bow, rosin (more like half a rosin) and new set of strings just replaced. Asking \$120. 0435-798714 Kaku

1/2 size student Violin "Skylark" Chinese. 45 years old. Good condition. Comes with bow, shoulder rest, shoulder pad, rosin and good hard case. \$70. Vasudha 0451 944 051.

3/4 size Amore violin from Animato strings in Brisbane. In good condition. Complete with 2 bows, case and shoulder rest. Great quality instrument with a beautiful sound. Paid over \$1000 new, selling for \$400. Meaghan 0427751779

Full size 4/4 "Prelude" Violin. Copy of Stradivarius. High quality, very good condition. Comes with bow & case. Valued at \$2500. Selling for \$1500. Aladdin Jones 0490 123 199 or Tessa Priest 0405 390 348.

### Viola

1/4 size viola (originally a violin) Comes in hard foam case \$450. Contact Crystal 0416 361 012. Located in Warburton or can bring to school.

### Cello

1/4 size cello. Salieri brand. Bought in 2018 through the LYSS music department. Excellent condition. Comes with bow and semi-hard case (case will require replacement). \$550 Call Monique 0401353 698.

1/4 size cello "Chamber" Student Model MDC550 with bow and soft case in good condition. \$400 neg. Cat 0403 334 808

1/4 size cello. Comes in hard foam case in fair condition. Cello has a few nicks and scratches on it as it was bought 2nd hand, but still sounds beautiful. \$450. Contact Crystal 0416 361 012. Located in Warburton or can bring to school.

1/4 size Cello, Chamber Student Model – Plus, great condition, \$700. Nadine 0423 539 718.

1/4 Size Chamber Brand Cello and bow. Great condition

– some minor wear and tear. Comes with HYBRID brand Cello case (these retail for about \$399) Selling together for \$575 - can bring to school -Welcome to have it assessed by Music Dept). Call Amber on 0417 590 359

1/2 size cello Second hand in good condition, comes with bow and new hard case. Happy to drop at music department for assessment. \$400 ONO. Gerry Ross 0418-565-023

Cello - Chamber Student - 1/2 size. With bow, rosin, and hard case. Very good condition. \$750 ono. Tel: 0458 254 828

1/2 size Cello Chamber 300 Brand and bow. Excellent condition. Hybrid hard case. \$1000. Victoria 0411 016 299.

3/4 CELLO, SKYLARK (photos available). Decent condition with a few marks, 1 bow. Solid case with broken zip but clasps still close. \$400 neg. Luna 0433 337 161

3/4 size 'Arco' Animato Strings Cello, very good condition. Comes with bow and hard foam case. Probably needs tuning. \$550. Contact Liz on 0401 054 881 or lizmynes3357@gmail.com.

4/4 full size Cello Enrico Student Plus II. This lovely cello is in excellent condition, being near new and having had limited use. Comes with bow and hard foam case. \$800 Liz 0401 054 881 or lizmynes3357@gmail.com

3/4 Cello + Bow. Chamber Student 300s -Very Good Condition. Hard case (semi) in excellent condition. Located in Woori Yallock. Happy to bring to school for a try. Has been checked by music staff at school. \$750 ONO Contact Kelly - 0414391039

Schumann Prodigy 4/4 Cello. Full size cello, bow, and hybrid case with wheels. Purchased new, Bows for Strings in Feb 2023. Very satisfying to play and hear. Price as new: \$1899. Sell for: \$1300 o.n.o.. Larissa Lemon riss1437@gmail.com

### Saxophone

Brass Tenor "The Sound" Saxophone. Comes complete with reeds, neck strap and hard case. All in excellent condition. This sax has always been well looked after and always stored in its carry case, \$500. email us in Healesville, lisa.n.marko@gmail.com

Please note that music teachers are happy to assess if the instrument is the correct size for your child and advise if there are any repairs required prior to purchase. When discussing this with the seller please explain this may take a week as the teacher will need to fit time in for this around their busy schedule. If you require a valuation, it is best to take the instrument to a valuer for a valuation none of our staff are qualified to value. Please make sure that any instruments are clearly labelled with a contact phone number for collection



# Beans and Bananas Fruit & Veg Co-Op

## Fortnightly organic / biodynamic fruit and vegetable boxes

Beans and Bananas is a local organic/ bio-dynamic fruit and vegetable co-op, providing members with an abundant box of mixed organic/ bio-dynamic fruit and vegetables at reduced prices due to our relationships with local suppliers.

Full or half boxes are packed and available fortnightly.

A full box costs around \$80 each fortnight depending on supply and market costs. There are also wonderful opportunities to be involved with the running of the co-op to reduce your box cost as an active member.

**The pick-up for boxes is at ECOSSE, Old Warburton Rd  
in Wesburn after 3pm on a Thursday.**

Boxes are out for collection with no fixed pick-up time to allow for different schedules on the day.



You are welcome to start with a trial of three boxes at an active member price before deciding to join!

For further information or to arrange a trial, contact [beansveggiebox@gmail.com](mailto:beansveggiebox@gmail.com)





### Strawberry & Rhubarb Crumble Cups

*From 'Gardens for Harvest', November 2025*

A twist on a classic crumble, baked in muffin tins – perfect for lunchboxes or picnics!

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped rhubarb
- 1 cup chopped strawberries
- 2 tbsp honey or sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp cornflour (optional, for thickening)

*For the crumble topping*

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup plain flour (or almond meal)
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 75g melted butter

#### Method

- Preheat oven to 180°C. Lightly grease a muffin tray.
- In a bowl, mix rhubarb, strawberries, honey, vanilla, and cornflour.
- Spoon fruit mix into muffin tray holes (about halfway).
- In another bowl, mix crumble ingredients and spoon over the fruit.
- Bake for 25–30 minutes until golden and bubbling.
- Let cool slightly. Serve warm or cold

### Zucchini, Pea & Feta Fritters

*From 'Gardens for Harvest', November 2025*

Crispy on the outside, soft inside – great for lunch or light dinners.

#### Ingredients

- 2 medium zucchinis, grated
- 1/2 cup fresh peas (or thawed frozen)
- 2 spring onions, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup crumbled feta
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup plain flour (or chickpea flour)
- Salt & pepper
- Olive oil for frying

#### Method

- Squeeze excess water from grated zucchini using a tea towel.
- In a bowl, mix zucchini, peas, spring onion, feta, eggs, flour, salt and pepper.
- Heat oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat.
- Drop spoonfuls of mixture into the pan and flatten slightly.
- Cook for 3–4 minutes each side until golden.
- Drain on paper towel and serve with Greek yoghurt or a lemony dip.





## How a radical experiment to bring a forest into a preschool transformed children's health. *Source: The Guardian*

In Finland, kindergartens are exposing children to more mud, wild plants and moss - and finding changes to their health that show how crucial biodiversity is to wellbeing

*By Phoebe Weston. Photographs by Liisa Takala*

Aurora Nikula, 5, is having a normal day at her nursery. She is making a cake out of sand and mud, adding in make-believe carrots, potatoes and meat.

"It's overcooked," she says as she splashes water in, then adds another dollop of sand. "More sugar, it tastes better," she says. A handful of mud goes in, and the dish evolves into a chocolate cake.

Aki Sinkkonen, a principal scientist with the Natural Resources Institute Finland, is watching. He's also very interested in Aurora's cake, but for different reasons.

"Perfect," he says, admiring the way she is mixing soil, sand and leaves and then putting it on her face. "She's really getting her hands in it."

To a hygiene-conscious kindergarten, this could be a problem, but at Humpula daycare centre in Lahti, north of Helsinki, children are encouraged to get muddy.

Across Finland, 43 daycare centres have been awarded a total of €1m (£830,000) to rewild yards and to increase children's exposure to the microscopic biodiversity – such as bacteria and fungi – that lives in nature.

We already know that access to the outdoors is important for children and their development. But this study goes one step further.

It is part of a growing body of research linking two layers of biodiversity. There is the outer layer – the

more familiar vision of biodiversity, made up of soil, water, plants, animals and microbial life, that lives in the forest, playground (or any other environment).

And then there is the inner layer: the biodiversity that lives within and upon the human body, including the gut, skin and airways.

Increasingly, scientists are learning that our health is intimately linked to our surroundings, and to the ecological health of the world around us.

The first 1,000 days of human life – when the brain and body are most rapidly developing – are considered particularly crucial.

### Putting the children in charge

This kindergarten has been exploring that relationship through a novel experiment – including digging up a piece of the forest floor, and seeing how exposure to it changes children's health.

In autumn, the daycare centre – which has 180 children and 50 staff – looks much like an allotment run by children.

The compost is fed with old leaves and weeds, and then used to grow beetroots, carrots, cucumbers and potatoes, courgettes and chillies.

Now parsley is the only thing left – winter is drawing in and everything else has been eaten. The children, however, remain outside.

The plants, dead wood and soil in the daycare centre have all been specially selected for their rich micro-biodiversity.

They have also dug up and imported a giant live carpet of forest floor, 20-40cm deep and 10 metres square.

It has blueberries, lingonberries and moss growing on it, to encourage the children to forage, find bugs and learn about nature.

"This area has not been forested for 200 years so this is a substitute," says Sinkkonen. In a wetland area they can balance on rocks and play among a different selection of plants.

Five years ago, it was a gravel car park.

This kindergarten was included in a two-year study looking at how biodiversity enhancements affect the microbial composition of children's skin, saliva and faeces.

The study was the first of its kind. Blood samples were taken to look at immune defences, and a short questionnaire about infectious diseases was filled out every three months.



*Eevi (right) and Aurora are 'making food'*



*Jade Maksimainen (left) and Enni Löfman*

In total, 75 children aged between three and five across 10 urban daycare centres took part in the study. It compared “rewilded” daycare centres such as this with others covered in asphalt, sand, gravel and plastic mats.

A year later, it found children playing in the green kindergartens had less disease-causing bacteria – such as *Streptococcus* – on their skin, and stronger immune defences.

Their gut microbiota showed reduced levels of *Clostridium* bacteria – associated with inflammatory bowel disease, colitis and infections such as sepsis and botulism. Within 28 days it found an increase in cells in the blood – called T regulatory cells – that protect the body from autoimmune diseases.

Other research showed that in just two weeks children’s immune system regulation could be improved by playing in a sandpit enriched with garden soil

The human body contains trillions of bacteria, viruses and fungi, which are essential to how we function. Research shows external micro-biodiversity (such as bacteria and fungi) is transferred into the body through touch or ingestion.

Even breathing counts: the air has its own microbiome, which is associated with tree and plant species in the surrounding area. Soil – home to 90% of the world’s fungi – also feeds the microbiome in the air.

Scientists think one of the reasons so many people now have allergies is because they were not exposed to microbes that occur naturally in the environment at a young age.

The “old friends” hypothesis says humans evolved alongside microbes in air, plants and soil. The body can exchange useful microbes (bacteria and fungi, for example) with the natural world to stay healthy.

Marja Roslund, a scientist at the Natural Resources

Institute Finland, says: “It’s good for national health. Immune diseases are expensive. Even a small reduction in the burden of these diseases is good for national health and the economy.”

Previous research found that early exposure to green space was linked to a healthy immune system, but it was unclear if this was causation or correlation. The Finland study suggests it could be causal.

An Australian study published last year corroborated the findings, showing children playing with a range of different soils had better gut health and a stronger immune system.

### **Moving the inside out**

The interest in bringing dirt and nature into nurseries is spreading. In Helsinki, Poutapilvi-Puimuri daycare centre is being redesigned with the help of a €30,000 (£25,000) government grant.

It currently looks like a building site with a couple of diggers at work, but soon there will be trees, flowers, rocks, planters, sandpits and a grass area for games. “We told the architects we want nature in it,” says Marjo Välimäki-Saari, the centre’s director.

“We’re moving the action from inside to outside. We want to show the children nature so they learn about it,” says Välimäki-Saari.

The kindergartens provide more evidence of just how crucial healthy ecosystems are to human health.

As biodiversity, habitats and wild species are lost around the planet, there are huge potential repercussions for human wellbeing. Increasing on site biodiversity can be a win-win for children’s health and the environment.

The University of Sheffield has done research on installing green barriers around school playgrounds to prevent air pollution from harming children’s health.

Based on that study, Hunter’s Bar infant school in Sheffield created a 70-metre-long hedge of plants and shrubs that wraps around the playground, which is close to a busy road.

Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) concentrations in the playground were reduced by 13% six months after planting, and further decreases are expected as the hedge matures.

“More and more people are saying they want to make these daycares in their towns,” says Roslund.

Visitors from Norway, Iceland and Denmark have come to see how they could replicate the Finnish model at home.

“I don’t want to see rubber mats in any kindergartens,” says Sinkkonen.



# Steiner-inspired play items for sale

call Tania on 0428 682642  
for more details and pricing



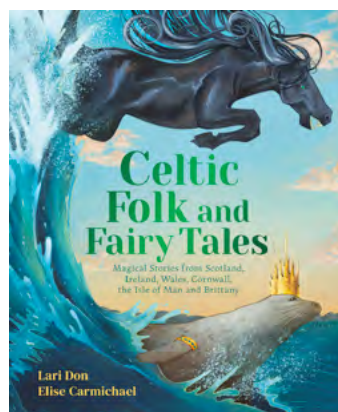


## Spring and Summer Activities Come Rain or Shine

Race handmade boats, build an insect hotel and create wildflower Easter eggs, all while learning about the natural world -- whatever the weather.

This practical and brightly illustrated book is packed with indoor and outdoor crafts and activities, plus fun facts, to entertain and engage curious children during the spring and summer months.

All the activities encourage an exploration of nature, from streams and moss, to butterflies and dandelions. Children will love finding out about the natural world through play and creation whether at home or in the classroom.



## Celtic Folk and Fairy Tales: Magical Stories of Dragons, Fairies and Selkies from Scotland, Ireland, Wales and more

Travel to the magical Celtic lands to meet shapeshifting selkies,

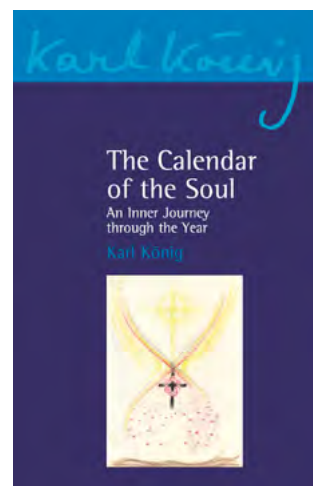
duelling dragons, a terrifying waterhorse, a cheeky changeling, a cunning fairy and a bloodthirsty giant...

In this sumptuously illustrated new collection, award-winning Scottish author and storyteller Lari Don retells classic tales of myth, magic and mischief.

Elise Carmichael's exciting and luminous illustrations bring the rich shared folklore of the Celtic lands -- Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and Brittany -- to life in an outstanding collection that will enchant younger and older readers alike.

## Step Inside The Calendar of the Soul

Karl König meditated intensely on the 52 weekly verses of Rudolf Steiner's Calendar of the Soul. He often encouraged his colleagues to find inner strength from the verses, and wrote The Calendar of the Soul, which forms part one of this combined volume, as a guide for them, drawing out the patterns through the course of the year.



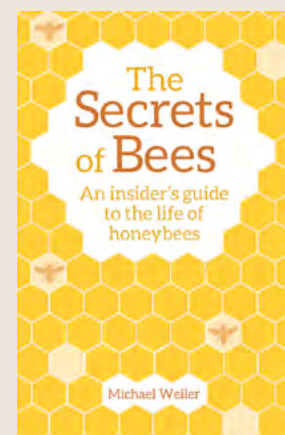
Part two of The Calendar of the Soul: An Inner Journey Through the Year comprises 52 naïve, full-colour artistic sketches that König created in 1940 to accompany each verse during his internment on the Isle of Man. For each weekly verse of the Soul Calendar, there's a picture which describes an experience of the inner situation.

## The Secrets of Bees: An Insider's Guide to the Life of Honeybees

Bees make honey; we all know that. But what happens between the bee buzzing around our garden, and the sticky knife in the jar, is a mystery to most of us. How many bee-hours does it take to make just one jar of honey? What do the honeybees' wagging dances really mean? Why do bees swarm? What is a 'house bee'?

From exploring their life cycle and development, to revealing their societies and behaviour, expert biodynamic beekeeper Michael Weiler answers these questions and many more.

Combining poetic observations with scientific detail, The Secrets of Bees uncovers the incredible world of these remarkable insects.





## What's on for families in Yarra Ranges December



Stay busy these school holidays with a range of free, low-cost and family friendly activities. Yarra Ranges Council school holiday activities are inclusive for children of all abilities aged from 0-14 years.

### Further information and booking



### National Gallery of Victoria – Kids on Tour

NGV Kids on Tour is back this January with a range of free drop-in art making activities created especially for children and their families to enjoy.

Date: Wednesday 7 January - Sunday 25 January

Time: visit the website for session details

Location: Arts Centre Warburton, The Memo Healesville, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum Lilydale

Cost: Free

Booking: no booking required, just come along

Get ready to party when NGV Kids on Tour comes to you these school holidays. From drawing decorative cakes and creating wearable party hats to playing fun party games, activities from the NGV are coming with art to make for every age!



### Christmas Carols on the green next to Warburton Water World on Saturday 20 December.

Begins 6pm with jazz followed by Santa at 6.50pm. Then Carols 7pm followed by international Celtic group Claymore until 9pm.

The Warburton Advancement League's Christmas in the Park will bring the festive spirit and cheer to the Upper Yarra this December.

Taking place on the green next to Warburton Water World on 20 December, this exciting event is sure to get you in the Christmas mood.

Kicking off at 6pm, jazz band Paige Burney Quartet will play some classic Christmas hits before Santa himself shows up at 6.50pm.

Following the appearance of Father Christmas will be the highly anticipated carols from 7-7.20pm.

Once everyone has sung their carols, from 7.20 through to 9pm an internationally renowned Celtic band called Claymore will brace the green with bag pipes and all.

A shuttle bus will be running from the Warburton Football Oval from 5.30pm.

Food and coffee vans will be onsite to quench any hunger.

This event is a free entry but a gold coin donation is always welcomed.

If the weather's bad and it's not looking likely that the event will run, check [wal.org.au](http://wal.org.au) for more information.

## Step Inside The Calendar of the Soul – Karl König.

Extract from the eighteenth week, which emphasises the importance of listening attentively, plus we share the accompanying sketch from Karl König.



*Can I expand my soul  
To grapple to her being  
This word of worlds in germ conceived?  
I do forebode I strength must find  
To found and form my soul  
A garment worthy of the spirit.*

The word of worlds has gained entry into human depths of soul through the sphere of the senses. It will stream into the limbs, which are borne by the spirit, in order to be reborn in the aims of work. Between conception and birth lies the time of this transformation, which is spoken of in the verse for this week. How can it come about that this change takes place worthily?

This is the question that the human I poses itself:

*Can I expand my soul  
To grapple to her being  
This word of worlds in germ conceived?*

It is an inner listening, a real effort to keep quiet and listen, that needs to happen now. The words, ‘Behold, I am the Lord’s handmaid, let it be according to thy word,’ express the attitude of soul which is alone appropriate here. It should also be said: Can I open the ear of the soul out of humility to such an extent that I can listen to the tender voice of the word of worlds? For only in the element of listening and hearing can that connection arise of which the I is speaking here.

How otherwise would we be able to encounter the word if we did not incline our ear towards it in an attitude of listening?

If this inner surrender has been achieved, the voice of the angel speaks again within us, for a ‘boding’ note is sounded:

*I do forebode I strength must find  
To found and form my soul  
A garment worthy of the spirit.*

To fashion ‘my soul’ so that it is ‘worthy’ — this is a message that the angel whispers to the I. ‘Become worthy,’ he says, ‘then you can adorn yourself like the bride that the spirit birth awaits.’

For this, however, it is necessary to find the strength which can bring such a condition about. This requires not brute force or strength but an inner power of resolve.



# *Experience*

## 12 Ferntree Avenue, **WARBURTON**

Set in one of Warburton's most sought-after pockets, **12 Ferntree Avenue** offers a peaceful and picturesque lifestyle within walking distance from the iconic Yarra River, walking trails, and Main Street where you can enjoy some of the best coffee Victoria has to offer. Gifted with a versatile floor plan that can meet the requirements of any family and capturing spectacular views, there is plenty of potential with this one to come in and make it your own.

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## This month in the Garden



December in the Yarra Ranges marks the start of summer abundance. With long, warm days and the occasional thunderstorm, gardens are growing fast and need regular care. Keep up with watering early in the morning or evening to reduce evaporation, and mulch garden beds with straw or compost to lock in moisture and suppress weeds.

It's time to harvest early summer crops like lettuce, peas, garlic, and berries, and to plant heat-loving vegetables such as tomatoes, zucchini, basil, corn, and capsicum. Regularly pick produce to encourage ongoing harvests. Keep an eye out for pests like aphids and caterpillars, and use natural deterrents such as neem oil or companion planting with marigolds.

Fruit trees are heavy with ripening produce — protect them using wildlife and fruit-bat-safe netting with holes smaller than 5 mm. Secure nets tightly around the trunk to prevent animals becoming trapped.

Prune spent spring growth and tie up vigorous vines or tomato plants. Continue composting kitchen and garden waste to feed the soil. December is also a good time to collect and save seeds from early crops for next season. With consistent care, your summer garden will thrive well into the new year.

## Growing Strawberries in Pots – A Quick Guide

*Source: [yarraranges.vic.gov.au](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au)*

Strawberries grow well in pots if you choose containers with good drainage and at least 20–30 cm depth. Use a quality, well-draining potting mix (look for “berry mix” or similar), and place your pot in a sunny spot—strawberries need at least 6–8 hours of sun per day. Popular varieties for pots include ‘Albion’, ‘Tristar’, ‘Alinta’, and ‘Melba’.

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Plant them at the same depth they were in their nursery pots, keeping the crown above the soil line. Space them about 30 cm apart to allow for air flow. Water regularly to keep soil moist but not soggy—morning watering is best to avoid fungal issues. Avoid wetting the leaves.

Feed your plants every 2–4 weeks with a balanced, water-soluble fertiliser, and mulch around the base to help retain moisture, suppress weeds, and regulate soil temperature. Remove runners to encourage more fruiting, and pick strawberries when fully red and ripe.

Strawberry plants are short-lived, so replace them every 2–3 years for best results. Watch out for pests and diseases, and consider hand-pollination if growing indoors. With a little care, you'll be rewarded with sweet, homegrown berries all season long!





## Health through regular meals

Source: Goetheanum. Section for Agriculture

Created by Dr. Jasmin Peschke und Lea Knöpfler |  
10/01/2025 | Nutrition



### Fresh, Local & Connected: The Value of Farmers Markets

Source: [yarraranges.vic.gov.au](http://yarraranges.vic.gov.au)

Farmers markets are a vibrant part of life in the Yarra Ranges, offering more than just fresh fruit and veg. They're a way to support local growers, reduce food miles, and reconnect with where your food comes from.

Farmers markets are a vibrant part of life in the Yarra Ranges, offering more than just fresh fruit and veg. They're a way to support local growers, reduce food miles, and reconnect with where your food comes from.

Shopping at farmers markets means you're buying direct from the people who grow and produce the food — often small-scale farmers and organic growers. The produce is typically fresher, seasonal, and full of flavour, having been picked just days (or even hours) before. This freshness means better nutrition and less packaging waste.

Supporting local producers also strengthens the Yarra Ranges economy, keeping dollars in the community and encouraging sustainable farming practices. Many stallholders use organic or low-spray methods, making it easier to shop with health and the environment in mind.

Farmers markets are also social hubs — places to chat with growers, swap recipes, enjoy live music, and connect with neighbours. From Healesville to Belgrave, Warburton to Lilydale, our markets reflect the region's rich soil, diverse growers and creative food makers.

So next weekend, grab a basket and explore your local market — your plate, your health, and your community will thank you.

Our modern lifestyles throw our natural sleep-wake cycle out of balance. Artificial light — including from screens — and shift work can lead to illnesses such as chronic fatigue, obesity and metabolic disorders. The field of chrono-nutrition research investigates the timing and rhythm of daily meals and their influence on health and metabolism. A review by Pot (2018) shows that lack of sleep can lead to unhealthy eating habits. An unbalanced diet also reduces sleep quality. Sleep and eating rhythms influence each other, and a balance is needed to promote health.

Every person has their own circadian rhythm, which can be divided into sleep and wake phases and is adapted to the change from day to night. Chronobiology deals with such biological rhythms, which can also be found in the organs: each organ is particularly active at a certain time of day. Artificial light — whether electric or from screens — strongly influences these rhythms, especially the sleep rhythm. This promotes the development of insomnia, chronic fatigue, but also overweight and obesity. Shift work also has a negative impact on health. In 2007, it was even classified as possibly carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer [1].

It has long been known that healthy eating is not only about what you eat, but also when you eat. For example, irregular meals, but also consistently late meals, can increase the risk of overweight and obesity. This topic is addressed by the field of research known as “chrono-nutrition”, which investigates how irregular eating, the number of meals and the actual time of food intake affect eating behaviour and thus health. Many metabolic processes take place during sleep. As these restorative activities are essential for health, scientific interest in the relationship between sleep and eating habits has grown significantly in recent years. The publication by Pot (2018) summarises numerous reviews on this topic [1]. Some important findings are discussed here.

#### Interaction between sleep and nutrition

People who sleep less (5 to 6 hours per day vs. 7 to 8 hours per day) often eat a less balanced diet, which is associated with a lower intake of fibre and protein. This is probably because when we are tired, we tend to reach for ready-made products or simply eat whatever is available without thinking. Normal sleep duration, on the other hand, is associated with

a higher intake of certain nutrients such as vitamin C, fibre and iron. In addition, it has been shown that sleep deprivation can lead to an increased energy intake of up to 400 calories per day – particularly through the increased consumption of high-fat foods. Conversely, diet also influences sleep: irregular meals are associated with poorer sleep quality. Sleep quality also suffers when people eat a lot of sweets and pasta but few vegetables and fish.

### **Influence of meal timing on nutrition and sleep**

There is currently no clear evidence to support the claim that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. However, there is a clearer consensus when it comes to eating late: people who eat late in the evening and eat too much have an increased risk of obesity, metabolic syndrome and cardiovascular disease. This also includes snacking while watching television. This risk is particularly pronounced when more than 25% of daily calories are consumed after dinner – a pattern also known as “night-time eating syndrome”.

### **Discussion**

The review shows a complex interplay between sleep, nutrition and health. During sleep, rebuilding processes take place: the metabolism is active, substances are broken down and rebuilt. During this time, the metabolism can work “at rest”. The waking phase, on the other hand, is characterised by processes of consciousness and perception that require energy and are therefore more degrading. If you spend too much time looking at screens at night and don’t get enough sleep, the forces in your organism cannot have a sufficiently restorative and health-promoting effect. This, in turn, is the basis for the waking phase. It is not without reason that people say “sleep yourself healthy” or “sleep is the best medicine”. This illustrates how essential sleep and a balance between the waking and sleeping phases are. Many people are familiar with the feeling of when this balance is disrupted: stress, shift work or unhealthy habits such as watching television late into the night can lead to a lack of sleep. A lack of sleep then means you don’t have the energy to prepare fresh and balanced meals. Instead, you pop a ready-made pizza in the oven or quickly eat a bar between meals to compensate for your tiredness. If you are also trying to lose weight, the increased release of the stress hormone cortisol causes you even more stress – it’s almost impossible. With sufficient sleep, on the other hand, it is easier to lose weight because the metabolism has had enough time to be active: for example, the hormone leptin, which is responsible for the feeling of satiety,

is produced in sufficient quantities. Overall, it is also easier to eat more healthily. You have enough energy to cook more balanced meals, prepare fresh food and eat more regularly. A regular meal pattern ensures that the body is stimulated evenly and supplied with energy and vital nutrients. In addition, regular meals usually go hand in hand with a more structured daily routine, which means that you also go to bed at regular times. Having a regular eating and sleeping pattern brings order to everyday life, which is the basis for well-being. When these rhythms are in harmony, good health is possible.

### *Bibliography*

[1] Pot GK (2018): “Sleep and dietary habits in the urban environment: the role of chrono-nutrition”  
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Little Yarra Steiner School  
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# Playgroup

Looking for a warm, welcoming space for your little one to play and grow? Join our playgroup community! Our playgroup is designed for children who are two turning three in 2026- a gentle, nurturing space to explore, play, and connect.

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### You Need to Be Bored. Here's Why.

Arthur Charles Brooks is an American author and academic. Since 2019, Brooks has served as the Parker Gilbert Montgomery Professor of the Practice of Nonprofit and Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School and at the Harvard Business School as a Professor of Management Practice and Faculty Fellow. He is the author of thirteen books and since 2020, he has written the Atlantic's How to Build a Life column on happiness.



### Cosmic aspects in biodynamic agriculture

Living Farms - Podcast, Eduardo Rincón and Dennis Kloeck, 31.10.25.

Co-section leader Eduardo Rincón invites Dennis Kloeck to discuss the cosmic interconnections in biodynamic agriculture. Dennis Kloeck has been gardening in harmony with the rhythms of nature using the biodynamic method for 40 years. He is co-founder of the Coros Institute, an internationally renowned lecturer, and teacher. He is the author of nine books.

#### Tune in here!

This episode was produced as part of the online course "Earth – Cosmos – Humus", offered by the Section for Agriculture.

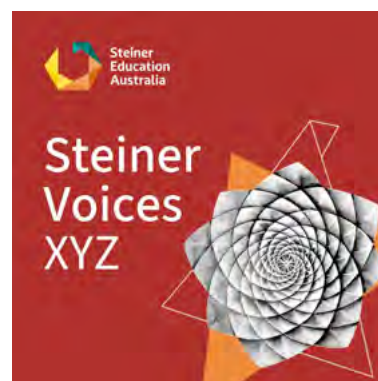
### A Rich World of Learning: The First Year in a Steiner School

Catherine Pilko is an experienced Kindergarten teacher in Sydney and in this podcast



she shares the beautiful first year in a Steiner school that children enjoy in Kindergarten (NSW, ACT), Prep (Qld, Vic, Tas), Reception (SA), Pre-primary (WA) and Transition (NT).

Catherine takes us through a typical day, showing the calm, ordered and productive routines that provide a nourishing start to the child's life at school. It's a rich world of learning from everyday life where English, Maths, and even Science outcomes are embedded in practical activities that build independence and personal competence. Self directed play has a central place and Catherine shares touching and amusing stories of the powerful creativity that children can demonstrate when they are allowed a safe and natural play environment. It's all a profoundly



social and character-building foundation to a child's school journey.

You can find the podcast via this [\*\*link\*\*](#), or on Spotify and Apple podcasts.