

# Firefly Scientists' Garden

Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center



## APRIL IN THE GARDEN

Spring has sprung! This month we're welcoming all the changes of our new season. It's time to splash in puddles, look for rainbows, sniff the newly blooming flowers and listen to the singing birds. Our windowsill seedlings are getting ready to move into the greenhouse and eventually get tucked into our beautiful garden beds!

## LEARNING THIS MONTH

### WHOO's There? The Incredible Owls!

*Scratch scratch.* The sounds of a mouse in the distance...we would have a hard time hearing it—but there's a creature of the night who has fine-tuned ears. From, not one, but two football fields away, an owl can spot a mouse just the size of a cookie. Then, using their soft, silent feathers, they soar toward the mouse (their *prey*), grabbing with their sharp talons. Owls are

able to break bones and eat their prey whole...but yuck! The bones and fur get spat out into *pellets*. These are just the kinds of superpowers we learned about the incredible owl. We read *Incredible Owls* by Justin McCory Martin, and talked all about how owls use their keen senses, much different from you or I. This spring, owls are raising their baby *owlets* to become super sneaky adults. Then, we got to make our own owl paintings using our very own handprints! It may have gotten a little messy, but we used our owl ears to listen carefully and follow directions—and we had a great time!



### Fossil Lab

Millions of years ago, our Earth looked very different from the world we see today. Roaming the land and sea were creatures completely different from the bunny or chipmunk in your backyard. We know and love them: *dinosaurs*. But how do we know that dinosaurs existed? How do we know what they looked like? What

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other animals lived back then? All of these questions can be answered with the help of the remains they leave behind, *fossils*.

Creatures preserved in rock since the start of life on Earth, fossils can tell us who lived when. Fossils tell a story. To learn all about it, we read *Dinosaurs* by Jill McDonald, and got to see all kinds of prehistoric creatures. Then, we got to look at real fossils (thanks to Professor Sally Warner at Brandeis). We saw gastropods, brachiopods, REAL dinosaur bones, and even coprolite—fossilized dino poop! We had a blast from the past getting to hold fossils millions of years from the past. Then, we got to make our own fossils of the present! We used shells from the Cape and peach pits from the garden and



imprinted them into clay. Maybe paleontologists will find them one day...and get to learn all about us!

## Earth Day/Garden Kindness

April 22nd was a very special day in the garden. It was Earth Day! Although everyday is Earth Day here in the Lemberg Garden, it's nice to have another occasion to celebrate our planet and brainstorm ways that our actions can have a positive influence on the environment. This week was also very special because we got to have all of our garden lessons outside again! We read *The Curious Garden* by Peter Brown, a story of a little boy who makes it his mission to turn his city green. His actions inspire all of the townspeople to help make the new city gardens flourish. We too have a bustling city-like environment surrounding us. But here at the heart of Lemberg, we are lucky enough to have a beautiful garden that we can make thrive. Turning our environmental activist brains on, we came up with ways that our classrooms can take care of the garden—and why being stewardly is so important.





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## Planting Seeds

Our greenhouse is up and running! With the help of our Lemberg gardeners, we have so far begun sowing pumpkins, sugar peas, sunflowers, watermelon, carrots, eggplants, kale, and of course...

there are always some yummy garlic chives to munch on while we wait for our crops to grow!



We are so grateful for the continued support and love from our community here at Lemberg!



## April Family Garden Day

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our April Family Garden Day! With the help of Lembergs families and friends we were able to build two pea forts, re-install all of the hoses, plant garlic cloves, weed the garden beds, and water all of the plants that are just starting to establish their roots in our garden. It was a hot day, so as we watered the plants we needed to keep ourselves hydrated with lots of juice breaks! The mourning dove who made her nest in the gazebo even brought out her new baby chick to chirp "hello!" to us as we worked.



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## Maddie Presented Her Research at the Brandeis University URCC!

Maddie (Madeleine Reck) had the honor of presenting her environmental education research at the Brandeis Undergraduate Research and Creative Collaborations Symposium on May 1st! In her 15 minute oral presentation titled *"Green Minds for a Bright Future; How Preschoolers Embrace Stewardship and Perceive their Relationship with the Environment,"* Maddie revealed what she has discovered through her work at Lemberg about the power of environmental education and how a teacher's stewardly behaviors can positively impact a child's empathy and motivation to be sustainable. Maddie is beyond grateful for all of the Lemberg teachers and faculty who came to cheer her on and who continue to guide her learning!



## Want to Learn More?

We learned about all sorts of exciting things this month! If you want to continue learning and getting involved, **check out these sources below!**

- Learn how to find fossils at *Paleopalooza, Drexel U Academy of Natural Sciences* [HERE](#)
- Rocks can tell us lots about early plants and animals...but learn how they've even given us evidence for early *humans* [HERE](#)  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-02597-1>
- Check out this Climate Change Guide for kids (and everyone) [HERE](#)  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/04/18/climate/climate-change-future-kids.html>

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