

More diplomas were awarded.

Have a look at the realisations in Finland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands

The allotment association “Kupittaaan ryhmäpuutarhayhdistys”, in Turku (FI) received the diploma for social activities

This allotment site with a unique vegetation, a built heritage of several decades and a particularly active community is, despite all this, threatened to disappear.

Cooperation partnership in the 'Multaa ja mukuloita' –project

The Kupittaa Allotment Garden Association is the cooperation partner in the project 'Multaa ja mukuloita'. The Finnish name of the project has a dual meaning: 'multaa' = soil and 'mukuloita' = **both** tubers **and** kids ('ja' = and). The project started in June 2019 and continues until summer 2021. The owner of the project is the association Sateenkaari Koto ry. and it has been funded by the Finnish National Agency for Education.

The project has created a scientific, mathematical and technological learning environment in the Kupittaa allotment garden. Within the project the principles of child-oriented phenomenon learning are used to inspire the children (aged 1-6 years) to explore the life of the urban nature. The activity promotes broad-based learning as part of the children's overall well-being. The aim is to support the principles of a sustainable lifestyle by strengthening the relationship between nature, circular economy, knowledge and appreciation of nature and the origins of food. The project creates meaningful new local networks to share cultural knowledge, promote children's social skills, exchange diverse knowledge and prevent exclusion of older people and immigrants.

Kupittaaan Ryhmäpuutarhayhdistys ry.

Kupittaa allotment garden is the oldest in Turku – founded in 1934. The allotment garden was set up for the recreation and well-being of the city's working population and for the security of food supply for families. Although the primary function of the plots is no longer to feed the gardeners, there are still about 300 apple trees that were planted in the area in the early days. In addition, on the plots there grow a large number of old ornamental and useful plants, the value of which is immeasurable from the point of view of plant genetics.

Sateenkaari Koto ry.

Sateenkaari Koto ry. is a non-profit association. The association owns the company Sateenkaari Koto Oy, which provides early childhood education and home care for families with children. In addition, the association's activities also include Educational Homes supporting social integration.

Background of the project

The cooperation between Kupittaa allotment garden and the association Sateenkaari Koto ry. began with apples. The children picked up surplus apples in the garden and baked pies.

That aroused a mutual enthusiasm for the opportunities offered by the allotment garden for children.

Implementation

During the summer of 2019, children from six different Sateenkaari Koto's kindergartens frequently visited Kupittaa allotment garden. Every day one kindergarten group spent a full day in the garden – eating outside and relaxing in the hanging swings under the apple trees. The children diligently took care of the plot assigned to them.

The life in the garden is monitored throughout the project throughout the year. During the first summer the children worked diligently on their own rented garden plot. They studied garden phenomena and organisms, played and brainstormed their own research projects creatively using the allotment garden.

The cooperation between Sateenkari Koto and the Kupittaa Alloment Garden Association creates new innovative interactions between generations. Daily encounters between the children and gardeners, working together and learning, and joint events create meaningful moments for both parties.





The section “Amis de la Fleur Belvaux” received the diploma for innovative projects

This association has created a community garden called “Matgesfeld” in Belvaux

Characteristics:

a unique concept of sustainable gardening and horticulture,
dry toilets,
a garden patch with a robot,
6 gardening plots for school children,
an aviary and
an apiary

Description:

Since the 2017 gardening season, the „Amis de la fleur Belvaux“ have been able to make garden plots available to their members following a new concept for Luxembourg.

In opposition to traditional allotment gardens, the 28 square garden plots (7x7 metres) are only used for cultivation. For the common use and relaxation, you find a surrounding green space with a picnic bench, a sunbathing bench, a barbecue area and, new for this garden season, a greenhouse with automatic irrigation. The background of this concept is that all elements in the garden fulfil a functional and ecological purpose. Thus, the two tool sheds have extensively green roof areas.

Solar cells on both roofs supply electricity for the lighting in the shed. The barrier-free public dry toilet also fulfils its ecological functioning by saving water.

Another innovative element is the garden robot. Here, the focus is less on bed preparation, than on programming. If everything is set, the robot can sow, water, pick weeds and loosen the soil independently. The aim is to demonstrate on a small scale that horticulture can be innovative and “high-tech”.

As 6 plots are reserved for school structures, the garden also takes on an educational role.

The multi-nationality of the tenants additionally makes the garden an intercultural place. From young families, singles, elderly single people to circles of friends; all household forms and age structures are present.





“De Doordouwers” in Utrecht (NL) received the diploma for ecological gardening

Natural gardening

The allotment association De Doordouwers (the Sustainers) started on the site of the current garden park in 2006. In 2013, a group of members enthusiastically started with the project Quality Mark Natural Gardening. In 2015 the association was awarded with a Quality Mark Shield which contained a ladybug (symbol of natural gardening) with 3 dots. In 2019 the fourth dot (highest possible) was added.

Various facilities for nature development have been realised at the garden park. For animals, for example: dry stone walls, branch fencing, heaps for grass snakes, bird groves, apiaries, insect hotels, hedgehog houses, a kingfisher wall, all kinds of bird nest boxes, like a wood owl box. For plants, for example: amongst others flower meadows, constructed riparian zones, and a flower bulb field.

Since a few years the association has been managing the paths and ditches in an ecological way.

Organisation and Communication

In addition to a Facebook group, the association also has a newsletter. In this, attention is given to, for example, information about composting, reuse of material and alternatives to pesticides. Photographs are also published of the gardens of members with special flora and fauna. A topic about natural gardening is regularly discussed at member meetings.

Various activities have been organised for members, from a nature treasure hunt for children to building hedgehog houses, from a tour at the beekeeper to pruning fruit trees.

Gardeners getting started

The association has 115 members. Among other things, members are involved in the Natural Gardening Project by letting them help with the construction and management of natural facilities. Information is also given at that time. In the Facebook group photos, experiences and tips are exchanged. Pesticides are not used. A few dozen gardeners also make room for nature in their own garden. The individual gardens are reviewed annually and, if necessary, members receive tips or an explanation about maintenance or planting.

Project garden for women

There is one garden in use to give (single, non-Western) women who live in the neighbourhood the opportunity to gardening. Under the guidance of members, they can learn here how to work in a vegetable garden in the Netherlands. This assistance takes 2 years. If all goes well the women can get their own garden if they like. This participation project creates more contacts between other cultures within the association. It also has the advantage that the children of the women in question also spend more time outside, by helping in the garden.





Tuinpark Onderlingen (OTV) in Leiden (NL) received the diploma for ecological gardening.

The natural garden park

In November 2019, the allotment association OTV in Leiden was awarded the National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening. The ladybug (symbol of natural gardening) on the Quality Mark Shield received 4 dots. This is the highest possible. In the garden park of OTV there are many natural elements in the common green space. At the entrance there is an insect hotel made of wicker and there are frames used to dry the cut grass. Then one walks past the picking garden where flowers and vegetables are grown, which can be purchased by members and non-members. Last year, part of the income from the vegetables was donated to the food bank. The bird grove is located next to the picking garden. There are native trees and shrubs with food and shelter for birds.

In the garden at the clubhouse there are, among other things, a Zeeland (natural) hedge and beehives. A number of hedgehog houses can be found. There is also a garden with plants that are attractive for bees and butterflies, a pond and a large insect hotel that was built during a workshop with volunteers.

A garden with lots of shade plants and stinzen plants was created and a dry stone wall was built. There are so called “bee camp sites”, hedgehog houses, piles of wood and branches, roof tiles around the pond, different nest boxes and space for different animals.

Organisation, communication

The natural gardening committee deals with the redesign and maintenance of common green spaces and provides information about natural gardening to the gardeners by organising activities and writing articles for the newsletter. The committee organises several workshops and other activities throughout the year to provide gardeners with information about natural gardening.

Members are kept informed of the progress of all the projects via a newsletter and the website. In addition, the park shop committee regularly issues its own flyers in which natural gardening is promoted. The garden shop sells and promotes things such as organic cultivation and garden soil, as well as special and mostly native plants and shrubs.

Specials

The technical committee helps with the preparation and/or making of various architectural artworks with added value for insects and other animals. A “walking garden tour” was held to ensure that the members inspire each other.





A detailed description will follow in the next Hyphens.