

Margaret Peace is well known to many Forest and Bird members as an executive councillor and a lifelong conservation advocate. Her Blenheim home is a haven for many native and introduced birds, as a group of young children discovered last spring. After the visit the children related their impressions to their teacher who transcribed them.

What the Children Saw in Mrs Peace's Garden

On Wednesday we walked to Pollard Park to see the ducks and then went on to the Taylor River. We strolled along the bank to the end of Monro St. where we were picked up and driven back to school.

On Thursday we went to Mrs Peace's property at Tuamarina. She loves birds and has made a beautiful garden with plenty of food and shelter for them.

Ducklings Judith

We saw some little ducklings on the river. There were seven of them. Four of them went away and thought their mum was with them. Mum went with the others the other way.

Swallows Lance

Yesterday we all went for a walk to look for birds. We sat quietly by the bridge and watched some swallows flying behind us near the power lines.

Five-year-old Jacob's delighted reaction: "I saw blue eggs in the nest!"

Thrush Matthew

I saw a bird's nest in the tree. It was round and made of dead grass with mud inside. It had four eggs. They were blue with black spots.

Bantam Hen Kristen

At Mrs Peace's I saw a little brown hen sitting on a nest made of dead grass. I could see four white eggs. We heard the hen squawking so we looked again and there were five eggs.

Goldfinch Bronwyn

On the grass at Mrs Peace's I saw a goldfinch. It was brown with some black, white and yellow feathers. Its head was red, white and black.

The Garden Guru with young disciples, explaining how birds make nests.

Baby thrush Sarah

When I climbed up the bank I saw a thrush's nest in the tree with fluffy babies in it. One of them had an orange beak and opened its mouth up. Its mum was out getting some worms.

Birds' Nests Sara

Mrs Peace had a lovely garden full of big trees. When we got there, she showed us some old nests, she had cut the branches with the nests still in them so that we could see them easily. There was a thrush's nest - big with rotten wood inside, a goldfinch nest - small and tidy made of moss, leaves, grass, roots and lined with horse hair and wool, a fantail's nest - small and round, made of moss and straw - hanging down in a tail at the bottom and a silvereye's nest made of grass and leaves and very thin so that you could see the eggs in the bottom.

Pigeons visit the garden all winter until October when they fly to a remnant of native bush about 15 km away for the nesting season.