



BLUE THUNDERBIRD LAND-BASED TEACHINGS LEARNING CENTRE

Spring 2021

Newsletter



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Tragopodon dubius
Western Goat's Beard

WELCOME TEACHER KAHS!

This spring we had the absolute pleasure of welcoming Kat Derbecker permanently to the team here at Aki! Kat is a mixed-Indigenous Two-Spirit educator known to their students as Teacher Kahs, short for Kahsennisak Dibiki-Giizis Ikwe (looking for a name, full moon woman). They have a wide range of experiences facilitating community learning programs in the non-profit sector and have most recently worked as a teacher at Victory School. They are looking forward to meeting more friendly faces in the months to come!

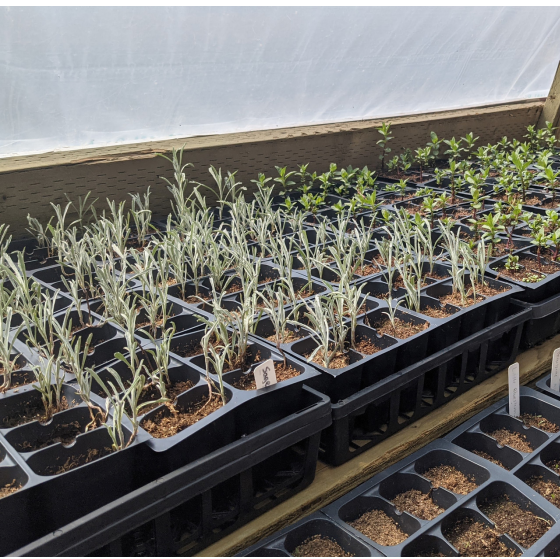
Teacher Kahs in Swamp Monster form.



SCHOOL VISITS

Though the school year was interrupted several times, the Aki Centre was busy! The total number of student visits was 1600 - nearly 600 more than the previous school year!

Cancellations allowed other unexpected learning opportunities to take place! Steve Carson's class at Garden City was able to take advantage of the openings to attend the Aki Centre after spending time here in winter. They planted potatoes and onions, helped shovel compost, and propagated sage, sweetgrass and mint!



Propagated Sage and Mint

SCHOOL PLANT DISTRIBUTION

With the help of our fabulous MET school intern - Rory Ramos (and our greenhouse) we planted and grew hundreds of vegetable seedlings and 2,000 Indigenous prairie plants. Some of these plants were distributed to schools while the remaining plants were used in our gardens and to enhance our prairie habitats on site.



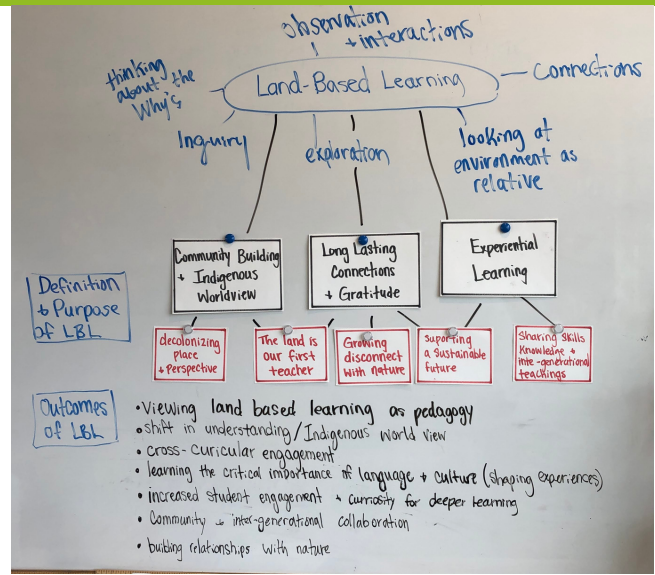
COMPOST

Classes who were able to come tried out our new Compost Trommel. It was very popular among students and teachers doing the "Simple Machines" unit. The trommel sifts the finished compost so that schools receive that soft fine goodness without sticks, rocks, or the occasional plastic bottle.

We expect to have more compost to distribute to schools this fall thanks to these excellent workers!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

As interest in Land-Based learning started to build this year in the division, more schools came to us for Professional Development days. While we had hoped to facilitate them in-person at the Aki Centre, we did hybrid and virtual sessions with OV Jewitt and RF Morrison, with others rescheduled for September. **Starting September 7, 2021 attendance at a PD day facilitated at/by the Aki Centre will be required before teachers are able to book trips to Aki.**



PLANT AND ANIMAL DIVERSITY

This spring the land continued to delight us with its surprises of resilience and determination. We found Indigenous plants thriving which we did not plant, or had given up on, many baby birds, jackrabbits, and toads! Seeing these Indigenous plants and animals take root again in this place reminds us that we are working alongside nature to restore what was lost.



One of HUNDREDS of baby toads!



Blue-eyed grass growing beside the bus parking lot! Nature finding its way.

Special Thanks to:



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