



national science week 2017

Owen Williams

How does my garden grow?

PhD student, Plant Genetics
School of Biological Sciences, University of Tasmania

Have you ever wondered how a plant knows when to grow? Or a flower knows when to open? Well my PhD aims to answer some of these questions. I am currently working with garden peas, and looking at the genes that help plants make these decisions.

I was born and raised in Britain, where I undertook a Bachelor of Science at Aberystwyth University in Wales. During my degree I became interested in genetics and pretty little flowers. This led me to undertake my Masters in plant genetics, where I investigated speciation (identifying different species) of plants according to flowering habits and their genetics.



In 2010, I escaped the rain and came 'down under', to sunny Australia. I lived and worked in Cairns as a scientist looking at pests and pathogens in sugar cane. Not long after this I travelled to the outback of Western Australia to work as an environmental scientist in a gold mine.

From here I made my move all the way down here to Tasmania, to start my PhD. I hope that the work I am doing here can further the plant breeding industry by improving crop yields.

For further information: www.utas.edu.au/plant-science