

APRIL/MAY NEWSLETTER
The Bathurst Gardeners' Club Inc.



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PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS



Autumn at last! My favourite season of the year; as the heat of summer gives way to cooler days and nights, this is the ideal time to mulch, fertilise lawns, prune trees, plant bulbs, build garden beds plant fruit trees and make compost. The Garden Clubs of Australia has a number of useful articles: google the GCA website, click on Resources and then Readings. Also, check out the Sustainable Gardening Australia website for lots of useful information. As Bathurst moves to extreme water restrictions (buckets only), mulching your garden, using grey water and directing water to plant roots becomes even more important.

Despite the very trying summer conditions, but thanks to our very civic-minded and generous garden owners, the Spring Spectacular is on track for 2020 with some outstanding heritage properties, as well as plans for a giant Plant Fair and Expo., and a luncheon which combines the Spring Spectacular launch, the Club's 30th birthday and a zone friendship day with GCA Ambassador, National Gardening Week Coordinator and immediate GCA Past President, George Hoad as guest speaker. We will need garden sitters, bus guides and gatekeepers. Please contact me if you are available on 24th / 25th October. We will also need lots of plants for our Expo. plant stall, so start propagating!

At present, planning for the Spring Spectacular is going ahead, and we hope that the Covid19 pandemic will have been controlled by October, but we will also be reviewing this in June.

On a sadder note, because of the concern arising from the pandemic and in the interests of the welfare of members, the Management Committee has taken the difficult decision to cancel the April and May Gardeners' Club meetings. We are sure that you will understand given the (almost daily) developments but we will review the situation towards the end of May and advise you accordingly. 'Friendship through gardens'

Chris.

**SNEAK PEEK OF
WHAT'S INSIDE:**

MEMBERSHIP
MAYFIELD

GARDENS: WHAT'S ON?
GARDENING BY THE
MONTH APRIL/MAY
STOP THE SPREAD

FIONA OGILVIE'S
COLUMN

TRIP REPORT

DROUGHT TOLERANT
PLANTS

April 5th and May 3rd Meetings

Due to the developing Covid 19 virus and in the interests of members health and welfare the committee have made the decision to cancel these two meetings. The situation will be reassessed in May. You will be informed of any future developments in the next newsletter or keep an eye on the announcement section at the bottom of each page of the website.

Mayfield Gardens: What's On????

GLAMPING—spend a night in luxurious tents during what is probably the most spectacular time of the year. Rates include dinner for 2, garden entry and accommodation in a luxurious tent. Additional options include:

PRIVATE GARDEN TOURS: Be guided around Mayfield Garden by an experienced horticulturalist. Visit the Hawkins Family Chapel.

FANCY A CHAMPAGNE SUNSET PICNIC?

Collect your Champagne and picnic basket from the Café late afternoon and stroll into the garden for your own private sunset picnic. They provide glasses, and picnic rugs!!

BREAKFAST PICNIC PACK: At 7.30am they will deliver a breakfast picnic basket and include champagne. Cost additional.

Please contact Mayfield Gardens for further information 6336 3131.



MEMBERSHIP:

Membership fees are due by 31st March 2020, if you have not paid your membership by this date, you will NOT continue to receive Newsletters, attend meetings and have the opportunity to go on our wonderful trips. If you are not sure if your membership is current, please contact Susie Perrott on 0431 294 446 and she will look at your membership status. Membership payments can be sent by cheque to PO Box 1049, Bathurst 2795 or paid by direct deposit to BSB 637 000 ACCOUNT NUMBER - 713853828 (Greater Building Society). Annual membership is \$15 per member or \$20 if joining as a new member (includes \$5 joining fee).

REMINDER CHILDREN AT MEETINGS

Following consultation with the NSW Office of Children's Guardian in 2019 and a subsequent determination by the Management Committee of the Bathurst Gardeners' Club, it has been decided that children under 18 years of age will not be allowed to attend meetings of the Bathurst Gardeners' Club or participate in club outings.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.



GARDENING BY THE MONTH

APRIL

Vegetables

Continue to apply liquid fertiliser to the autumn and winter crops until the frosts.

Plant broad beans and peas now. Probably best to leave snow peas until later. Plant spinach and silver beet. Sow onion seeds in punnets.

Renew strawberry plants.

Ornamentals

Trim evergreen shrubs such as pittosporum, euonymus and conifers.

Good time to move or plant camellias, rhododendron and azaleas. Observe in the nursery the colouring of autumn leaves so you can make an informed choice of new plants.

Remove summer and autumn annuals including residue from vegetable area. Add clean material to the compost heap.

Plant spring annuals including sweet peas.

Complete planting of spring bulbs.

Continue removing old foliage from hellebores and aquilegias.

Tie up chrysanthemums.

Watering

Adjust watering systems to use less water in the cooler months



MAY

Vegetables

Check the brassicas ie. Cabbage etc. for cabbage white butterfly.

Plant seed of late maturing onions.

Prepare area for onion planting in the middle of June. Remember for onions "Plant on the shortest day and harvest on the longest".

Ornamentals

Do not prune any plants now.

Good month for repotting shrubs.

Do not buy packaged roses where new growth has commenced.

Disbud japonica camellias.

Prepare well drained area or pots for planting of summer flowering bulbs eg. liliium, hippeastrum, sprekelia and nerines.

Give spring flowering annuals eg.

Pansies half strength fertilizer.

Compost

Collect autumn leaves as they fall and mix with grass clippings in compost heap.

STOP THE SPREAD

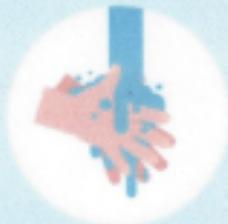
Wash your hands thoroughly



Use soap and water



Rub soap all over your hands and wrist for at least 20 seconds



Rinse your hands under running water



Dry hands with paper towel or dryer

Cover your cough and sneeze



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue



Dispose of your used tissue



If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, **NOT YOUR HANDS**



Wash your hands with soap and dry thoroughly with a disposable paper towel or hand dryer



WITH ALL THE CANCELLATIONS AND POSTPONEMENTS OF EVENTS IT IS A GREAT TIME TO DEVOTE THAT EXTRA TIME TO YOUR GARDEN. REMEMBER TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE. - PHONE, MESSAGE OR SKYPE.

FIONA'S TIPS FOR CREATING A GARDEN THAT WILL STAND UP TO THE DRY WEATHER

Autumn is the best time for planting in a dry garden. This is a case of doing what I say rather than what I do as – full disclosure – I regularly fall for a tempting nursery display in October and tell myself just this once. It rarely works. I add humus and manure, I mulch, I sprinkle soil wetter like birdseed, I water, but by January my purchases are shrivelled twigs. Never again. Until next spring, sigh.

In autumn you can plant with a clear conscience and your plants should happily outlast even a summer like the one we've just had. Anything planted from March to mid-April has time to settle and make new roots before the first frost. By spring your plants will be established and will race away quickly, and better still, will need far less water to keep them going through next summer. And if you choose the right plants (Terry Fatseas' list from Feb's meeting would make an excellent start) they may not need extra water at all.

Get rid of perennial weeds before embarking on a planting session, either by digging or spraying. Never assume they'll quietly do you a favour and die, they won't.

Next, collect your plants and put them in a wheelbarrow. Add a spade, a hand weeding fork (there's sure to be a few little terrors still lurking), a bucket (most important), an ice cream container of pelleted manure or blood and bone and a packet of soil wetting granules. You'll also need compost or some other form of humus to help minimise transplant shock, and whatever mulch you can lay your hands on.

Drought
hardy Cistus
Silver Pink



A vital thing when planting is to dig a sufficiently deep and wide hole. Drop your plant container into it as you dig to make sure, plants hate having squashed roots.

Fill your bucket with water, drop the plant into it, pot and all, and wait for the oxygen bubbles to disappear. De-tangle the roots if necessary and spread out in their new home before covering with soil and compost, then tread in firmly.

Add a small handful of blood and bone or manure pellets and one of water granules. Then give everything another soak.

Lastly, irrigation. I love Peter Varman's suggestions of sinking a pot near a plant and filling it with water twice weekly, and when you're planting, the pot is ready to hand. Winner!

Fiona Ogilvie

Peter Varman's garden with one of his sunken pots.



Bill Grattan's Nursery "The Bay Tree" on Bell Road after the bushfires.

TRIP UPDATE

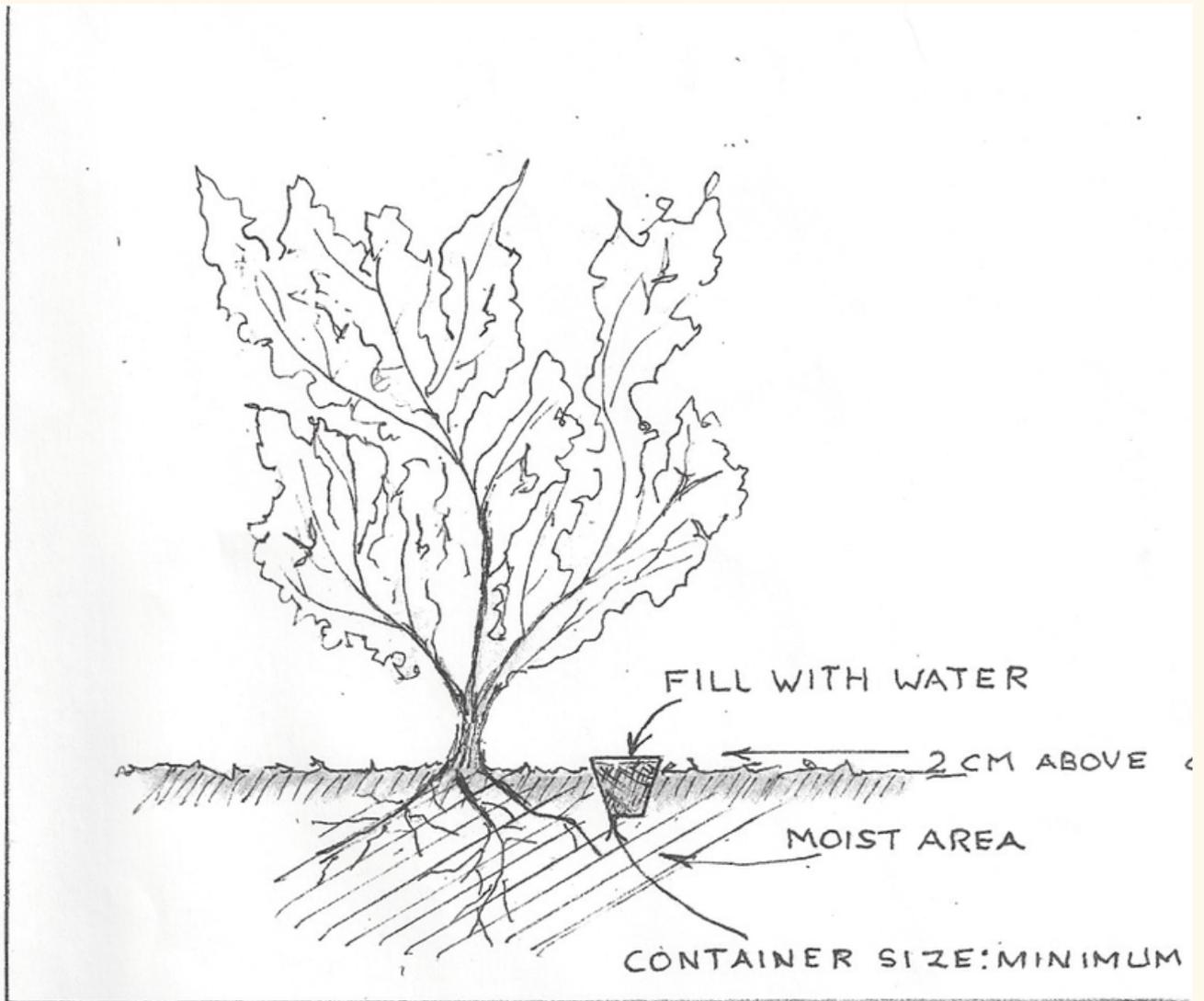
Unfortunately due to the Covid 19 virus our trip to Singapore at the end of May and early June is not going ahead. There are 18 very disappointed people! These things are beyond our control.

Sarah was organising a one day trip in May. This will not happen at this time. I will try to organise a one day trip in Spring depending on the situation later in the year..

At this point in time our trip to Castlemaine & District Festival of Gardens is still on. I will be in touch with those participants shortly.

KEEP POSITIVE AND GARDENING. JUDY (TRIP ORGANISER)

Peter Varman's idea for using a pot near newly planted plants. Thanks Peter!



OTHER HELPFUL HINTS.

USE SOIL WETTING AGENTS; PREVENT SOIL BECOMING WATER REPELLENT.

USE SEAWEED EXTRACT; TO STIMULATE PLANTS AND MAKE THEM MORE RESILIENT.

MULCH GARDEN; PREVENT MOISTURE LOSS.

These plants are surviving in parts of my garden, despite having received no watering, except for rain, for many months, even years, in some cases. Most are growing on sloping, poor soil. While most could not be described as flourishing, they are all still living, although another month of hot dry weather will probably finish them off. They are not sensational plants, in general, but may be useful options for those wanting to replant with hardier choices. It also should be noted that they are well established. New plantings would need to be nurtured for some time, given the current climate.

Trees

Chinese Elm , Chinese Pistachio, Casuarina cunninghamiana, Crabapple, Quince , Arizona Cypress (seed grown, so varying forms)

Liquidambar (just hanging on), Tasmanian Blue Gum, Mallee, White Box

Shrubs and Smaller

Bracelet Honey Myrtle melaleuca armillaris, Acacia fimbriata, Rosemary "Blue Lagoon", Lilac, Artemisia "Powis Castle", Cotinus coggyria,, Berberis thunbergii atropurpurea

Rock Rose "Brilliantcy" cistus x purpurascens (starting to look dodgy)

Spanish Lavender lavandula stoechas (e.g "Avonview), Russian Sage (formerly perovskia, now salvia yangii)

Gaura lindheimeri, New Zealand Flax phormium tenax (hanging on), Catmint (taller growing - "Six Hills Giant"?)

Sedum (e.g. "Autumn Joy"), Agapanthus, Centranthus (Valerian)

Iris (especially older 'heirloom' varieties)

Wild iris, Peacock Iris, Iris Bicolor dietes iridoides

Bog Sage salvia uliginosa , Lamb's Ear stachys byzantine (Only in some places - dead elsewhere)

