

Community Garden 3231 Newsletter

JANUARY 2018

Growing food, friendships & community



Welcome to 2018

2018 is going to be a great year. The garden is looking fabulous – the pumpkins are meeting the archway challenge, corn is speeding upwards, tomatoes are producing fruit and the scarlet runner beans are running all over the place.

The espaliered fruit trees are thriving and the grapes are looking fantastic – all-in-all everything is growing. Of course this has been happening because of the great efforts of many under the leadership of the garden team.

There are lots of ways you can contribute to the garden – collecting green waste from local businesses, adding your name to the watering roster or helping in the recycle shop. We need helpers with the Art in the Garden and there are always working bees.

I hope you grow everything you want in 2018!
See you in the garden.

GRETEL

UPCOMING EVENTS

BBQ in The Garden
Friday 5 January

WORKING BEE
Saturday 6 January

WORKING BEE
Saturday 14 January

Pizza OR BBQ in The Garden
Friday 19 January

Art in the Garden
Saturday 27 January (see attached flyer)

Recycle Shop
REVISED DATE: Saturday 10 February

Eco Dyeing Workshop
Dates TBC - Over 2 days in February.

Start collecting fabrics or garments in natural fibres only – they must be white or pastel colours – cotton, silk, acetate, wool. Watch out for further information to be sent in a separate email.

Christmas at the Garden



Our end of year celebrations in the Garden featured talented Garden members Graham, Keith and Gabriel leading the Christmas carols.



December Working Bee



What's growing in the Garden



Sustainability

Sustainability is a term we often hear – so what does it mean? Here's what Sustainability Victoria says:

“Living sustainably is about choices and behaviours, both big and small, that enhance our lives, care for our environment and encourage us to live within our means. A sustainable community and world is one which supports itself and its surroundings. It is the practice of reducing our impact on the earth's natural resources, reducing our carbon footprint and living healthier lives.”

Last month I suggested that garden members may like to make a list of sustainable activities and focus on one each month in 2018. My list is on our website <http://aireyscommunitygarden.weebly.com/green-living.html> and each month I'm going to research and share ideas and learn something new.

January is Recycling

I chose recycling this month as I wanted to start the year on a positive note and it's also often a good time for a cleanout. I wanted to make sure that everything I'm "throwing out" goes to the right place.

This month, if there is something I'm not sure about how to dispose of, then I'm going to find out. I'm not just going to guess which bin it should go in – instead I'm going to ensure it's disposed of in the correct way so I'm not contaminating the recycling system.

First I started by looking on the Surf Coast Shire's website for the list of what goes in our yellow recycle bins. Secondly, I found that <http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au> is the place to find the answers to many of our recycling questions. For example, I'm never sure about plastic bottle tops, so I checked this website and here's what it says:

“Most councils will ask you to remove the lids from your plastic bottles before you place them in your recycling container, for the following reasons:

- *Plastic bottles must have lids off and be empty because the weight of a half full bottle makes it more difficult for the recyclers automated systems to recognise it as a particular recyclable item.*
- *Plastic bottles must have lids off and be empty to prevent the liquid spilling and ruining other recyclable products or damaging the equipment at the recycling centre.*
- *The plastic lid is a different type of plastic from the bottle.*
- *Plastic lids are too small for recyclers to recover with current technology.”*

So now I know - no more plastic bottle tops in the recycle bin!



Thirdly, do you use the REDcycle system? It's a program set up to keep plastic bags and packaging out of landfill. If it's soft plastic and CAN be scrunched into a ball, it can go into a REDcycle bin. I have set up a bin in the garden where you can put all your scrunchable plastic. This includes things we use in the garden such as the sugar cane mulch bags and manure bags (we'll wash these first). Every so often I'll arrange for

it all to be taken to a drop-off bin. Our nearest one is at Coles in Torquay.

Finally, my friends Kate and Bin are holding their **Annual Garage Sale** at 21 Berthon Street, Aireys Inlet on Saturday 27 January. All money raised will be donated to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. If you are doing any decluttering and have garage sale items then you might want to donate them to this cause. Contact Kate on mobile 0407 048 421 for drop-off details.

Beneficial Bacteria

When I dug up my broad beans I was delighted to see how many little white nodules there were on the roots. These are caused by *Rhizobium* bacteria, commonly found in soil. There are many different species of *Rhizobia* but they all fix nitrogen from the atmosphere and make it available for legumes. After harvest, the plants leave soil that is richer in nitrogen. So now we are planting beans in the corn bed as corn is nitrogen hungry. The corn provides support for the climbing beans.



Another garden friend is *Bacillus thuringiensis*. These bacteria have a crystal (the pointy shape pictured) that is toxic to a number of species of caterpillar including that of the cabbage moth. Yates sell a water soluble powder which you can spray on brassica leaves when you see little

caterpillars. The spray washes off so it is best to apply to the underside of leaves. It is also effective against the tomato caterpillar. The crystal is only toxic for things with alkaline stomachs and has no effect on birds, mammals or other animals.

Connecting Communities

Have a look at the link below about connecting communities:

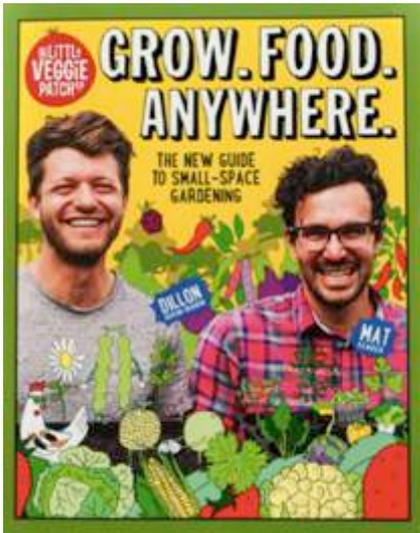
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/dec/24/connecting-communities-the-gardens-that-offer-more-than-plants-and-soil>

A Book Review

Grow Food Anywhere: The New Guide to Small-space

Gardening: Dillon Seitchik-Reardon & Mat Pember. 2017 Hardie Grant Books

I was given this book for Christmas by a friend of Dillon's and was a bit sceptical at first – but I've found it to be a fantastic book for any gardener, and a particularly good reference for the new veggie gardener.



It is very easy to find what you're after – from soil testing, to compost, from what to grow to information about pests. I like the rating systems for different growing crops – easy to grow, small space suitability, yield value and pleasure.

There is also a time-line that includes water requirements. For pests they offer another rating system – for example the whitefly that is prevalent in the garden now is rated 3/5 for damage, 4/5 for probability and 3/5 for persistence.

I'll leave my copy in the shed for you to look at.

GRETEL

Q. & A.: Ask 'The Gardener'

Send in your gardening questions and we will answer them in the next newsletter. No question is too difficult for 'The Gardener'.

How do you HARVEST rhubarb and are the green stalks edible?



Rhubarb comes in a variety of colours, from green to dark red and various shades in between. We have a few different varieties in the garden, in Bed S (see photos). The green stems are often longer and thicker, but sometimes not as sweet so might need a bit more sugar when cooking.

TO HARVEST: twist one or two stalks from the outside base of each crown. Leave at least 2 stalks on each plant. Remember that the leaves are poisonous, so chop them off and add them to the compost where they are a great compost activator. While you're at it please clean up the dead leaves from around the plants and compost them as well.

How do you HARVEST berries?

We have a range of brambleberries in Bed L, including loganberries and boysenberries. These are ready to harvest when they are big, dark and juicy. When ripe they are a dark purple colour and come away easily from the plants when held lightly between a couple of fingers. They will be soft and deliciously sweet to taste. The best ones are usually hiding under the leaves.

TO HARVEST berries you'll need to wear long sleeves and a glove on one hand to lift up or pull aside the branches so you can look under and into the plants. The ones on the roadside are difficult to access but provide great rewards for those prepared to venture in past the elderberry and under the netting. Raspberries, at the northern end of Bed L near the gate, are a deep pink colour when ripe and



they too slip easily off the stalk into your fingers, leaving the core on the plant.

Note the red and not ripe berry

Volunteers Needed:

Please add your name to the lists on the board at the Shed if you are able to assist with

- Watering
- Compost collection
- Recycle Shed at Anglesea tip

Beyond The Fence:

Great Escape Books – January 8th 2018.

Meet great new people and find out more about ways you can learn about and explore your own Marine Park- Eagle Rock Marine Sanctuary, Aireys Inlet.

<http://www.greatescapebooks.com.au/events/delve-deeper-marine-event-great-escape-books/>

Recipe of the Month:

Matt Moran's Zucchini & Feta Fritters

From The Guardian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/dec/17/matt-morans-zucchini-and-feta-fritters-with-yoghurt-dipping-sauce - img-3>

Yoghurt dipping sauce

150g (½ cup) Greek-style yoghurt
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Finely grated zest and juice of ½ lemon
1 small garlic clove, finely chopped

1. Stir all the ingredients in a bowl to combine. Season to taste.
2. Cover and refrigerate for the flavours to develop while you make the fritters

Zucchini and feta fritters

3 zucchini (courgettes), cut into julienne or coarsely grated
1 small handful coarsely chopped flat-leaf (Italian) parsley leaves
1 small handful coarsely chopped dill
1 small handful coarsely chopped mint leaves
1 spring onion (scallion), thinly sliced diagonally
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon, plus lemon wedges to serve
100g feta cheese, coarsely crumbled
3 eggs, lightly beaten
135g (scant 1 cup) plain (all-purpose) flour
¼ tsp baking powder
Olive oil, for shallow-frying

1. Combine the zucchini, herbs, spring onion, lemon zest and feta in a bowl and season generously.
2. Stir in the eggs, flour and baking powder and season with salt and pepper.
3. Heat about 3cm of olive oil in a deep-sided frying pan over a medium-high heat and check the temperature by adding a little spoonful of the fritter mixture. If the mixture bubbles and rises to the surface, the oil is ready.
4. Add rough tablespoons of the mixture in batches to the oil and fry, turning occasionally, for 2-3 minutes until golden brown (be careful as hot oil may spit).
5. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain well on paper towels. Season to taste and serve hot with the yoghurt dipping sauce. Squeeze over lemon wedges to taste.