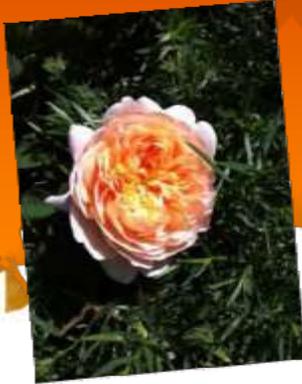


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Community Garden 3231

Growing food, friendships and community



Coordinator's comment

We have a number of new members: Margaret Barkley & Mark Halpern, Tim Davies, Jennifer McIver & Sarah Davies, Maureen Finemore & Michael Carlin all joined recently. It's good having new, enthusiastic members and I hope they enjoy the garden as much as the rest of us.

The Surf Coast Shire has offered CG3231 some funding and we are investigating wicking beds to replace two aging and root infested communal beds. These use a lot less water which is better for sustainability. The training sessions were all very informative and interesting. Thanks Terrence for organizing these.

My tomatoes this year have been disappointing, but the white corn was fantastic and eggplants as good as usual. I made chervil pesto which is delicious on grilled eggplants. The brassica seeds are growing nicely in our germination bed - it's sad to see the end of the summer veggies, but fun anticipating different produce.

See you in the garden

Next working bees

Saturday
5 March

Pick beans, basil, lettuce, capsicums and tomatoes.

Build pea trellises.

Make compost.

Sunday
20 March

Tomato Festival!
Tastings, sharing recipes, boule and more.

Saturday
2 April

To be advised.

Keep the date!

Community Open Day
Sunday 20 March 2016

at

Community Garden 3231

Working Bee 9.30 am

TOMATO FESTIVAL
and BBQ lunch from 12 Noon
PLUS

Tomato tastings
people's choice award,
kids' activities and Easter Egg hunt,
sharing recipes and a game of boule.

KEEP THE DAY FREE

Now this is exciting! Have you seen there is one watermelon growing in Bed F? It belongs to the plant with the speckled leaves.



Ask Kim

This is a new section of our newsletter in which our Garden Team Coordinator, Kim, responds to a garden query from a member.

If you have a plant-related question 'Ask Kim' at: kneubecker@iinet.net.au or let her know at the next working bee.



What is tip pruning and why is it helpful?

Plants are like us in lots of ways. They have veins. They have blood (chlorophyll). They take in and use air and let it out again through pores in their skin. They also manufacture and use hormones in similar ways to us, that is, as regulators.

One group of these hormones known as auxins, are growth regulators and are concentrated in the growing tips of plants. If you remove those growing tips you slow the growth in that particular area and trigger growth in other areas. In this way, by continually removing growing tips, a plant loses its dominant stems and becomes denser, bushier.

This technique can be applied for amenity purposes ie to make a shrub denser (eg hedging) or for food production eg increasing the amount of fruit bearing stems on a fruit tree or a tomato plant.

By removing the tips of branches or stems, you influence the growth habit of a plant without causing it major shock and without having to remove a lot of plant material. It is what foraging animals do to plants in their natural setting.

Garlic 2016

After our sad episode last year with disease in the garlic, the garden team has decided to call a halt on growing this crop in both community and private plots for this season so as to not continue the disease cycle. The spores causing the disease will be active in the soil for some time.

Instead, we will be growing some trial plots on the periphery of the garden where the chance of infection will be least likely. This will be to inform our members about which varieties do best in our district. This will include an assessment of disease resistance.

Please resist the urge to plant any garlic and we will keep you informed of our progress and results.

Kim Neubecker



So what kind of grapes do we have at CG 3231?

Several of us were wondering about what kind of grapes are growing on the pergola, so I took some to a friend of mine who is a vigneron who grows pinot grapes. He tasted and searched his books and concluded that they are most likely the heirloom variety 'Isabella'.

I found out that apparently some growers refer to Isabella as a dual-purpose grape and many 'backyarders' use 'her' for a variety of purposes. She makes an acceptable wine, delightful jam, and is eaten fresh as a table grape. Isabella has the unfortunate habit, however, of ripening progressively. On a single bunch you'll have some fully ripe grapes, some half ripe and some green, so it can be tricky to work out when to harvest.

According to one website I looked up, there are better table varieties of grapes available (such as Sultana and Crimson Seedless) so people primarily use Isabella grapes to make verjuice, which is simply the juice of grapes picked at

'veraison', the stage in the ripening process when grape skins change colour from green to red. At this point the grapes have reached maximum acidity, and for those not familiar with verjuice, mild acidity is the name of the game.

Apparently all you need to do is to take the under-ripe bunches of Isabella grapes and juice them. You can either bottle all of the verjuice or freeze it in ice cube trays for later use.

And I must add that Maggie Beer uses verjuice all the time in her recipes.

Barbara

Signs for herbs

The Garden Team is looking for an interested person or persons who is/are feeling creative, to make some informative signs for the perennial herbs. We envisage the Garden Team would provide the words, the Building Team would assist with the building and the creative person would come up with the design and layout, and coordinate the project ... but happy to discuss further with anyone interested. We can email you a few ideas to get you started.

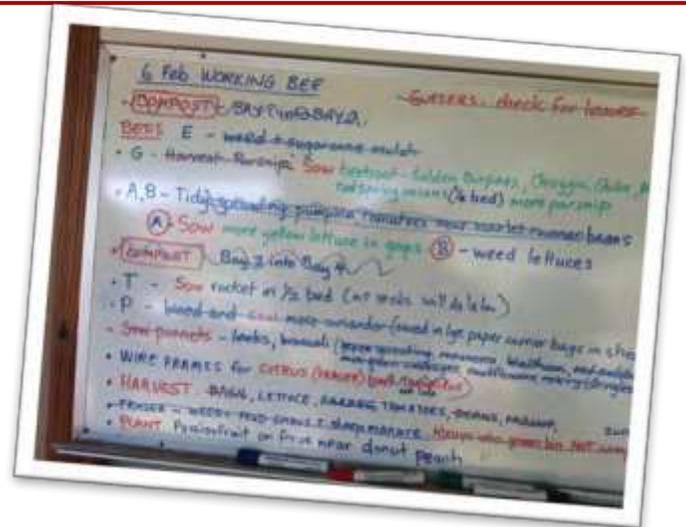
Please contact Angela Berry angelaberry11@gmail.com if this appeals to you!

Working Bees

6 February 2016

What a wonderful way to spend a sunny Saturday morning in Aireys Inlet! Everything that is good for mind, body and soul happens at our working bees. We share the fruits of our labour – the harvest.

- Knowledge about soil, propagation, pest control, watering efficiently, plant rotation
- The physical work of making compost, planting seedlings, weeding, watering, building, digging
- The fun and companionship at morning tea where we discuss any issues or plans relating to the garden.



Of course late summer/autumn is the time of abundance. We are all anxiously awaiting the ripening of tomatoes, but in the meantime the basil and beans have been bountiful, grapes delicious, cucumbers curvaceous and the zucchinis positively zinging!

Gabriel



21 February 2016

It was terrific to see so many people turn up on this sunny day to help harvest beans, tomatoes and peppers, weed the invasive kikuyu grass, thin carrots, save cornflower seed, sow brassica and leek seeds in punnets, turn and layer compost, build trellises for the peas and marvel at the canteloupes ... and then spend time chatting to each other at morning tea.



Watering checklist

A few suggestions for watering when your name comes up on the roster

Firstly, determine what needs watering – here's how to tell.

Spend 5 minutes checking out the garden to see:

- ✓ Is anything wilting or are leaves burnt on the edges? Make a mental note
- ✓ Read what is recommended on the white board – new plants or emerging seedlings will be the most important.
- ✓ Often other members have watered these plots and they may not need doing again. How wet is the soil?
- ✓ Check other established vegetables - is there any sign of wilting?
- ✓ Lastly check the periphery and permanent plantings - are any of these plants yellowing? This can be a sign of dryness. When plants don't get enough water they can't make plant food and can become starved.
- ✓ New seeds and seedlings will only need a little water often. Established vegetables will need you to stand still and water a longer time but less often.
- ✓ Established trees or other peripheral plants may need a sprinkler left on them.

Kim Neubecker

Graham Raby has built the garden a gong!

Using only recycled materials, Graham has built a gong using a wheel hub (is that the name of the round bit? and a tent peg for the striker and mounted it on a plinth.

You will soon get used to the sound of the gong as I am told it will be used to call people to morning tea!

PS The gong will have a trial run this weekend at the working bee this weekend, so feedback welcome.

