



Community Garden 3231

Growing food, friendships & community

February 2022

Diary Dates

Working bees:

Saturday 5 February from 9am

Sunday 20 February from 9am

We are on Instagram and Facebook
communitygarden3231

Check out our new website at:
<https://cg3231.org.au/>

From the President

2022 promises to be a great year for the Aireys Inlet Community Garden. In 2021 we kicked into gear to renew key infrastructure. We now have a smashing 'new-vibe' shed and entry but the work to update and renew will continue in the next 12 months.

The garden itself is looking fabulous thanks to the work of Gay Fuller and a team of avid weeders. The kikuyu has really been a challenge to control and good rains and good soil have created ideal conditions for invasive weeds to take over. The additional weeding efforts over January have made a massive impact. If you are a plot holder please help maintain pathways adjacent to your plots by weeding and mulching. Every little bit helps!

While it's been great to watch some locals succeed at the Australian Open, the AO Tennis vibe has really taken off in the garden this year. Working out how to protect tomato and strawberry crops is always a topic of interest at this time of year. There are many different and innovative approaches evident. As the photos demonstrate, tennis balls have been particularly useful this year.



However, Marg Lacey and Sarah More's more formal structure is something to behold.



Easy, functional and readily assembled arrangements flourish in a multitude of configurations.



Take care and see you in the garden.

Liz

From the Garden Team

Our garden is looking fantastic. However, you can never seem to get everything producing well in the one season. The apricots were fantastic and the donut peaches delicious. The apples are looking promising, but the nectarines are disappointing.

While tomatoes may not be great yet, and eggplants are slow, the ever-reliable zucchini are abundant. The seedlings Keith and Mary gave us are producing lovely pale green fruit along the fence while the others are also trying to take over the garden.

Mario gave us some bean seedlings and these plants are producing pale yellow, delicious beans on the arbour and in Bed A.

Other interesting veggies growing are tromboncini and pepinos also on the arbour and spaghetti squash in bed L. While tromboncini can be picked when about 30cm long, the pepinos need to be dark yellow with purple stripes and spaghetti squash bright yellow before harvesting. Please do NOT pick until a working bee when they can be harvested and shared.

Unfortunately, the kikuyu is also growing well and Gay and her helpers have been battling the paths and Peter is fighting the good fight around the edges with a brush cutter.

We are planning on installing more wicking beds around the fences to try and stop the invaders, but that will have to wait until we've installed the new tanks where beds 26 and 27 were. In the meantime, we will need to continue the battle.

When in the garden, check the board for jobs – watering is essential now. The list is divided by frequency watering is needed – daily, every 2 days weekly etc. Check when a bed was last done, and if you have time water the bed(s) and note the date on the board.

Also feel free to harvest a zucchini or 2 and a variety of beans. There's lots of rocket, kale and chard in Bed M, and ground cherries to nibble on while you work.

If you don't net your tomatoes, there is a danger of King Parrot fatalities – green tomatoes have a toxin that affects parrots. We have had had a number of deaths over the years – the birds wander around looking drunk and then die.

On that cheery note, see you in the garden.

Gretel, on behalf of the Gardening Team

What's growing in the garden?



(Left to right): No birds will be eating the quinces this year. Keep your eyes out for zucchini before they get too big!



(Left to right): Meyer lemon is in bloom, tromboncini will be at the next working bee and pepinos



(Left to right): The new passionfruit vine flower, the first passionfruit on the vine, Janice with her stunning crop of corn

The End of Year Party, December 2021



Photos from the End of Year party (top to bottom, left to right): an outdoor , COVID-safe meal in the garden, Gay receiving her award and Keith receiving his award. Liz summing up 2021 in the garden.

Our end of year party was a great success with many members coming together to celebrate the end of another tough year. Melbourne members joined Aireys, Fairhaven and Moggs members and with a wonderful BBQ cooked to perfection by Paul and Co. along with delicious salads and desserts shared, the evening got off to a great start.

A surprise came with Liz presenting the inaugural Community Garden Awards. First off was Keith who was presented with the Rusty Nail Award for his great work leading a small team of hard workers to reimagine 'the shed' into a clean space with painted walls, a concrete floor, kitchen cupboards and a sink with running water and more. Not to mention the relocated gate, a wired fence for passionfruit to grow and an adjoining shed for furniture.

The second award – the Green Thumb Award - was presented to Gay Fuller for her indomitable enthusiasm with every task she takes on. Whether it be introducing new members to the Garden and how it all works, tackling the kikuyu, spreading cardboard and mulch to create attractive paths or sharing her tomato seedlings for a great cause, Gay is there.

Finally, whilst not present on the night, Sarah More received the 'Best in Garden' Award for creating the beautiful new signs that adorn the Garden entrance.

Do you have too many zucchinis ?

Zucchini (courgette), pea and basil soup: Recipe by Yottam Ottolenghi, available via The Guardian: <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/jul/08/fennel-salad-recipe-tomato-bread-asparagus-leek-grilled-tomato-watermelon-pea-soup-yotam-ottolenghi>

The way to keep a green soup green is not to overcook it. Once you've added the peas and basil to this, take it off the heat and blitz it straight away. This is gorgeously light, but you can make it more hearty by using chicken stock and topping with fried pancetta. Serves eight.

75ml olive oil, plus extra to serve
1 whole head garlic, cloves separated and peeled
6 courgettes, cut into 3cm-thick slices
Salt and black pepper
1 litre vegetable stock
500g frozen peas
50g basil leaves
200g feta, broken into 1-2cm pieces
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon

Heat the oil in a large saucepan on a medium-high flame, then fry the garlic cloves for two to three minutes, stirring often, until caramelised. Add the courgettes, two teaspoons of salt and plenty of pepper, and fry for three minutes, stirring, until starting to brown. Pour in the stock and 500ml cold water, bring to a boil and cook on a high heat for seven minutes, until the courgette is soft but still bright green. Add the peas, stir through for a minute, then add the basil, turn off the heat and blitz smooth with a stick blender (or in a liquidiser). To serve, spoon into bowls and top with the feta and lemon zest. Finish with a good grind of black pepper and a final drizzle of oil.

Beyond the Fence: Protecting the Hooded Plover along the Surf Coast

From Bron Ives

So far, the only chick to make it to flying stage this season was at Pt Roadknight (98W). The chick fledged on Saturday 30 January, 2022. The fledgling is still a 'learner' flyer but now has a better chance to escape from threats such as off leash dogs, foxes and predatory birds. The fledgling is still vulnerable, so dog walkers are asked to be aware of hoodies on the beach and to keep their dogs away from the dunes and under control.

We have a nest with 3 eggs at Red Rocks, Pt Addis that is about to hatch any day. The breeding season has a month or two to go and some of our other resident pairs of hooded plovers may yet surprise us - we are hoping the Moggs and Fairhaven pairs will try again this season.

Locals and visitors have been really helpful and interested. Each year things get a little easier as people become more aware of what's needed to help the hoodies to survive. Dog walkers have kindly observed the temporary Dog Exclusion Zones and almost all have been willing to enter the beach at points well past the parents and their chick. It takes a village to raise a chick!



Left to right: The Point Roadknight plover family and chick that has now fledged, a reminder to keep dogs on leads and the team that have helped protect the chick while vulnerable to predators have a well-deserved celebration.