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# Bowral Garden Club Inc

## NEWSLETTER February 2011



*'Friendship through Gardening'*  
Affiliated with the Garden Clubs of Australia Inc.



*The Philadelphus (Mock Orange) in early summer - it can now be pruned and fertilised for a lovely flowering season later in the year.*

### **Rain, rain, rain!**

We all wanted the drought to break and it did, but we weren't expecting the incredible rain that swept through the eastern States. It is fortunate that in the Southern Highlands the rain has not caused flooding. Instead, lush gardens abound and no one has had to use their hoses. The grass has grown while our backs are turned. It is interesting to see the number of lawn mowers lined up for repair in the local shop! Is it overuse or lack of maintenance?

We are told that this wet weather will last into autumn—so enjoy it. Next year may be drier, although some experts are saying that 2011 may be another wet year. For those of us establishing gardens, the rain has been wonderful for all the new plantings, but check your drainage. Is there too much runoff or flooding?

### **What's On In February 2011**

**7 February (Monday):** The first Club meeting for 2011 will be held at 1.30 pm at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. We are all looking forward to hearing Bruce Rosenberg, the owner of a wonderful garden in Burrawang, who will be speaking about building garden structures.

**14 February (Monday):** 10.30 am Coffee morning at Phyllis and Eric Paananen's home, 45 Highlands Drive, East Bowral. They will take us round their lovely garden and if you want any advice on your maples, don't miss this event.

**21 February (Monday):** Note that the date was changed late last year. 10.30 am, the first Potting morning in Marilyn Gleeson's shed. 'Mist Hill', 511 Illawarra Highway, Moss Vale, entrance off Fitzroy Road (first on left). Bring your secateurs and any rooting powder or gel (or honey). It sounds like hard work, but it is lots of fun, so if you haven't been before, do join in this year.

**28 February (Monday):** 10.30 am Committee meeting at Margaret Woodstock's home, 3 Elizabeth Street, Burradoo.

### **What's On in March**

**7 March (Monday):** 1.30 pm: Club meeting at the Presbyterian Church Hall, Bendooley St, Bowral. Speaker: Dr Peter Donaldson on the work of the great botanist, Dr Joseph Hooker, friend of Charles Darwin.

**14 March (Monday):** 10.30 am Coffee morning at Braemar Garden Centre "Blue Rose Café", Lot 27, Old Hume Highway, Braemar.

**21 March (Monday):** 10.30 am Club Outing to Glenmore House and Garden, Argyle St, Camden Valley Way, Camden. Car-pooling. Cost \$7.50.

**28 March (Monday):** 10.30 am second Potting morning in Marilyn Gleeson's shed. 'Mist Hill', 511 Illawarra Highway, Moss Vale.

### **Pots, Pots, Pots!**

Do you have any spare pots? Please bring them to the February meeting for the Potting mornings

## Bulbs

The bulb catalogues are a delight to peruse. Have you planned where you want to plant the bulbs for spring? Buy your bulbs as early as possible so that you will have the best and widest choice. Plan a continuous display from winter to early summer by selecting a wide range:

*Late winter:* crocus, cyclamen, snowdrop, winter aconite, jonquils, hyacinth.

*Early spring:* anemone, bluebell, blue starflower, daffodil, freesias, grape hyacinth, ixia, snowflake.

*Mid spring:* grape hyacinth, ranunculus, some tulip.

*Late spring:* Dutch iris, tulip, allium, dietes, fritillaria persica, cottage gladioli.

*Summer:* Lilium, Belladonna lilies



*Daffodils in a woodland setting in early September*

## Garden Tips

**Removing rose suckers:** During this summer you may find that your roses have more suckers than usual. Suckers are stems that grow beneath the graft union and tend to be very bright green with seven leaves. Remove them or they will drain the rose's energy and damage the plant.

**Deadheading and summer pruning:** lightly pruning roses (at least 20 to 30 cm of stem) at the end of summer will promote a beautiful flush of flowers in autumn. Check roses for powdery mildew and black spot (spray with Triforine if necessary).

**Wisteria:** Prune the whippy growth on wisteria and trim older stems back to 3 plump buds to ensure that there will be good spring flowering.

**Herbs and vegetables:** Pick the herbs and vegetables regularly to stop them from going to seed or becoming large and tasteless. Fertilise regularly through this month.

**Lavender:** Prune the lavender into shape so that you will get plenty of fresh growth before winter and to prevent plants from becoming too woody.

**Buddleias:** Prune buddleias heavily when they finish flowering and fertilize with a complete fertilizer or rotted manure.

**Annual and perennial flowers:** Keep the flowers blooming by sprinkling with liquid fertilizer every fortnight. Late-summer pruning of perennials such as gaura and salvia will ensure a flush of autumn flowers. When the annuals have finished flowering remove them and prepare the soil for autumn seedlings. Dig the border over, add some compost and fertilizer. (If your soil is heavy, add some lime.)

**Fruit trees:** Spray apple and pear trees with carbaryl every three weeks to protect against codling and light brown apple moth.

**Hydrangeas:** Prune large hydrangeas to half size when they have finished flowering and fertilize. To prune, cut to two plump buds and remove spindly and old wood from the base of the plant.

## Softwood cuttings

The first potting morning for 2011 will take place on Monday 21 February in Marilyn Gleeson's shed but you can start taking cuttings and pot them in your garden as soon as possible. Many plants will grow from softwood cuttings:

- ❖ Clean your pots thoroughly and fill with good quality potting mix and water.
- ❖ Make a diagonal cut across the tender green stem (removing any buds) and remove all but a few leaves at the top.
- ❖ Dip the end of the cutting in hormone powder, liquid or gel, or honey.
- ❖ Make a hole in the potting mix (a pencil will do very well for a dibbler) and insert the cutting, two-thirds buried in the damp mix (as many cuttings as you can fit in the one container). Firm well and water gently. Don't forget to label.
- ❖ To speed up the process, you can put the container into a plastic bag with sticks holding up the edges keeping the bag clear of the cuttings.
- ❖ Check for root development in two weeks.
- ❖ Plant out in autumn or spring or save for the Club stall in October, repotting when necessary into individual larger pots.



*This two-year-old Dogwood (Cornus kousa var. Chinensis 'Milky Way') flowered for the first time after all the spring and early summer rain*

### Top Ten Design Secrets

(Taken from 'Design Your Garden with Linda Ross' p. 96)

1. Keep it **simple**. Use only a limited range of materials and try to repeat colours, materials or shapes to create unity.
2. **Blur** the boundaries of the garden. Enclose the garden with climbers and hedges so the edges of the garden cannot be seen. This will increase the feel of the garden transforming it into an intimate urban oasis.
3. Create the illusion of **space** by: light coloured walls; small unit paving like cobblestones to trick the eye into thinking they are larger; a *trompe l'oeil* to deceive the eye into thinking the space continues; increasing the sense of perspective by adding a sculpture to end the vista.
4. Start with a bold **framework**. This will provide the structural backbone to the garden just like the walls of a house. The framework should include a bold design, strong layout and vibrant shapes. You can then add the elements of planting, sculpture and lighting to soften the overall effect.
5. **Borrow** pleasant scenery from any neighbouring property. Plan views of trees or structures, allowing these aspects to become

part of your garden experience. This will provide a larger and fuller garden composition.

6. Add **water** in any way you can. It will liven things up by providing light and movement.
7. **Textural surfaces** add detail and decoration—pebbles, mosaics, stones, bagged masonry surfaces, recycled glass, mulch and reed fencing all contribute to the layering of textures within the garden. This layering of textures will give the garden richness.
8. Plan for **foliage colour** as well as flower colour to increase the tonal depth of your garden. Paths add intrigue, inviting exploration.
9. The best gardens are **multifaceted** and **multilayered**. Planting should have a variety of height levels, a succession of seasonal interests and a few surprises along the way.
10. Use a **focal point** to catch the eye. Attract attention to a particular vista. Limit yourself to one focal point per garden view.

### Agapanthus

When the agapanthus finishes blooming, don't forget to remove their seed heads. These should be cut off as close to the base of the plant as you can manage before they scatter seeds throughout the garden and the neighbourhood. This is especially important if your garden is surrounded by bush or is adjacent to native forest.

Many horticulturists do not recommend agapanthus in gardens because of their invasive behaviour, but we all seem to love them in the Southern Highlands. They are very useful plants for holding back the soil on banks and sloping areas. They are tolerant of all sorts of conditions and flower in sun and shade (although if it's too shady they may not perform quite as well).

When you remove the dead heads, clean up any dead leaves caught in the clumps and watch out for snails. The agapanthus plants become motels for snails.

Feed the plants with a handful of blood and bone or complete fertilizer, and then water—if it's not pouring with rain at the time!

### Bananas

If you love your roses (and Queensland) it's really your duty to eat at least one banana a day! Banana skins are high in starch and potash, which breaks down to feed the roses.

All you have to do is place the skins under the rose bush and lightly cover with mulch. So simple, but so beneficial for you and your roses.

### Shrub Cuttings

Early February is a good time for propagating many shrubs, such as lilac and hydrangeas, by semi-hardwood cuttings.

- ❖ The first requirement is a healthy mother plant, preferably a young one from which the cuttings will root more easily.
- ❖ Cuttings should be taken early in the day when they are full of sap, and should usually be cut with a heel—a small portion of the older wood—although they may also be cut cleanly below a joint.
- ❖ Trim to about 7cm – 12cm in length and remove any lower leaves.
- ❖ Dip into a hormone rotting agency or honey.
- ❖ The best propagating medium is a mixture of half sand, half peat, or a good quality potting mix.
- ❖ Put crocks into the bottom of small pots for drainage, fill with the mixture and insert the cuttings about 2 to 3cm down.
- ❖ Water in thoroughly and transfer to a shady area.
- ❖ After a week gradually give the cuttings more light and air until they can stand full sunlight.

### Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens

The Wingecarribee Council, in accordance with Section 38 of the Local Government Act 1993, has given notice that the draft Plan of Management is now on public exhibition until Monday 14 February 2011.

This is an opportunity for the Community to contribute to the planning process for the establishment of the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens. The draft Plan can be viewed on the Web or at the following locations during normal business hours:

Wingecarribee Council Civic Centre, Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale; at the Bowral, Mittagong and Moss Vale Public Libraries; at the Scottish Arms Inn, 69 Boardman Road, East Bowral.

Submissions are invited on the Plan from the community until close of the submission period no later than 4:30pm on Monday 28 February 2011. Written submissions should be addressed to:

**Contact details:** General Manager, Wingecarribee Shire Council, PO Box 141, Moss Vale, 2577 (Attention: Mark Pepping, Manager Strategic & Community Development) phone 4868 0761 or [wscmail@wsc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wscmail@wsc.nsw.gov.au)



*Not only has there been plenty of rain this summer but the hailstorm on 19 December made the garden look like it belonged in the northern hemisphere!*

### Advance notice:

#### Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens: Town and Country Weekend 16-17 April

Four Town and four Country Gardens, some not usually open to the public, with a plant stall and displays or entertainment at gardens. More information will be available in next month's newsletter.

### Management Committee

President:	Margaret Woodcock	4861 1647
Vice President:	Jennifer Braithwaite	4869 1389
Secretary:	Kay Fintan	4861 2594
Treasurer:	Pam Bailey	4869 5117
Meet & Greet:	Sandria Westwood	4861 5695
Membership:	Marilyn Gleeson	4869 3881
Newsletter Ed:	Meg Probyn	4871 3134

### General Committee Members

Publicity:	Lorraine Stott	4869 4797
Social Secretary:	Catherine Mah	4861 7268
Seed Bank:	Barbara Wilson	4869 3925
Trading Table:	Ulishka Virag	4872 2243
Public Officer:	Eric Paananen	4862 1570
Afternoon Tea		
Hosts:	Margaret Buckland	4862 5963
	Wendy Gamble	4862 2766
	Glenys Lilliendal	4861 2849
	Doreen Plumridge	4868 3517

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