

STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER



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March 2024 - ISSUE 226

NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY 22ND MARCH 2024 - 9.30 FOR A 10am START

Well we finally had a heatwave just when we thought we were going to get away with it and then last Thursday we had our first rain for a little over six weeks. I hope you and your gardens all survived as we now really settle into Autumn and that the fuchsias that were taken home from the last meeting survived – ours is looking a little bit sad but we are eternal optimists when it comes to plants surviving. This month we welcome back Paul di Puglia from Neutrog – he is always interesting to listen to with plenty of good advice. I look forward to seeing you all on Friday.

David Thomas, President

It helps our kitchen crew if you bring your own cup for the morning break and if you have surplus plants, garden produce or garden related items they can be given to either, or both, the trading and raffle tables.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

If you have not already done so your committee encourages you to complete the questionnaire to help us plan for the future of our club – copies are available at the sign in desk. Please take a few minutes to complete it and return it to the box by the door at this month's meeting. The responses received last month were most encouraging.

GARDEN CLUB MEETINGS 2024:

Mar: Paul di Puglia from Neutrog (22nd March)

Apr: Alan O'Leary (with Pat S & Marg J) - Autumn & Winter Bulbs (26th April)

May: Jim Barry – Pangarinda Botanic Garden (24th May)

Jun: Ruth Creedy & Heather McDonald – The Art of Bonsai (28th June)

Jul: Barry Blucher – Vegetable Growing – My Way! (26th July)

Aug: Brenton Kortman - President of the Rare Fruit Society (23rd August)

Sep: Kym Syrus – Horticultural Media Personality (27th September)

Oct: Annual Bloom and Photo Competitions (25th October)

Nov: Christmas Lunch (22nd November)

UPCOMING OTHER EVENTS 2024:

- Mar:** Cottage Garden Plant Sale – 21 Sandergrove Road – 24th March from 8.30am – see notice board
- Apr:** Dressed for Success – Red Cross Social Group – Footy Club – 2nd April – see notice board
Australian Plants Society – Plants sale, 13th April, Urrbrae Agricultural School – see notice board
Nangawooka Flora Reserve - Open Day and Native Plants Sale, 28th April, Victor Harbor
- May:** Garden Affair, 5th May, Stangate House, Aldgate – see notice board
- Sep:** Entries close for Strath Show Garden Competition, 6th September – see notice board
- Oct:** Strath Show, 7th October

SA OPEN GARDENS:

Still Water 'Quince Fair' - 13th/14th April - 344 Krongart Road, Penola
Three Gums - 13th/14th April - 2 Seaforth Avenue, Hazelwood Park
Wyndbourne Park - 20th/21st April - 258 Mawson Road, Forest Range
Etre - 27th/28th April - 10 Delaney Avenue, Willunga

STRATHALBYN HERB GROUP:

This new group had its first well attended meeting on 26th February. Regular meetings will be held at the Centre on the fourth Monday at 9.30am and the format will be “Show and Tell”, followed by a break for tea/coffee and chat and then a monthly topic. All new members receive a Welcome Pack, outlining meeting format, expectations and a list of herb nurseries, seed suppliers, recommended websites, podcasts and books. The next meeting on March 25th will be a workshop on propagation; attendees are asked to bring along a small amount of potting mix - pots, seed and cuttings will be supplied. The April meeting will be 6 to 10 popular herbs and how to use them, May will be infusing herbal oils and June will be cooking with herbs.

JOBS IN THE GARDEN:

Oh, it's still so dry despite a drizzle the other day and I'm sure many of us are wondering when some decent falls will descend upon our gardens again! So, keep the water up with long deep soaks rather than light hand watering that encourages shallow root systems. I've just given most of our roses (time constraints have prevented me from completing yet!) a deep individual soak with the hose plus a handful of Sudden Impact. This will stand them in good stead over the coming months before the same treatment in early Spring for a stunning display. I have also applied the same to our fruit trees and if you have citrus trees they need a good feed, preferably aged chook manure, some trace elements and liquid seaweed fertiliser.

By covering our tomatoes and cucumbers with shade cloth over the recent scorching weather as we were away, they came through with flying colours and looked great on return.

Next month it's time to plant garlic in a sunny fertile position as current warm soil will benefit good early growth – simply pop individual cloves (pointy end up!) and in 6 months you'll have a bountiful crop.

As St Patrick's Day has just been it's time to get those trellises up and plant your Sweet-Pea seeds ready for a glorious and beautifully perfumed display later.

Happy gardening - Jen Engelhardt

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH:

Isn't it enough to see that a garden is beautiful without having to believe that there are fairies at the bottom of it too? – Douglas Adams “The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy”, p.79.

JOKE:

Firstly, our President's: What is small, red and whispers?

A hoarse radish!

Why didn't the new lass in town date the handsome gardener?

He was too rough around the hedges!

How do you know flowers are capable of kissing?

They have tulips ☺

What did the flower say after it told a joke?

I was just pollen your leg!

My wife always complains that I never buy her flowers....

I didn't even know she sold them!!!



STRATHALBYN GARDEN CLUB MINUTES

General Meeting held Strath Neighbourhood Centre
Friday 23rd February 2024 Commenced 10am.

Meeting commenced: David welcomed everyone. It is important to sign in on the attendance register book. Please put your phones on silent –we are thinking about a naughty corner for those who don't comply.

New Members: Reinira Sadler, Edna Poyner,

Welcome Visitors: Trinette Riechers, Helen Glasson, Sarah Sabila, John Turner, Chris Watters.

Attendance: 78 **Apologies:** 17 **Lucky Door Prize:** Maggie Minchin

Minutes of the last meeting: 19th January 2024 - circulated **Moved:** Dawn Hill **Seconded:** Val Phillips

Business Arising:

Last talk and new plants – how are they?

Rainfall – will it rain in February?

Correspondence:

Adelaide Hills Garden Affair Newsletter – we will have a promotional talk next month.

Announcements:

Questionnaire: Thank you all for today's replies. Copies on the desk to take home and bring next month.

Trees for Life last delivery done. We have been doing this for 4 years – thanks to everyone who participated.

Herb Group – Chris Elliott will conduct this new group starting Monday 26th at 9.30 at the Centre.

Notice Board – SA Open Gardens, etc

Plant Sale – 21 Sandergrove Road, 24th March. Proceeds to Save the Children.

Dress for Success – Fashion parade 2 April. Footy Clubrooms. Proceeds to the Red Cross.

Plums – Kay has brought 18 bags for us – not sure what variety they are but good for stewing.

Some succulents outside from Maggie M.

Heather McDonald has two tickets for the Garden Affair which she can't use.

Treasurer:

Ced advised that he will be retiring at the AGM. Sue Leers has agreed to take over the role. We need a new Computer.

Raffle: A good choice on the table today.

Morning Tea: Always popular.

Guest Speaker: Chris Scrase (with husband Roger) from Weald Nurseries – Fuschias. Chris had plenty of good advice on growing and maintaining Fuschias. Also, plants for sale for us to try and put this advice into practice.

Next Meeting: 22nd March 2024

Signed as a true and correct record: **Date:**

A Garden Path Update by Heather McDonald & Ruth Creedy



It's now almost 3 and 1/2 years since Heather and I moved to Strath, and 18 months since 60 Garden Club members visited our garden - so it's time for us to report on how the garden has evolved.

We have been blessed by wonderful seasons and a much milder climate than Mt Barker and Littlehampton.

Our outstanding successes have been the establishment of our semi-mature trees, namely Crepe myrtles, Crab apples, Pyrus and Prunus. Wise choices for Strath on the advice of MANOR NURSERIES.

The effort we made in soil preparation has proved a major factor especially in the front garden where we have planted lots of Natives, Leucadendron, Salvia, Statice and succulents under mature Pines, Lagunaria and Casuarina. eg lots of Gypsum, and a mixture of premium cottage mix and fine cottage mulch from local landscape supplies, rotary hoed with a generous helping of Seamungus and always composting.

The top driveway has been very successful- planted with 5 purple Prunus and Callistemon 'Endeavour' in between, a nice mix of Purple and Green in Summer and white blossom in Spring and red bottlebrushes –they are now developing into a great hedge and habitat for birds and bees.

The lower driveway with a low hedge of Nandina 'Moon bay' alternated with frosted curls CARIX and 2 Crepes, starting to flower this year.



Natives we can recommend include Banksia praemorsa (yellow-small form) Eremophila (Glabra, 'Big John', Nivea), Correas, Spyridium, Baeckea virgata, Melaleuca Nessy (tall and compact forms), Prosantheras Blue/White, make great balls if trimmed.

Callistemons, Wattles especially Bormani, Myrtifolia and Eucalypts (Baby Orange, Pyriformis, Vitrix & Orbifolia). Grevilleas, however, planted in the ground, have been challenging,

The Red Olivaceae has been outstanding, but most others we have tried have now been dug and survive well in large pots. Other winners have been Salvias and Buddleas.

The vegie beds are all raised and have been excellent Tomatoes, Lettuce, Spinach, Capsicums, Rhubarb. Citrus (Lemon and Orange) and Guavas

(in pots).

Yes, we have overplanted, but our garden is a wonderful refuge and source of food. The Bonsai and Orchids are other passions, but I need to stop.

The bantams, native birds, butterflies, lizards, frogs/fish etc enjoy the spaces we've been lucky to provide –a wonderful sanctuary.

PS Recommended fertilizers. Seamungus and Bush Tucker from Neutrog and David Grays 'Liquid Blood and Bone' plus seaweed mix'. Excellent value.