



C.M.G.C. Newsletter

Vol 7. November 2020 Editor/Designer: Fiona Lynch

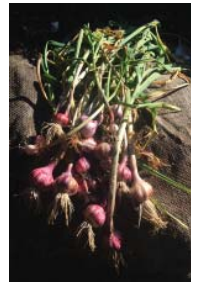
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Dear Members,

What a roller coaster of weather and spirits we have experienced over the past month. At least we seem to be making headway on the Covid front, but not to the point where we can meet safely yet.

The thing that has struck me recently is the incredible lushness of our surrounds after the rain. My hill in North Balwyn is as green as I have ever seen it in 35 years of living here. Quite beautiful. This has prompted a photographic splurge for the next newsletter, which I hope that you will enjoy.

In our first newsletter we discussed growing garlic. If you got around to planting some, it's getting close to the time for harvesting your crop. When the stalks change colour and die down, it's time to pull them out, hose them down and then dry them till the stalks are completely dry. I planted 3 different varieties and the picture to the right is my first harvest.



This month's newsletter is starting off with a celebration of the rose. A big thanks to our members who have contributed photos of their blooms, including a rare blue *Ixia* pictured below. Enjoy the warmth of the sun and the pleasures that are found in your garden at this time of year.



Warmest regards,
Fiona Lynch
CMGC President.

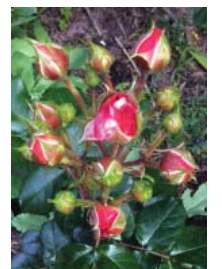
Below: Spring splendour from our member's gardens.



Everything's coming up roses! Or so we hope....



Just look at the colours and variety of the rose blooms from our members' gardens this Spring. After the recent rain, it's amazing to see the proliferation of buds on the bushes and the size of the blooms. The rose is a woody perennial flowering plant of the genus *Rosa*. Most originated in Asia. There are over three hundred species, tens of thousands of cultivars & they are treasured globally.



In My Garden - by Club Members :

This month we were going to welcome members from our club to speak about their gardens. So instead we asked them to photograph their gardens for you and to tell you about them. This month we are featuring 3 gardens and next month we will feature 2 bush or acreage gardens for you. In this edition we are looking at Lea Carter's succulent courtyard garden, Helen Tauchert's lush garden in Camberwell and Sylvia Stephen's cottage garden in Glen Iris.

Lea Carter's succulent courtyard garden:

You will be delighted to hear that Lea Carter has made it safely home from hospital to her much loved townhouse in Malvern East. There Lea has created the most wonderful courtyard garden of every variety of succulent imaginable, all in pots. Just look at the colours she has in her garden and all the different shades of green that can be found in the foliage.

The beauty of these plants is that they can be shared with others, and Lea is both a giver and receiver of succulents. I now have a "Lea corner" in my garden of thriving succulents from little sprigs she gave me.



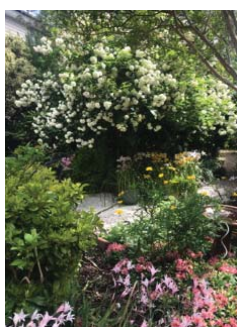
Helen Tauchert's lush Camberwell garden

My garden has evolved over many years, from a child friendly space into one that's lush and easy to care for, as I slide into old age.

After a new fence and a recent house paint, the front garden is currently a work in progress. The large pin oak and birch have made the soil compacted and root-bound, necessitating dry tolerant and small plant choices.

Country Farm Perennials, Tesselaar and Lambley Nurseries have been recipients of my considerable largesse! Now I will wait to see which plants are successful and resistant to possums, and track their progress.

This garden has given much needed solace through some difficult times, is forgiving of my rather erratic attention and forgetfulness, presents small delights to lift clouds and reminds me that nature will triumph!



For so many of us, our gardens have been our saving grace during all these months of lockdown.

They have given us a sense of purpose, a place to reflect and a chance to watch the miracles of nature unfolding before our eyes. However big or small they may be - they are very precious to us.

Gardening jobs for November/December by Sylvia Stephens

Trim daisies and lavenders lightly to encourage a repeat flush of blooms.

Plant gladioli corms for a beautiful display of summer flowers. Also plant dahlia tubers for a super show when summer arrives.

Tidy up Kangaroo Paw by cutting off finished stems at the base, water thoroughly and then spread a handful of slow release fertilizer around the base.

Start watering potted cacti and succulents more often – at least once a week in warm weather.

Feed hydrangeas and fuchsias with a flower and fruit fertilizer.

Plant tough perennials like salvia, cistus, lavender, gazania, sedum and statice for summer colour.

Get mulching to reduce moisture loss, lower soil temperatures during summer and help suppress weeds. Water your plants thoroughly before applying the mulch around them.

Plant sun loving annuals such as celosia, vinca, zinnia and African marigolds, to add colour. Coleus and impatiens are perfect for the more shady areas of your garden.

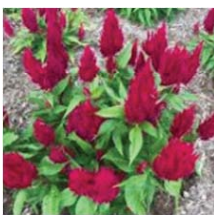
Daylilies create a super show when planted en masse. Plant large swathes through garden beds. Feed November lilies with complete fertilizer after they have finished flowering. Let stems die off naturally to aid development of next year's bloom.

Veggie Seedlings to plant now - think summer salads - lettuce, rocket, radish, tomatoes, spring onions, ruby chard, chives, parsley, etc.

Kangaroo Paw



Celosia



Gladioli



Beetroot and Radish



Lettuce, rocket & shallots



Ruby Chard



Sylvia Stephen's cottage garden

I always yearned to have a cottage garden, so when we bought a 1922 bungalow, I decided to create one. Much of my front garden is in full sun and very well drained, being on the highest side of the property. After much experimentation, I realised that for the garden to look good in spring, summer and autumn, I needed plants that were drought tolerant, easily propagated and long flowering. I also wanted the garden to be good for pollinators. So with all that in mind, the plants that I chose were:

Roses - repeat flowering and revel in the heat

Salvias - come in many shades that suit my colour palate and flower well into winter

Liliums - magnificent bells that finish their spectacular show before the heat arrives

Verbena polaris - fast spreading, non invasive, low grower, with lilac or purple flowers

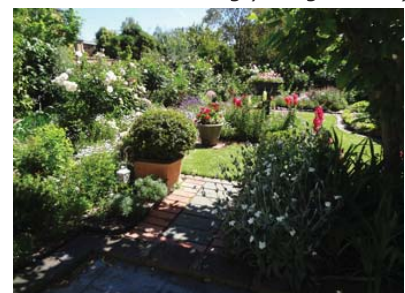
Verbena bonariensis - tall, statuesque, airy plants that self-seed once established

Snapdragons - short lived perennials that cope with more sun than foxgloves

Lychnis coronaria - prolific self-seeder with attractive grey foliage

Lastly - large pots full of dwarf escallonia, pelargoniums, alstroemeria, etc.

(I think that we would all agree that Sylvia achieved her desire brilliantly and thanks to all 3 for sharing your gardens.)



Birds in my garden -

by: Glenda Munroe

Sometimes I hesitate to go out the back because I know that they will all arrive 'in a twinkling of an eye'.

And I really don't know what to feed them, especially as they are different species, so I've resorted to fruit cake !!!!! And Muesli oats. I pick out the dried fruit and banana for myself. That's my special treat.

Myriad Mynahs perch all around in the tree tops - waiting, waiting, waiting, just like in the film. It's spooky; especially when the tree is bare of leaves. It's good that the Mynahs don't like me to be too close, so that I can work on feeding the other birds first.

My Maggies had been absent since February but they're increasing in numbers now: looking for breakfast, dinner and tea. They perch on the handrail of the back porch and wander into the sunroom, which can confuse the dog. I love their caroling, though sometimes it can get a little loud. A cheeky Maggie comes into the sunroom more frequently now, despite my dog. To get him out, I open the door wide and just tell it to 'come on'.. and out he toddles.

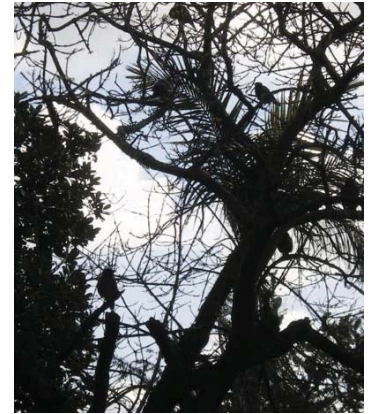
And here comes Pidgy. He's a sweetheart. I call him and he quietly arrives and lands nearby. Sometimes he brings his wife. Pidgy doesn't mind me being near him. He'll keep me company if I'm weeding or having a game of Mahjong in the garden. I try to make sure that he doesn't miss out on food to the others. I'm even beginning to practice social distancing with the birds, with separate spots of feed around the yard.

Now comes Craven the Raven. Golly he's so very big, and beautiful with his pale blue eye. He'll fill his beak with little nuggets of cheese or a length of cake and fly off to - the dining room?? I don't know. When his wife comes, sometimes she just sits on the branch watching him fill up. Ah - they've spawned a babe. They brought him along the other day, and he's almost the same size as his parents!

Finally, and it was only once that they came so close. Usually the Lorikeets are difficult to see among the gumtree leaves, but the tree's bare right now. In any case, my friend and I were sitting in the sunroom, close to the open door, when I spotted a pair of Lorikeets in a nearby tree. I'd never seen them that close before. Next thing they are BOTH on the rail just a metre or two away from us. Incredible. I see from our last Newsletter that they do come close, but it was an exciting first time for me.

As well as the occasional Wattle Bird in the Callistemon, I have a darling pair of Thorn birds flitting through the shrubs in my front garden. I see them especially when I get up in the morning and it's a lovely start to my day. I am so lucky!

(And so are we Glenda to have you write this lovely article for us on the birds that bring joy to your life.)



Mynahs in a wintry tree



Maggie



Pidgy



Lorikeets