



C.M.G.C. Newsletter

Vol 6. October 2020 Editor/Designer: Fiona Lynch

Mob. 0432 159 412

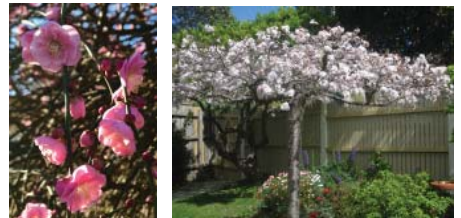
Dear Members,

In the last two days of deliciously warm weather, it's as if someone turned a switch and every tree in our neighbourhood has burst into glorious blossom. What a sight to behold as shown below.

I was planning to show you my seedlings being raised in the boxes I demonstrated last month but got thwarted by the wind again! A mini tornado came through last week and blew my boxes off their stand dumping all my new seedlings on the ground and blowing them away. A definite "Not Happy Jan" situation. After much searching I managed to find a few to put back in. Now I am on the search for a sheltered sunny spot for the next lot, or I'll just tie them down.

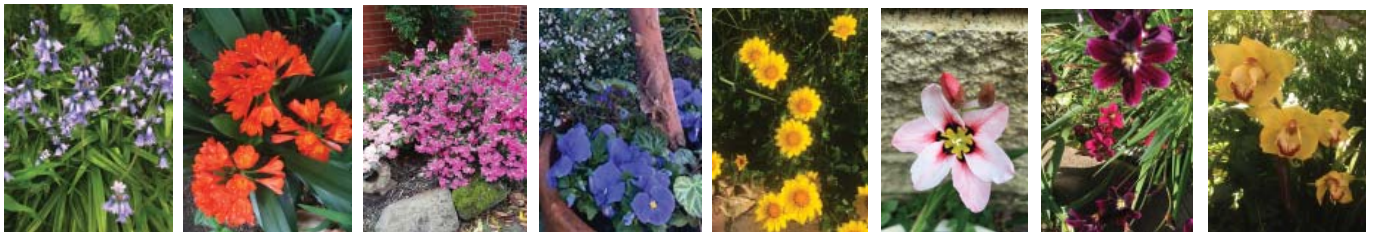
If I plant seeds directly into the ground, my dogs see this as the perfect spot to sit! Gardening is certainly about trials and tribulations. At this rate with seedling propagation (or lack of) the veggie garden that I have just cleared of 10 years of junk and neglect, is going to be very empty.

This month's newsletter is full of spring colour thanks to all the photos I have received from our club members. A big thanks to each and every one of you for sharing your garden and triumphant blooms with us all. It helps to lift our spirits and hopefully we will get some good news about new freedoms next week. Till next month take care and keep happy.



Warmest regards,
Fiona Lynch
CMGC President.

Below: Spring splendour from our member's gardens.



What members are up to in their gardens.

Sometimes a bargain doesn't work out quite as planned, as Marilla Timms-Johnston found out. She bid for three large potted plants (2 pictured right) at an online auction and got them for \$50. What a bargain!

The problem was that they were much larger in real life than they appeared to be and required a truck with two very strong men to transport and unload them at Marilla's house in Camberwell.

The cost \$170. The pots came with a ton of "greenery" that had to be pruned away to reveal the plants underneath, as pictured above.



The beautiful floral display pictured right, are seedlings that Marilla planted in cleaned up recycled pots. What a stunning range of colour that Marilla's neighbours get to enjoy as much as Marilla does. Now she is duty bound to maintain the display for all to see.

October Speaker - Susan Murphy - Boroondara Historical Trees

This month we were looking forward to welcoming Susan Murphy, Urban Tree Planner, and Alannah Matheson, Senior Arborist - from Statutory Planning, from the Boroondara City Council to talk to our club. Their topic is significant trees in Boroondara, of which there are an amazing number.

Susan has lived in Boroondara all her life and is passionate about the trees and flora in our area. She works with a dedicated team of arborists, horticulturists and landscape designers to preserve and improve our beautiful parks, gardens and public areas. Alannah is part of the broader team of statutory planners who oversee compliance of developments in the Boroondara Planning Scheme. They work to protect existing trees on development sites, and if tree removal is necessary, to protect that planting site for future canopy tree planting.

Boroondara is home to a diverse tree population on "private land" such as residential or commercial property and "public land" including parks, car parks, kindergartens, civic precincts & nature strips. Regardless of ownership, our community recognises trees provide aesthetic and environmental benefits, and need to be protected. The City of Boroondara's Significant Tree Study (STS) began at the start of this century. The first trees were documented in 2001, the second in 2014 and the most recent in 2018. These studies cover locally indigenous, Australian, and exotic trees. The STS includes avenues of trees, and mature and rare specimens in other landscape types. There are 1049 trees on the list now, but Susan says that there are many others still to be captured.

Boroondara is blessed with some amazing avenues in a variety of suburbs that are well worth strolling along, particularly now, as the new leaves are appearing on the branches. Some of the best examples are Monomeath Ave, Victoria Ave (image top right) and Rochester Rd, off Canterbury Rd. In Camberwell, look at Waterloo Street and Carramar Ave.



I asked Susan where members can look for the oldest trees, and the answer is along the Yarra River corridor and along Back Creek and Gardiners Creek, where you can find old Red River Gums. In Victoria Park, by Kew Cemetery, some trees pre-date European settlement!



Then I asked where members should go first, and the answer is within 5 km of your home. Susan suggested looking up Boroondara's significant trees online (Google it) to find the significant trees nearest you.

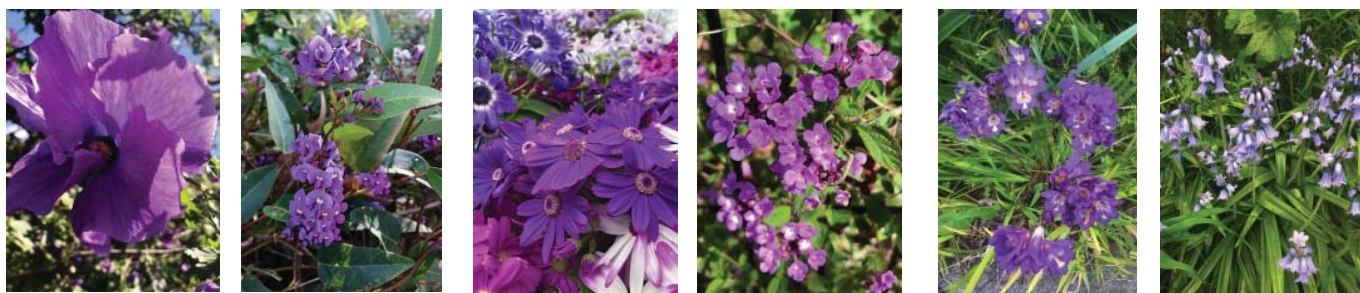


This is a huge and fascinating topic, and we look forward to welcoming Susan and Alannah to speak to our club in future. They are pictured at Riversdale Park, home to a rare, and significant specimen of *Searsia pendulina* (White Karree; images at centre and bottom right).



Passing Shots - Purple Passion -

Photos from members



I couldn't help noticing that my favourite colour purple was in abundance in gardens right now.



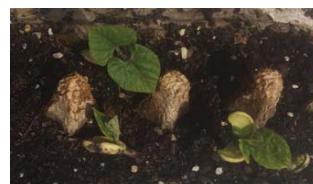
Gardening jobs for October/Nov

by Fiona Lynch

Planting Guide - Vegetables

It's time to plant everyone's favourite – tomatoes. By now your soil should be good and ready but obtaining seedlings this year might be a problem, so you may have to grow from seed. If so, start now as the soil will be warm enough for them to germinate. The day for planting out seedlings is 'Cup Day'. And don't forget their mates Basil and French Marigolds which are great companions, and no tomato patch is complete without them!!

Now is the time to try artichokes, beetroots, cabbage, capsicum, carrots, chillies, eggplants, French beans, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, parsnip, potatoes, sweet corn and watermelon! For some herbs try basil (both sweet and purple), parsley, sage, pyrethrum, lemongrass, oregano, rue and marjoram. This could be the year to go crazy with climbing beans, if you have the space or walls. I'm giving them a go and raising the seeds in egg cartons right now. Pic. right.



Pruning and tidying

I have never been one to concentrate on pruning in the past, but with more time on my hands I have been out with the secateurs more often and am seeing great results. My plants are better shaped, more bushy, less leggy and generally healthier looking. With the recent rain weeds have run rampant, so try to get out and clean them up. You can pretty-up your patch with some stunning summer-flowering annuals, like phlox, snapdragon and cornflowers. Asters and marigolds add colour and plant impatiens in shade.

Watering seedling boxes

This can be a pain as often too much water goes in and moves all your carefully placed seeds. The solution is simple - make a soft watering bottle from an old soft drink bottle. Pull a bottle out of the recycling. Heat a long steel skewer, poke holes in the lid, fill with water and enjoy controlled water!! Alternatively, you can purchase a pack of sprinkler tops that screw onto soft drink bottles. Like this.



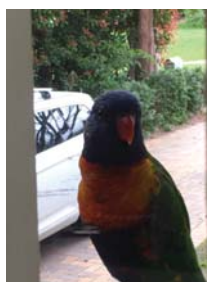
Birds in our gardens -

by Fiona Lynch - Photos from members.

Since lockdown 1 & 2 there have been frequent reports on the radio of how many different types of birds people are seeing in their gardens. So I asked members to share what they have seen. Anti-clockwise from bottom left - eastern rosella, spotted pardelote, king parrot, powerful owl, magpie feeling for worms and a currawong surveying the scene,



The top three pictures are of rainbow lorikeets, which in our garden have become so demanding that they tap like woodpeckers on my husband's office window until he gives them some seed, pictured right.



The most important thing that you can put out for the birds is a water bowl, especially in warm weather. Read the attached email if you would like to bird count.



All about herbs and spices -

by: Fiona Lynch

The terms “**herb**” and “**spice**” describe plants or parts of plants used for medicine, cooking, and pleasure, around the world. Such plants number in the thousands and come from most plant species.

Herbs are the green, leafy parts of plants. Maximum flavour is obtained from herbs when they are picked and used fresh. Herbs grow mostly in temperate to hot regions.

Spices are derived from any part of a plant that is not a leaf: for example, cloves are flower buds, cinnamon is bark, ginger is a root, peppercorns are berries, nigella is seed, cumin is a fruit, saffron is stigmas, cardamom is pods and seeds, and asafetida is a gum.

Spices being strong flavoured, are usually used in small amounts and best used dry, as drying process enhances the flavour. Most grow in subtropical or tropical climates. Some plants can be both an herb and a spice. Seeds like dill are a spice, while dill leaves are a herb. However, coriander and parsley roots, garlic and fennel bulbs are all regarded as herbs.

History

Archaeological evidence shows that the use of spices and herbs dates back to long before recorded history, when humans first added sharp-flavoured leaves to early cooking pots. As civilization progressed and nomadic tribes settled in one place, herbs and spices were deliberately sown near dwelling places. They were used for food, flavour, medicine, fuel, decoration, dyes, poison, as weapons and for mind bending journeys! At one point in time, cinnamon was the same price as gold!!

What herbs can be planted now?

Sage. Parsley, Rosemary. Mints. Thymes, Oregano & Chives.

Herbs that prefer full sun include:

Basil. Chives. Dill. Oregano. Rosemary. Tarragon & Thyme.

Pots or open ground?

Herbs are very easy to grow with a little sunshine, soil that drains well, some watering, and a little fertilizer or compost. They can be grown quite successfully in pots; but prefer the ground where they can spread out.

Some herbs are annuals and others are perennials. Dill, fennel, and a few other annual herbs reseed each year. Just don't expect them to be in the same place in the garden each year, especially if strong winds prevail. The best time to harvest herbs is in the morning when the sprigs are fresh. After washing and pat drying, fresh herbs keep really well in the fridge in snap lock bags for one to two weeks.

Parsely



Rosemary



Thyme



Oregano



Cinnamon



Star Anise

