

NEWSLETTER

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PRESTON GARDEN CLUB COMMITTEE 2019/2020

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SPRING SHOW

Our Spring Show is on Saturday 26th October in Preston City Hall. Read your schedule carefully, if you have any questions, speak to Bill our Show Manager or Phone 9478 0269.

Make sure that you phone your entries in before 9 pm on Thursday 24th October, do not leave it to the last moment to phone.

We aim to be in the hall Friday to set up, from 9am. so if you have a

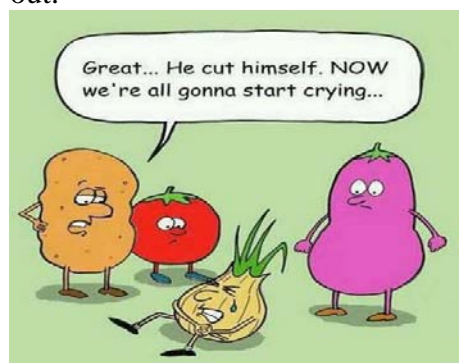
couple of hours to spare, we could do with your help. The work is not hard. We need your help to set up the tables, marking out, card writing and assemble the hanging basket stand. All you need to do is turn up on Friday morning and we give you a job, the more people that help, the quicker we can finish.

On show day we need volunteers throughout the day. During judging - card writing (at least 10 people needed), selling raffle tickets, afternoon teas, packing up at the end, all assistance is appreciated.

If you would like to help and can spare a hour or so just see Bill at the meeting or phone him later. Bill can explain what is required and he will point you to somewhere to help out.

Any cooks out there? We are looking for home made scones for the Devonshire teas.

A volunteers list will go around the room at the October meeting. Add your name wherever you can help out.



GROWING DAHLIAS

When few flowers are blooming through autumn, there's one that will continue to shine on: the dahlia. Once considered old-fashioned, dahlias (Dahlia sp.) are making a comeback to the gardening world – it's a wonder they ever left! Their flamboyant blooms burst onto the scene in late summer, lasting well through the autumn months, and come in a spectacular mix of yellows, reds, oranges, pinks and purples.



They're also available in many forms and different sizes, ranging from dwarf 40cm to 1.5-2m giants. You can grow dahlias from seed or tubers – both will happily thrive in a pot or planted in the garden. And, with reasonable care, they will produce a mass of colourful blooms for years to come.

Climate

Dahlias prefer warm areas but can be grown outdoors in all climates. In colder climates, tubers should be planted only when the last frost has passed.

Position

These plants are sun-lovers, so choose a sunny position in the garden where they'll get at least six hours of sunlight. Ensure they are protected from strong winds.



Dahlia Cafe au Lait

Soil

Dahlias grow best in moist, well-drained soil. Before planting, improve the soil by digging in well-rotted organic matter such as compost, leaf mould and manure.

Planting tubers

The easiest way to grow dahlias is from tubers, which are sold packaged (like bulbs) in late winter and spring. They look great planted en masse, so prepare an area of garden well in advance. And if you have friends with dahlias, maybe you could encourage them to share!

The tubers gradually multiply beneath the soil, and if you dig up the plant when it's dormant over winter, you can divide the tuberous roots and replant the divisions.

Plant tubers at a depth of 10cm and about 30-90cm apart, using closer spacing for smaller varieties. Ensure the growing tips are facing up. Tall-growing dahlias will need staking, so it's a good idea to put the stake in at planting time, when

there's little chance of damaging the tubers.

Water

When planting in spring, water generously at first, then only lightly until the plant reaches about 15cm high.

Fertiliser

When the plants are about 30cm tall, apply a general all-purpose fertiliser. Spread it in a circle around the plant, then fork it in and water thoroughly. When buds appear, give liquid feeds of soluble fertiliser every 10-14 days to promote large blooms and longer flowering.

Pruning

As dahlias grow, pinch out the growing tips to encourage bushy growth. Regularly cut flowers to promote flowering – they make great cut flowers to display in vases.

Post-flowering

After flowering has finished, leave plants to die down. If your soil doesn't remain wet or cold for too long over winter, leave tubers in the ground and they will re-shoot the following year. For colder climates, you'll need to lift and store the tubers. Or, if your dahlia is in a pot, leave it to die back naturally and pop the pot in a shady spot or, in frosty areas, in a garden shed. Replant tubers once the weather warms up, in late winter to mid-spring.



TOMATO GROWING

After the wet and cold days winter have gone we feel the warmth of the sun and seeing spring bulbs, blossom on the trees. Many people to start their summer vegetable garden, particularly the tomato seedlings.

When you buy your young Tomato seedlings, these can be planted directly into the garden. The traditional 'planting into the garden' day is Cup Day. However, as long as you are confident night time temperatures won't fall below about 5°C, you can plant out earlier. However, some people plant their seedlings in the garden earlier and protect them from cold weather at night with an upturned bucket or cloche.

Pots or garden? Tomatoes can be grown either in large pots (sized around 40 cm wide and 40 cm deep) or in the garden. It is important to use fresh, good quality potting mix in pots, or grow tomatoes in a different place in the garden each year to avoid soil virus build-up (which causes plants to wilt and become unproductive).

Fertilise every 4 weeks or so, to maintain vigorous growth. 'Indeterminant' tomato plants grow tall (e.g. Grosse Lisse or Tommy Toe), and need to be tied to a stake as they grow.

Two tomato plants can share one stake. 'Bush' (or 'determinant') tomatoes (e.g. Roma) are usually more compact. Whilst some still need a stake, others (e.g. Tatura Dwarf) are stocky plants and support themselves. It is best to put the stake in the ground or pot before planting the tomato seedling, to avoid spearing the tomato plant's roots.

Soil and aspect. Make sure the soil you plant your tomatoes in is friable, with plenty of manure (e.g. chicken manure), compost and lime. Mushroom compost is also an excellent soil conditioner. Use gypsum to break up heavy soil. Tomatoes enjoy a sunny aspect and can be planted at the back of the veggie patch with shorter veggies at the front. You may need to protect plants from the hot afternoon sun with removable shade cloth in February and March.

Which varieties to plant? This really depends on personal preference. Consider the following: High yield and reliability: Gross Lisse, Rouge de Marmande, Tigerella, Tommy Toe.

Sweet flavour: Black Krim, Black Russian, or yellow tomatoes like Sunray or Jaune Flamme.

Colour: Green Grape, Green Zebra, Indigo Rose, Red & Black, Earl of Edgecome (orange), Snow White (white), Black Cherry, Cherokee Purple or Brandywine (purple).

Shape: Roma, San Manzano (oval); Gross Lisse, Australian Red (round); Hungarian Heart, Ox Heart (heart shaped); Tommy Toe, Cherry Roma (small).

'Cooking' tomatoes: Palmwoods, Roma, San Manzano.

Early varieties: Jaune Flamme, Stupice.

Tall or short plant: short plants include Riesenstraube, Roma, Tatura Dwarf.

Maintenance. As your tomato plants grow, unless you have a stocky variety, you will need to tie

them to a stake. You may want to pinch out the laterals, which are the side shoots between the main stem and the growing points. This will prevent your plant getting very leafy and dense and will thus allow your tomato fruit more sun. You will probably get less tomatoes by pinching out the laterals, but your tomatoes should be larger. You could also remove any shoots that start growing near the base of the plant once the plant is established.

Staggered planting. Tomatoes planted now generally start producing fruit from late December to February, depending on variety. To have tomatoes through until May, plant another crop in late December. Tommy Toe is a good variety that will keep producing as the weather gets cooler in May.

LUMBERJACK CAKE



A Lumberjack Cake is an old-fashioned apple and date cake with a caramelised coconut topping. When baked, the cake part is a sticky marriage of apple pieces and dates. It's almost like a pudding so don't be expecting your typical fluffy cake crumb here. The favourite part is the caramelised topping of brown sugar, butter and coconut. When baked it turns into a sweet chewy layer of awesome.

Equipment:
23cm Springform cake tin.

Ingredients:

Cake.

2 Green Apples, peeled, finely chopped (about 400g).

200g Dried Dates, chopped.

1 teaspoon Bicarbonate Soda.

250ml Boiling Water.

125g Unsalted Butter, softened.

1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract.

200g Caster Sugar.

1 large egg.

180g Plain Flour.

Topping.

60g Butter.

100ml Full Cream Milk.

110g Brown Sugar.

60g Shredded Coconut.

Method:

Preheat the oven to 180 degrees Celsius (160 fan-forces; 350F).

In a medium bowl add the chopped apples and dates, bicarb soda and boiling water. Stir so the ingredients are evenly coated in water. Cover the bowl with clingfilm and leave the bowl aside until it's at room temperature.

In the bowl of an electric mixer beat the softened butter, vanilla and sugar until it becomes thick pale and creamy. Scrape down the sides of the bowl occasionally. Beat in the egg until combined.

Use a spatula to gently stir in the flour, and the apple/date mixtures including the water it was soaking in. Don't drain the water! Pour the batter into the cake tin.

Check the oven has reached the right temperature, set your kitchen timer for 45 minutes, and place the cake on the centre rack of the oven.

While the cake is baking prepare the topping. In a small saucepan add the butter, brown sugar milk and coconut. On low heat stir them together until the butter has melted and the sugar is completely dissolved. Set aside.

Remove the cake from the oven at 45 minutes. Pour the topping evenly over the cake. Return the cake to the middle rack of the oven and bake for a further 30 minutes. The cake is ready when a skewer inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean.

Let the cake cool upright in the tin.

SPEAKERS

If anyone knows a person or company that is willing to speak on a garden related topic at one of our meetings in 2020. Can you give the details to our organiser, Helen Salisbury, 9481 6345.

MEMBERS NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU
October: Joy Raftopoulos, Shirley & Ken Kendall.

We wish you all a wonderful celebration.

COMING EVENTS

2 November Sat - 3 Sunday. The Australian Pelargonium and Geranium Society. Saturday 12pm-4pm, Sunday 9.30- 4pm. Plants and cuttings for sale. Good free parking. Location Bellfield Community Centre, Corner of Oriel Rd and Banksia st. Ivanhoe MW 31E4. \$5 entry includes morning/ afternoon tea. Contact Lorna on 0404941462.

3 November 11 am. Victorian Iris Society Main Show. Location Mt Waverley Community Centre, 47 Miller Crescent, Mount Waverley.

9 November Sat - 10 Sunday. Bromeliad Society of Victoria - Bromeliad Show. Times Sat 9am-4pm, Sun 10am-3pm. Entry Adults \$4, Seniors \$3. Colourful bromeliad display, huge range of bromeliads for sale, Books & Information available, Hot Food & Drinks Available. Please bring your own carry bags. Location N G Wishart Senior Citizens Centre, 964 Nepean Hwy, Moorabbin (MW 77E6). Contact bromsocvic@gmail.com.

9 November Sat - 10 Sunday. Rose Society of Victoria - Spring Rose Show 2019 & Australian bred roses display. Times Sat 1pm-5pm, Sun 10am-4.30pm. Entry: \$5.00, Conc. \$4.00. Rose championship and displays. Rose bushes, bunches of roses and garden needs for sale. Guest speakers. Refreshments. Advice. Raffles. Displays by Regional Rose Gardens. Location Mt Waverley Community Centre. Miller Crescent (corner Stephenson Rd), Mt Waverley. (Melways Map 61, C 12). Contact www.rosesocietyvic.org.au for information.

16 November Sat - 17 Sunday. African Violet & Gesneriad 2019 Show & Plant Sale. Times Sat 1pm-4pm, Sun 11am-4pm. Entry \$5. Show & Sale Plants, Advice & Equipment, Demonstrations, Crafts & Refreshments. Location Mt Waverley Community Centre, Miller Cresc (Cnr Stephenson Rd), Mt Waverley. Contact www.facebook.com/earlymornafriicanvioletgroup/

17 November. Annual Salvia Plants at Nobelius. Time; 10am - 2pm. Great Bargains until stock run out. Come early after the Emerald Market. Email your order, so you don't miss out.

Location Nobelius Heritage Park, Crighton Rd, Emerald, under the Puffing Billy Line. Contact Enquiries: Phone Lyndi Ph9803454.

FIND THE WORD

Well, how did you go with finding the word in the last newsletter? The word is –

FIGURE

The word this month has 6 letters. What could it be?

Look at the four pictures for the clue. Answer next newsletter.



MONTHLY COMPETITION

October 23rd: One Stem Iris.

November 27th: No Competition – Presentation of Awards.

MONTHLY MEETING

October 23rd: Angelo from Deep Green Permaculture. Managing your garden naturally, Pest and weed control, Companion planting, Safe Garden Procedures.

November 27th: Christmas Breakup Night.