

NEWSLETTER

Registered Address: P.O. Box 1004, Preston, 3072.

Registered Number A0006535U

PRESIDENT:
BILL CHAMBERLAIN

ISSUE NO. 250

JUNE 2024



1934 – 2024 90 Years

Information:
Phone: 0438 467 836

E-mail:
prestongardenclub@hotmail.com

Web Address:
www.prestongardenclub.org.au

MEETING TIME CHANGE

NOTICE: As from Wednesday May 22nd meeting. The meeting start time will change.

Doors will open at **7pm**, meeting will start at **7.30pm**. Half an hour earlier!

If you are running late, don't worry, just come in and take a seat.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Preston Garden Club Inc. will be held at 7.30pm, on July 24th, 2024, in Preston Shire Hall, corner of High & Gower Streets, Preston.

GRASS CLIPPINGS

Grass clippings are a great way to add nutrients and organic matter into your garden soil. Do you know that the secret to a green thumb is not just about growing plants but also collecting their manure? The use of grass can help maintain your garden's fertility and also reduce waste.



Why are Grass Clippings Excellent for Garden?

Decomposed grass clippings contain 4% nitrogen, 1% phosphorus and 2% potassium which can be converted to organic fertilizer. Even though they may not seem like much on their own, the microorganisms in soil thrive off of these nutrients as well!

1. Lawn Fertilizer

Save money by letting your lawn clippings do the work for you! It's easy. Simply leave them on the grass and they will save up to 25% of fertilizer consumption. But only leave grass clippings on the lawn if they are short, shorter pieces will break down faster. Mulching mode on your lawn mower is a great way to cut the grass into smaller pieces, so use it for cutting the grass into shorter pieces.

2. Grass Clippings Compost

You can't make compost from only grass clippings, but it's a great way to recycle them. In addition, if you mix in some other materials like leaves or sticks for example they will break down more quickly and the mixture won't rot or smell as much! The trick to a successful compost pile is using other organic waste such as leaves, twigs and shredded branches in proportion of about 1:1 or 2:1. You should add two parts grass clippings with one part dry organic matter. In humid weather, especially in spring and

autumn it's important to let your grass clippings dry for 1 or 2 days before putting them into the compost pile. Your finished product will be ready within 3 months with this step!



3. Grass Clippings for Mulch

The best way to get your weeds out is with the help of some weed killer. But if you haven't used any chemical lately, use dried grass clippings for mulching in the garden instead! Spread on 2-3 cm thick layer near the base of plants or grass clippings. The mulch keeps water closer to its source by limiting evaporation, which can be especially helpful in drought conditions! Clipping your grasses to make mulch is an easy way to reduce the amount of work you have in spring. You can lay ¼ inches thick or less if it's fresh, as this will allow them break down quickly before they begin rotting and smell up whatever garden space they're sitting on (or even worse, mould). Thicker layers made with older clippings are not only too wet but also invite mould growth—which doesn't sound appealing at all!

4. Grass Clippings in Vegetable Garden

Nitrogen is essential for plants, especially those that need large amounts of it. Nitrogen-loving vegetables like lettuce and other green veggies benefit from the presence in grass because they are able to use its nutrients more efficiently! The best way to use your grass clippings is by mulching them. The thick, moist layers of this material will be great for preventing weeds from growing in or around any planting you have going on at home!



5. Grass Clippings Slow Release Fertilizer

Not only are grass clippings an excellent source of nutrients for the garden, but they also have a long lasting effect. A single application can be sufficient to last through all winter without needing any additional input! Incorporate 2 to 3 inches of grass clippings 6 inches deep in your garden soil. These added nutrients will help make up for any lack you may experience with general fertilization and work as an Eco-friendly source that's also easy on the earth! To prevent mixing weed seeds, take care not to mix different types together when incorporating them into planting beds or walkways.



6. Grass Clippings Liquid Fertilizer

If you want a liquid fertilizer that is 100% organic and effective, take grass clippings. The N-P-K level for this product is around 1 – 0.5 –

3.1 This means it has low levels of phosphorus but high potassium content as well! To make the ultimate “liquid green man” all one needs to do is fill up their bucket with 2/3 part fresh cuttings from your lawn or garden. Fill the bucket with water and close the lid. Let it steep for 3 days to make sure all nutrients are extracted from your clippings, then store in an easily accessible place! Soak the plants thoroughly using this solution. Depending on how big of a plant you have, apply up to 1 quart for those in pots and half cup if they're outside; make sure there's no seepage at bottom holes before continuing with your watering schedule.

Tips & Warnings

It is important to use only grass that has not been treated with herbicides.

All of your yard's grass clippings are precious! Make sure to collect only what you need for the garden, and don't forget about other organic materials that can help combat bad smells in compost piles.

Grass clippings are a great way to add more nutrients and organic matter in your compost pile. When used, they give off abundant heat that speeds up decomposition greatly!

Fresh grass clippings have a Carbon / Nitrogen ratio of around 20:1, depending on the species and season. This can vary significantly from one type to another so it's important for anyone who wants their lawn look green all year round!

HAPPINESS IS



...seeing your flowers
grow and bloom.

PLANT SPORT MUTATIONS

Plant Sport Mutations - What Does It Mean When A Plant “Throws A Sport”

What is a Sport in the Plant World? A sport in the plant world is a genetic mutation that results from a faulty chromosomal replication. The results of the mutation are a segment of the plant that is distinctly different from the parent plant in both appearance (phenotype) and genetics (genotype). The genetic change is not a result of unusual growing conditions; it is an accident, a mutation. In many cases the new trait can be handed down to the organism's offspring.

Plant sport mutations can add flecks of white to a flower or double the amount of flowers on a stem. The climbing hybrid tea roses are sports of regular shrub form hybrid tea roses; “Climbing Peace” is a sport of “Peace.” Flowers are not the only plants to be affected by sports. Many varieties of fruits are sports such as ‘Grand Gala’ and ‘Big Red Gala’, which are both derived from ‘Gala’ apple varieties. The nectarine is also another example of a sport, which was developed from a peach.



Apple Royal Gala

The term plant sport is the variation of the whole plant, and a bud sport is the variation of only a single branch. Bud sports are also a common cause of the variegation that is seen on some plant foliage. The inability to produce chlorophyll in the leaf indicates that some mutation has occurred. The result is a white or yellow area on the leaf. There are other characteristics that could vary from the original plant such as the size of the leaf, the form and the texture.

When a plant throws a sport, it is not usually a problem. The sport will either die out or change back to its original form. If you see something unusual with your plants and if the sport appears to have characteristics that would be desirable, it could be worth trying to root the plant to see if it continues to grow in the mutative way. The sport may be cultivated to make a new variation of the plant.

The climbing versions of the Peace rose, the Australian-bred Lorraine Lee and the lemon-yellow bush rose Friesia (discovered in a Nar Nar Goon rose nursery), for instance, are all sports. Geraniums, chrysanthemums and azaleas are other plants that can throw sports.



Rose Friesia

Many sports are likely not even noticed, either because they are so similar to the original or because they just aren't interesting enough. Certainly there are outstanding sports out there just waiting to be

discovered and appreciated, or even exploited.

In 2005, when nurseryman David Glenn (Lambley Nursery) noticed a branch of intriguingly variegated foliage had mysteriously appeared on a euphorbia plant, he was quick to act. He took cuttings and by 2008 had a striking new plant, Ascot Rainbow, a uniquely variegated euphorbia that has become a garden standout marketed by Australian company Plants Management Australia.



Euphorbia Ascot Rainbow

Roses, especially, are prone to "throwing a sport". Probably Australia's most-famous rose sport is from one of the world's top-selling roses, the German-bred white Iceberg rose. Back in the early 1990s Hobart rose breeder Lilia Weatherly noticed a few blushed pink blooms among the white ones on her Iceberg bushes. Quickly realising the potential, she shrewdly registered this sport via Plants Breeders Rights before allowing a Sydney nursery to market it.

The result was Pink Iceberg, later renamed Blushing Pink Iceberg, an immediate international success. Back then, Lilia confided the royalties from Blushing Pink

Iceberg would be her retirement fund.



Rose Blushing Pink Iceberg

Well, the plant breeder, now deceased, bolstered her retirement fund further in later years with follow-on Iceberg sports such as Brilliant Pink Iceberg and Burgundy Iceberg. All around the world others are making money from similar sports. You can too ... if you're super observant and lucky.



Rose Burgundy Iceberg

You first need to talk to an expert to confirm it is a sport, that it hasn't already been discovered and that it's different enough to be marketable. Next, you need to have the sporting part of the plant isolated — and more plants propagated and tested to determine they are stable and won't revert to the original once planted. If your prospects are promising you should early on follow Lilia Weatherly's example by having your find registered via PBR (details are at ipaaustralia.gov.au/plant-breeders-rights/managing-pbr). It can be a pricey process, but the rewards, especially when plants are sold internationally, can be hefty.

You may even choose to name your new sport after yourself, a friend or someone you admire.

Becoming a sports lover can add a whole new dimension to gardening.

APPLE & SOUR CREAM SLICE



Ingredients:

- 125 g butter melted.
- 200 g (1 ½ cups) self-raising flour.
- 150 g (¾ cup) caster sugar.
- 65 g (¾ cup) desiccated coconut.
- 2 tsp vanilla extract.
- 2 eggs.
- 250 g sour cream.
- 2 apples peeled and thinly sliced.
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon.

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 180 degrees celsius (160 if using a fan forced oven).
- Grease and line a 20cm square cake tin with baking paper.
- Place the melted butter, caster sugar, coconut and vanilla extract into a medium sized bowl. Sift over the self raising flour. Mix until smooth and creamy.
- Press mixture into the tin and bake for 15-20 minutes or until lightly golden.
- Take the slice out of the oven and layer the thinly sliced apple over the top.
- In a bowl, beat the sour cream and eggs together until well combined. Pour the sour cream mixture over the top of the apple.
- Sprinkle the ground cinnamon over the top (or cinnamon sugar).
- Place back into the oven for another 20 minutes or until the sour cream has set in.
- Allow to cool in the tin before placing into the fridge to cool completely.
- Cut into slices when completely cold.



TRADING TABLE

As was talked about at the last general meeting, we are trialling a trading table. The idea will be if you have any excess pot plants, donate them to the trading table. All funds will go to support the Club. Helen Shugg has volunteered to look after it. So speak to her at the meeting to know more.

NEW MEMBER

Welcome to new member, Diane from Maribyrnong, joined at the last meeting.

MEMBERS NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

June: Pat Kilpatrick, Robyn Bate, Diane Ryan and Gavin Warner.

We wish you all a wonderful celebration.

FIND THE WORD

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

BEANS

The word this month has 5 letters. What could it be?

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



MONTHLY COMPETITION

June 26th: One Pot/Container Fern.

July 24th: A Floral Arrangement Using Flowers and Foliage.

August competition is cancelled due to our 90th celebrations.

MONTHLY MEETING

7.30pm start (New Start Time)

June 26th: Claire Weekley - Friends of Merri Creek.

July 24th: Annual General Meeting, plus a garden video.