



News

February 2021



To promote all forms of gardening. To encourage a greater interest in gardening in the district and to help all indoor and outdoor gardeners.

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Welcome to all to the start of a new year. We all will be hoping for a much better one than the year we have just been through. It may not have been all bad, many have found a lot of things we thought were necessary were not so necessary. The lack of contact was one of the worst things and of course many of those with businesses were hard hit.

Now we have to make decisions on how we go about the future meetings for the Garden Club. Govt regulations are that no food or drink can be served at the meeting, masks must be worn and 30 people maximum at a meeting as electronic QR signing is not available.

The committee asks that members please get in touch promptly with a committee member on their thoughts whether they would like to attend a meeting (masks, no food), or not. It is important the committee knows what the members want to do.

Please let the committee know your thoughts on the matter.

What to plant in February

asil, beans, beetroot, cabbage, cauliflower, coriander, carrots, chives, celery, chives, cress, cucumber, parsley, parsnip, radish, silver beet, sunflower, sweet corn, thyme

Add a few flowers for colourchamomile, petunias, snapdragons, phlox or marigolds



There's nothing scarier than that split second when you lose your balance in the shower and you think : 'THE'RE GOING TO FIND ME NAKED:



Don't let them take your temperature when you enter the Supermarket., It's a govt plot to erase your memory. I went to the supermarket to buy a loaf of bread and a bottle of milk and came home with a case of beer and 12 bottles of wine

Thanks to all who helped with articles and pictures for this edition of the Garden Club newsletter

All correspondence should be addressed to the person by name or title such as President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary or News Editor, Doncaster Garden Club Inc., and forwarded to:

Doug Brewer 51 Manningham Road Bulleen 3105 or Joan Driver



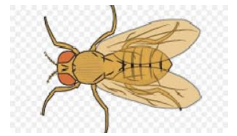
Pauline has had some success with Zucchini and button squash

But she has had Queensland Fruit Fly in an apricot crop Christmas week.

If you have signs of fruit fly remove neglected fruit trees as they perpetuate the breeding cycle of 1000 eggs per day per fly every 12 days. It's worse than a rabbit plague.

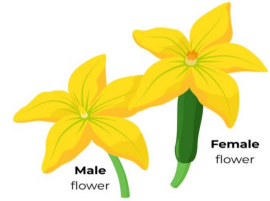
The Department of Agriculture said to boil, freeze or microwave affected fruit to break the 12 day cycle of breeding. Composting perpetuates it.

Also hang bait traps. The ones bought at hardware store for ordinary flies work well or make ones own with apple cider vinegar. The container needs a small hole for them to fly in. They then cannot escape.



Hand pollination of Cucurbits (pumpkin and Squashes)

Chose male and female flowers Start with the male flower cut it off at the base and take off the petals to expose the male part open the female flower and rub the male flower into the female part. Best done early in the morning. Also results seem better if it is done early in the season



Cucumbers To save the seed leave the fruit to ripen on the vine. White varieties turn yellow, green ones turn golden or brown. Those left on the vine can grow quite large. The colouring at maturity can be an indication of trueness to type. The mature cucumber can be stored for a while before extracting the seeds. Scoop the pulp and seeds into a bowl and leave to ferment for a couple of days so that the jelly around the seeds dissolves. This procedure will also kill off any seed-borne diseases. Wash well in a sieve under running water. Spread seeds out thinly on wax paper or sieve to dry for a week or ten day. They will be needed to be moved about for the first day or so, so they don't stick together when drying. The seeds will last for four years in the open air if in a dry climate and up to 10 years in ideal closed storage conditions.

Usage The home gardener knows the superior crisp texture and taste of fresh young cucumbers from their garden. Milk products like cream and yoghurt complement cucumber and are used in dressing for Indian raita (cucumber and yoghurt salad). Old cucumbers can be cooked up in a quick curry or stir fry. Spanish gypsies use a slice of cucumber on bruises. A cool slice placed over each eye is believed to relieve strain and fatigue.



CUCUMBER SALAD

INGREDIENTS

40ml (2 tablespoons) lime juice
40ml (2 tablespoons) rice vinegar
80ml (1/3 cup) fish sauce
2 tablespoons caster sugar
1 small red chilli, seeded, cut into thin strip
1 small red onion, finely chop
1/2 cup chopped fresh coriander
1 telegraph cucumber, chopped

METHOD

1. Combine the lime juice, rice vinegar, fish sauce and sugar in a small bowl, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Place the cucumber, chilli, onion and coriander in a medium bowl, pour over the dressing and stir to combine.



Sabrina Hahn, permaculture & horticulturist in WA. provides this recipe for making a good potting mix and it has been passed on by Pauline

1 bag of best potting mix 1/2 a laundry bucket each of compost and old sheep or cow manure
2 handfuls Rock dust and seaweed for mulch. I would suggest pine mulch/ needles as the strawberries, tomatoes, capsicums, cucumber can all cope with slightly acidic soil. Otherwise, sugarcane mulch is convenient as it is chaffed.

Biochar is another additive which will help. Both biochar and rock dust both alkalize the pH slightly so don't be heavy handed. I always like to add a big handful of gypsum for the calcium.





As the editor was a bit desperate to find much for the newsletter he had to resort to Show and BTell This Christmas Lily looks beautiful and these Rouge de Marmande tomatoes (total weight 220 grams) are keeping us well supplied. We have had good results with Rocket , Zucchini's. Leafy lettuce. Spring onions and cucumbers. There is a good crop in the later tomatoes. I did have a good crop of passion fruit, having counted over 100. Now I have about 10 left, no I have not picked them, something else has. The few I have are in bread bags. (we've eaten the bread) Project for next year, save the Passion fruit

Tomatoes, where they came from and how to save the seed.

Although the tomato originated in South America as a weed in a field of corn, it was domesticated in Mexico and South America. When they were taken to Europe by Columbus they were suspected of being poisonous . In a seed catalogue of 1760 they were featured as ornamental and it took another century to be offered as a vegetable by the same seed house. Its Italian name pomodoro (golden apple) is evident that yellow varieties predominated. They were called love apples in 19th century England.



Saving the seed. Tomatoes are self pollinating, the best plants should be marked and inspected during the growing season to ensure they are free from disease

The fruit from the lower three hands of tomatoes is best for seed. Allow the fruit to ripen just beyond the eating stage, Cut them open squeeze out the jelly and seeds putting them in a jar or bowl. Label the jar and leave in a warm place. If the jar is not disturbed a foam will form on top and a beneficial fermentation will take place caused by a microbe acting on the sticky gel that surrounds the seeds. The only danger is to leave the fermentation too long, leading to early germination

As soon as the foam forms, scoop it off the top add water and pour the whole lot through a sieve, wash and rub clean. The jelly around the seeds will have been washed off and the seeds will appear. Spread them onto sheets of shiny paper in a single layer and dry somewhere safe, out of the sun. After a few hours drying rub the seeds between your palms to stop the seeds from sticking. Store in an envelope and label the contents.

Seeds should be planted to the depth of 2 to 3 times their diameter, however it is better to sow too shallow than too deep. The reason for this is that the germ cannot make it's way through too thick a layer of soil. It will die from exhaustion, lack of air, or too much moisture. For shallow planting the surface of the soil should be made as fine as possible, the seed sown evenly over, then the surface slightly beaten with the back of a spade. Frequent watering may be necessary, if it doesn't rain, water with a mist twice a day for the first few days and then once a day for a few more. Too much or too little, water is a problem. Seeds are often washed away, or tumbled to destruction by too powerful a jet of water, or heavy rainfall

Transplant seedlings after the second set of adult leaves emerge and protect them. Note that a lot of seedlings have juvenile leaves that are different from the adult leaves. After planting protect them from strong sun for a day or two.

The old Doberman thinks, "Oh, oh! I'm in deep shit now! Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat.



Hearing this, the young lion halts his attack in mid-stride, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees. "Whew!," says the lion, "That was close! That old Doberman nearly had me!"

Meanwhile, a squirrel who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the lion. The squirrel soon catches up with the lion, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the lion. The young lion is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here, squirrel, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine!"

Now, the old Doberman sees the lion coming with the squirrel on his back and thinks, "What am I going to do now?," but instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet.

Just when they get close enough to hear, the old Doberman says, "Where's that squirrel? I sent him off an hour ago to bring me another lion!"

Moral of This Story Don't mess with the old dogs.

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★ Some of the articles in this edition have come from the Seed Savers Handbook by ★
★ Michel and Jude Fanton . We thank them for the use of the articles ★
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