

OCEAN GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER

JAN - FEB 2025



January in the Garden

GARDEN JOBS

- Check zucchinis & pumpkins early every morning.
- Assist with fertilisation if bees are in short supply.
- Harvest fruit before it grows too large.
- Tommie tip - Tomatoes can be picked when starting to colour & will ripen on the bench
- Apply weekly Seasol to the vegetables and citrus trees.
- Apply weekly Powerfeed to the vegetables that are not yet being harvested such as lettuces, beans & corn.
- Start broccoli & kale seedlings & keep in a cool spot.
- Keep up the watering!

SEEDS TO PLANT

Broccoli, cabbage, kale, leeks, lettuce, silverbeet, spring onions

SEEDLINGS TO PLANT

Lettuce (in a shaded area)

PESKY PESTS



- Watch out for aphids & tiny white flies. With a bit of luck the ladybirds have been breeding & will take care of them. Otherwise a good hosing down of the foliage when you are watering will help to keep the pests under control

February in the Garden

GARDEN JOBS

- Water, Water, Water.
- Prune apricot, plum, nectarine and peach trees when they have finished fruiting.
- Apply weekly Seasol & top up mulch
- Remove bean, corn, cucumber and zucchini plants when they stop fruiting.
- Check soil pH & adjust if necessary.
- Pot up the broccoli and kale seedlings and keep in a cool spot on hot days. Give them half strength liquid fertiliser twice weekly.

SEEDS TO PLANT

Broccoli, fennel, lettuce, kale, silverbeet, spring onions, chervil, coriander, parsley

SEEDLINGS TO PLANT

Lettuce, silverbeet, spinach, spring onions

TOMATO TROUBLES?

- Remove yellow & brown leaves to encourages new leaves & fruit growth
- Brown patch at the bottom of your tommies? This is called blossom-end rot. To prevent - keep watering consistently (but not too much) and apply a calcium supplement to your soil



MORE OF VIV'S GARDEN TIPS
AVAILABLE ON THE OGCG WEBSITE

Water Wisdom

As we head into the warmer months remember that the primary water source in the garden is from the tanks behind the shelter, so water conservation is a priority.

There are a number of taps in the garden connected to the tanks (check if the tap is connected to the black piping). Where you are able please use watering cans to water plots & return to under the sink in the shelter after use.

Hoses may be used on community plots or on member plots where using a watering can is not physically possible for you.

Town water should only be used if there is no tank water available.

Keep up your mulching to reduce water loss!



Composting 101 with Chris K

COMPOSTING BASICS

- Happy composters require both "brown matter" (**high in carbon**), such as straw, shredded paper, sawdust & pine needles, & "green matter" (**high in nitrogen**), which includes vegetable & fruit waste, fresh seed-free weeds, & fresh grass clippings. Composts do not love dairy, meat, citrus, onion/garlic or whole seeds ie. avocado seeds.
- The ideal ratio is about 3-4 parts **brown** to 1 part **green**. If you add too much green material, composting slows down, resulting in a soggy mess. You may find that a paper shredder is just the ticket for adding lots of brown matter. If you used to shred paper for security; now, shred it to feed your compost.

TUMBLER COMPOSTERS

- Turn every 2-3 days, spinning it 5-10 times to mix the ingredients or turn it each time you add compost.
- Add green waste & brown materials like raked leaves or sawdust. A good balance of carbon-containing & nitrogen-containing ingredients is important.
- Once one chamber is filled, you can start the process again in the 2nd chamber.



REMEMBER:

Please chop up all material into 2-3inch pieces before adding to compost. If waste cannot be chopped up, pop it next to the big composts to be mulched at working bees.



Preparing Eggshells for the Compost

Egg shells help plants grow by releasing:-

- calcium to strengthen the cells walls of the plant,
- magnesium aids the process of photosynthesis,
- potassium reduces water loss & wilting,
- prevent blossom end rot (calcium deficiency)
- helps worms digest food,
- raises the soil pH (less acidic)

Like many of us I used to throw my egg shells into the compost bins but found they didn't break down for a long time. Crushing egg shells before adding to the compost can help them break down faster. To assist with this process dry the egg shells in a warm oven.

I place them in the oven after cooking & turned the oven off, leaving them in until oven is cold. I then crush them to a fine powder either with a mortar & pestle or ground them in a coffee grinder...much easier!!

Handle old egg shells with care as there is a small risk of salmonella contamination.

Check for hard boiled egg remains in the shells as they can attract pests....I throw these in the bin

By Gaye Hose

Check the OGCG Website to read Gaye's full article



Upcoming

JANUARY

18th
Bellarine Farmer's Market

26th
Weekend Working Bee (10-12pm)

FEBRUARY

11th
Midweek Working Bee (10am-12pm)

15th
Bellarine Farmer's Market

23rd
Weekend Working Bee (10am - 12pm)



White Board

Remember the whiteboard is there if you:

- Want to request help to water your plot
- Have produce to share
- Want to notify others that you've watered the community plots so we don't over water them
- Want to draw a cute picture :)

