

OCEAN GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026



November in the Garden

Spring is in full swing, and the soil is warming up quickly.

- Plant out warm-season crops like tomatoes, zucchini, capsicum, eggplant, and basil.
- Sow climbing beans, sweet corn, and cucumbers directly into garden beds.
- Keep up with mulching to conserve moisture and reduce weeds.
- Begin regular deep watering as days lengthen and temperatures rise.
- Watch for aphids on tender new shoots and use a gentle spray of soapy water if needed.
- Harvest early crops of lettuce, herbs, and spring onions before they bolt.

Seedlings to plant:

- Tomatoes, capsicum, zucchini, cucumbers, eggplant, basil, silverbeet.

Seeds to sow:

- Beans, sweet corn, pumpkins, radishes, melons.

Pesky pests:

- Aphids, white cabbage moths, snails, and slugs.

December in the Garden

Summer heat sets in – time to protect your plants and harvest often.

- Water early in the morning or evening to prevent evaporation.
- Shade tender greens or use mulch to keep roots cool.
- Pick tomatoes, zucchinis, beans, and cucumbers regularly to encourage new growth.
- Keep deadheading flowers and herbs to prolong their harvest and appearance.
- Check for powdery mildew on zucchinis and cucumbers.
- Continue succession planting of fast crops like lettuce, rocket, and basil.

Seedlings to plant:

- Chillies, basil, lettuce, perpetual spinach, silverbeet.

Seeds to sow:

- Cucumbers, zucchini, beans, and sweetcorn.

Pesky pests:

- Whiteflies, spider mites, earwigs.

January in the Garden

Our summers can be hot and windy – plan for resilience.

- Deep water twice weekly and top up mulch where it has thinned.
- Harvest daily – zucchinis, tomatoes, and beans grow fast this month.
- Save seeds from strong summer performers for next season.
- Keep an eye out for sunburnt fruit; provide shade cloth where needed.

- Continue picking herbs regularly to prevent flowering and maintain bushy growth.

Seedlings to plant:

- Late-season cucumbers, basil, chillies, and perpetual spinach.

Seeds to sow:

- Sweetcorn, pumpkin, beetroot, carrots (in cooler beds).

Pesky pests:

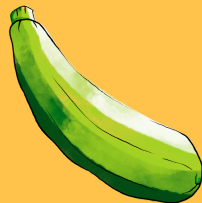
- Aphids, thrips, mites, and fruit fly.

Garden Veggie Tart with Fresh Herbs



Ingredients:

- 1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
- 1 small zucchini, thinly sliced
- 1 small eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1 tomato, thinly sliced
- 1 small red onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt & pepper
- 1 tsp balsamic glaze (optional)
- 100g crumbled feta or goat cheese
- Handful of fresh basil, parsley or oregano, chopped



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 200°C. Line a baking tray with paper and lay out the pastry.
2. Layer the vegetables on top, slightly overlapping.
3. Brush with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
4. Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until pastry is golden and crisp.
5. Drizzle with balsamic glaze, sprinkle with feta and herbs, and serve warm or at room temperature.

Perfect for picnics, working bees, or a light summer lunch!

Tomato Potato Psyllid

Agriculture Victoria has an active biosecurity notice restricting movement of some plants on the Bellarine to control the spread of the tomato potato psyllid (TPP) (*Bactericera cockerelli*).

What is TPP?

TPP is a tiny sap-sucking insect that attacks a range of plants in the Solanaceae family: potato, tomato, eggplant, capsicum, chilli and tamarillo.

First noticed in Australia in Western Australia, it was detected in Portarlington in November 2024, and Clifton Springs in March 2025.

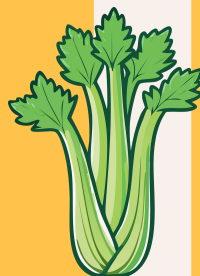
How long will this last?

Restrictions are in place until at least December.

Impact on the Garden

- The Garden is not in the restricted zone, so we're not directly impacted
- However, as Van Loon's Nursery is, we cannot buy seedlings from there to plant in the Garden

For further information please visit the blog section of our website.



Ben Shaw Workshop



Ben Shaw led another successful workshop at the Garden on Saturday, 11 October.

He complimented the healthy veg patches in the Garden, especially the plot we use to grow produce for the Market.

Thank you to Ben Shaw for again sharing your knowledge and experience!



Bunnings BBQ - Volunteers needed!

Ocean Grove Community Garden is seeking volunteers for our annual BBQ Bunnings on 30th Nov 2025.

Sign up now to sizzle sausages at our biggest fundraiser of the year at Bunnings Leopold. We need 4 teams of 4, working in 2-hour shifts, from 8am-4pm - 16 volunteers in total! Please register your interest and availability by contacting ogcommunitygarden@gmail.com



Upcoming Dates

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 11th

Midweek Working Bee (10am-12pm)

Saturday 15th

Bellarine Farmers' Market

Sunday 30th

Bunnings Fundraising BBQ



DECEMBER

Sunday 14th

Weekend Working Bee and Christmas gathering

JANUARY

Saturday 17th

Bellarine Farmers' Market

*No Working Bees Scheduled in January



Note From OGCG President

It's been a big year so far at the Garden, with much more to come. Thank you to all members whose contributions make it such a great place and community organisation. I'm delighted to be continuing as President for a second year following our recent AGM. Even better, we now have a full Committee of ten talented members ready to guide the Garden forward – welcome to Melanie, Marcus and Monica, who join Jeff, Craig, Robyn, Fe, Kate, Diana and myself.

Our thanks go to retiring Secretary Alice King, whose extraordinary service since the Garden's beginning has shaped our success, and to Lyn Nurnaitis, another long-time contributor who remains an active member.

Our monthly Farmers Market stall continues to be vital for our profile, new members, and revenue – thank you to everyone who helps. The income from the Market and upcoming Bunnings BBQ funds mulch, compost and other supplies for all plot holders. Please lend a hand where you can to share the load and the fun.

I'll share more detail about our priorities in a follow-up email after the Committee's next meeting on 12 November, but for now, I hope you continue to enjoy your gardening and the friendships that make our community so special.

Vin McKay, President of OGCG

Christmas Message

From early-morning working bees and abundant harvests to new friendships, shared knowledge, and a few well-earned cups of tea – it's been an incredible year at the Ocean Grove Community Garden. Thank you to all our members, volunteers, and friends who have tended, watered, weeded and mulched. Your care and commitment make our garden such a special place.

We wish everyone a joyful and restful Christmas, and a bright and abundant 2026 – may your gardens (and lives) continue to flourish!