

OCEAN GROVE COMMUNITY GARDEN NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY– APRIL 2026



February in the Garden

Late summer is at its peak, with long warm days and gardens producing abundantly.

- Keep harvesting tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, beans, basil, and corn regularly to encourage continued production.
- Plant out final warm-season seedlings while the soil is still hot.
- Begin planning your autumn crops – now is the time to start seeds for the months ahead.
- Water deeply in the early morning to help plants cope with heat and coastal winds.
- Mulch generously to conserve moisture and protect soil from drying out.
- Watch for powdery mildew on zucchinis and cucumbers as humidity fluctuates.
- Deadhead flowers and remove spent crops to keep beds productive.

Seedlings to plant:

Tomatoes (late), basil, lettuce, silverbeet, broccoli (early starts).

Seeds to sow:

Beans (last round), carrots, beetroot, radishes, Asian greens.

Pesky pests:

White cabbage moth, aphids, spider mites, snails after humid evenings.



March in the Garden

March is a turning point – warm days remain, but cooler nights signal the start of the autumn growing season.

- Continue harvesting summer crops, but begin clearing tired plants to make space for winter beds.
- Sow fast-growing greens now for fresh autumn salads.
- Plant brassica seedlings (broccoli, cauliflower, kale) while the soil is still warm – they'll establish quickly.
- Start composting spent summer plants (avoid diseased material).
- Keep watering consistent, but reduce slightly as temperatures soften.
- Protect young seedlings from late-summer heat spikes with shade cloth if needed.
- Coastal gardens may still dry out quickly – mulch remains essential.

Seedlings to plant:

Broccoli, cauliflower, kale, silverbeet, lettuce, spring onions.

Seeds to sow:

Spinach, rocket, radish, beetroot, carrots, coriander.

Pesky pests:

Cabbage moth caterpillars, aphids, snails, slugs as autumn moisture increases.



April in the Garden

Autumn settles in fully, with cooler nights and gentler days – ideal for leafy greens and soil repair.

- Focus on establishing winter vegetables like brassicas, spinach, and broad beans.
- Direct sow peas and broad beans – they thrive in the cooler months ahead.
- Add compost and organic matter to beds as summer crops finish.
- Continue planting herbs like parsley and coriander, which prefer cooler weather.
- Begin protecting tender seedlings from strong coastal winds and cooler evenings.
- Keep an eye on fungal issues as dew increases – good airflow is key.
- Harvest late tomatoes and capsicums before the cold slows them down.

Seedlings to plant:

Kale, broccoli, spinach, silverbeet, lettuce, parsley.

Seeds to sow:

Broad beans, peas, spinach, rocket, radish, onions.

Pesky pests:

Slugs and snails, cabbage moth, fungal mildew in damp conditions.



Secret supercharged compost!

Did you know about the secret project to create supercharged compost? Rohan has made the most of an otherwise underused area of the Garden with a project to create potent and powerful compost. He's commandeered the black compost bin behind the water tank and is creating rich compost following his own secret recipe.

Rohan has generously offered to extend his experiment to the nearby communal compost box. This was topped up with a layer of borage after vigorous weeding at January's working bee, but definitely needs some TLC. Under his guiding hand, Rohan expects to see great compost from this in a few months.

Keep an eye on the website for more information.



Late-Summer Panzanella (Tomato & Bread Salad)



A classic Italian-style garden salad that uses peak tomatoes and herbs.

Ingredients:

- Ripe tomatoes (lots)
- Day-old sourdough, torn into chunks
- Cucumber
- Red onion
- Basil + parsley
- Olive oil + red wine vinegar
- Optional: mozzarella or feta

Method:

1. Toast bread chunks lightly.
2. Toss with tomatoes, cucumber, onion.
3. Dress with olive oil + vinegar.
4. Let sit 15 minutes so it soaks up juices.
5. Finish with herbs.

Perfect with grilled fish or chickpeas.

Upcoming Dates

FEBRUARY

Saturday 21st

Bellarine Farmers' Market

Sunday 22nd

Working Bee (10am-12pm)

MARCH

Saturday 21st

Bellarine Farmers' Market

Sunday 29th

Working Bee (10am-12pm)

APRIL

Saturday 18th

Bellarine Farmers' Market

Sunday 26th

Working Bee (10am-12pm)



Newsletter - Have Your Say

We'd love your help shaping the future of our community garden newsletter. As the garden continues to grow, we want the newsletter to feel genuinely useful, enjoyable, and reflective of the people who make this place what it is.

If you have a few minutes, we'd be so grateful if you could share what you've been enjoying, what you'd love to see more of, and how you prefer to receive updates.

Participate in the survey: <https://forms.gle/DSfLYc6iXQVMsAEJA>

