

Spring 2014 Newsletter

Inside this issue:

<i>President's Message</i>	1
<i>Around the Pathways</i>	2
<i>Spring in the garden, Editorial</i> <i>Jennifer Stackhouse</i>	
<i>Spring - is it the best Season?</i>	3
<i>Article Editor</i>	
<i>Awards</i>	3
<i>Recognition of our volunteers</i>	
<i>Fun and Tips section</i>	4
<i>Laughter and useful tips</i>	
<i>Feed your Lawns</i>	4
<i>Article by Jo McGahey</i>	
<i>Gnome news corner</i>	4
<i>Kids Gnome Hunt at Eden Gardens</i>	

Special points of interest:

- President's message
- Fun and Tips section

President's Message

I take this opportunity to report on matters affecting the staff and Management Committee which, of course affect the volunteers.

Sadly we have recently lost two who were important to ECG, David Denny and Brian Self.

David Denny joined ECG as a Coordinator in December 2007. He resigned through ill health in March this year and he died in late April. David was well liked and respected by the staff members, volunteers and clients with whom he worked.

Brian Self, who had been a leader in the insurance industry, joined the Management Committee of ECG in mid 2003, serving as President from 2004 until 2012. He remained on the Management Committee until his death at the age of 82 in July this year. Brian was always a cheerful, enthusiastic and active participant in all he did and friendly towards all with whom he was associated. He led ECG during a period of significant change and growth. Throughout his period on the Committee Brian willingly gave assistance and wise counsel to any who sought it.

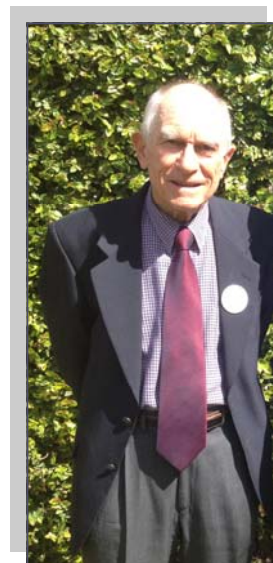
Both Brian and David will be greatly missed.

On a happier note, we have recently appointed Mitch Harris and Robbie (Robyn) Cunningham as Coordinators. Mitch joined ECG in April and Robbie in July. Both have already demonstrated enthusiasm and skills in their new roles.

Jennifer Stackhouse, having recently moved to live in Tasmania has resigned as Patron. She remains enthusiastic about the work of ECG but believes she is unable to provide any real support or contribution as Patron from Tasmania.

Finally, I encourage as many of you as are able to attend the Annual Meeting on Friday 19 September when I look forward to meeting with you.

Frank Windeyer



Brian Self

Increase in fees

Easy Care Gardening Inc last increased the gardening and lawn mowing fees in 2011. Unfortunately due to increases in insurances, motor vehicle costs, petrol and tools, there is a need for fees to rise on 1st October 2014.

The new prices will be:

Gardening: \$12 per volunteer (increase \$2 per volunteer) with a maximum charge of \$84 per visit.

Lawn mowing: very small lawn \$26, small \$32, medium \$38 and large \$50.

The minimal price rise will assist ECG to continue to provide a quality service

Around the Pathways - Spring in the garden Editorial

Jennifer Stackhouse



Luculia in fragrant flower in late winter.



If you are looking for gardening tips, try these sites:

[Sustainable Gardening Australia](http://www.sgaonline.org.au)

www.sgaonline.org.au

[Greenworld](http://www.greenworldmag.com.au)

www.greenworldmag.com.au

[Garden Drum](http://www.gardendrum.com/)

www.gardendrum.com/

I am anticipating my first spring in my new garden and I can hardly wait. Spring is exciting in every garden, but here in the cool climate of Barrington in Tasmania in an old and well-established garden there's so much that's new to me.

We moved from Sydney to Tasmania in mid July. Since we arrived it has been cold, warm, wet, sunny, frosty, cloudy, windy – indeed just about everything you could imagine. And, despite the Tassie cold, plants are already in bloom with a fragrant luculia as tall as the house, jonquils, hellebores, early camellias, late roses, hardenbergia, violets and the Japanese flowering quince in bloom too. But there's more to come as many of the trees and shrubs are leafless or just budding up and there are bulbs and perennials dormant beneath the soil.

Urgent tasks

It isn't all flowers and fun though. As I wander in the garden picking winter flowers, enjoying the new scents and trying to identify leafless trees, I've noticed tasks that need to be done. Wandering jew (*Tradescantia*) has invaded part of the garden. It will require some dedicated weeding to remove it before it spreads further. In my large veggie garden some of the beds have been invaded by oxalis. The corms are clearly visible in the ground. Dealing with this weedy problem won't be just down to hand weeding, as it is too extensive. I am going to solarize the soil by covering it with clear plastic (which we have armloads of from the protective coverings the removal company wrapped around the furniture), but I will also need to use glyphosate with a wetting agent to ensure it 'sticks' to the foliage.

As well, there's lots of pruning and tidying to be done as all the late summer and autumn perennials have to be cut back before they reshoot from the base along with clematis, roses and berries in the orchard.

Part of the vegetable garden is also under a green manure crop, which needs to be dug into the ground. At the moment it is adding nitrogen to the soil as it grows.

Veggie planting

As the soil warms there's planting to be done too. There are vegies to be planted so we can make the most of the rich volcanic soil and good rains to grow our own produce. I've already bought a bag of King Edward seed potatoes to go in the ground as August is a great time to plant spuds, and King Edwards are an old-fashioned variety that you don't often find for sale in the shops. I am also going to put in a crop of peas to enjoy for spring.

The garden also produced a bumper crop of scarlet runner beans this past summer. We know just how good the crop was as we've been harvesting the dry pods since we arrived and enjoying the large colourful crimson and black patterned beans in stews and soups. These beans do best in cool areas. For dried beans in warmer areas try planting Borlotti beans, which have colourful pink pods and pink and white beans.

Jennifer Stackhouse

To read more about my new Tasmanian garden see my blog 'Garden Shopping' on www.gardendrum.com.



Scarlet runner beans grow well in the cool conditions in Tasmania and are ideal as dried beans.

Spring - is it the best Season?

What can we expect for Spring in 2014? Our plants have been telling us for weeks it must be spring with the wonderful winter days we have been experiencing. Yes, there have been some cold days and the nights have been extra cold, or am I just getting old? And what about the glorious sunsets we have been having in Sydney? Absolutely a knockout.



So now we move into Spring and we can expect more balmy days, so throw off the doona and bring out the lightweight quilts as the nights turn to a warmer temperature.

Sydney in Spring is the perfect time of year to visit – not too hot for those used to cooler summers, and not too cool for those looking to make the most of the outdoors.

One of the best and most iconic things about springtime in any city is the colour and scent explosion that a bit of sunshine brings to gardens everywhere.

The Australian Garden Show held in Centennial Park is a great chance to see some of the beautiful and exquisite blooms all in one place. Welcoming Spring in style, the event is set to run from Thursday 4 September to Sunday 7 September every day. Visitors can stop by to see spectacular floral installations and hear from the world's leading experts in all things green-fingered. Stop by at night time to be treated to a magical display of lights and flowers, and remind yourself why Sydney in springtime is simply the best time of year.

Most Sydneysiders know about the Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney. You have probably visited Australia's oldest botanic garden and 30 hectare public showcase for over 8,800 different species of plants. What is less well known about this green oasis of peace in the heart of the city, is that it is a superb place to view spring blossoms and bulbs.

The Spring Walk is on the **Macquarie Walk** within the Royal Botanic Garden. It is behind the Botanic Garden restaurant and to the side of the gardening shop.

Make sure to book in a visit in early September. The blooming of the Spring Walk is one of the highlights of the year.



Welcome to all our new volunteers

If you surrender to the wind, you can ride it.

- Toni Morrison



'Spring Walk' Botanic Gardens
(Photos courtesy of Royal Botanic Gardens)

Easy Care Gardening Volunteer Garden Awards 2014

Eden Gardens

301 Lane Cove Road, Nth Ryde.
Ph: 9491 9900



April: John Quigley

May: Jutta Filla

June: Karin Yu

Hargraves Nurseryland

630 Old Northern Road,
Dural. Ph: 9651 1833



April: Lesley Lowe

May: Trevor Long

June: Sharon Cooper

Parkers Nursery

45 Tennyson Avenue,
Turramurra.

Ph: 9487 3888



April: Barbara Barclay

May: Monica Poole

June: Kevin Allport

Peter Whitehead Appreciation Award

Easy Care
Gardening Inc
sends warmest
wishes and
congratulations to:

Sue Cramp

This award is for
outstanding service
to volunteering.



Amanita muscaria,

Fun and Tips Section

Mushrooms, what a wonderful selection you can find. A **mushroom** (or **toadstool**) is the fleshy, spore-bearing fruiting body of a fungus, typically produced above ground on soil or on its food source. You need to be careful if picking wild fungi you can identify the edible mushrooms.

This wonderful specimen (photo on left) was spotted on the median strip in the suburb of St. Ives. **Amanita muscaria**, commonly known as

the **fly agaric** or **fly amanita**, is a mushroom and psychoactive basidiomycete fungus, one of many in the genus *Amanita*. Native throughout the temperate and boreal regions of the Northern Hemisphere, *Amanita muscaria* has been unintentionally introduced to many countries in the Southern Hemisphere, generally as a symbiont with pine plantations, and is now a true cosmopolitan species. It associates with various deciduous and coniferous trees.



Use a Hungry Bin to deposit your kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps. Compost worms to create your own liquid plant food and nutrient rich worm castings from your kitchen fruit and vegetable scraps.



Hungry Bin

Now this is a weed!

Never mind biggest fish of the day – how's this for a weed!! Trevor Long (photo on left) with his "catch".

Feed your Lawns - Jo McGahey

Spring is a great time to feed lawns.

A strong, healthy lawn is disease resistant lawn. So feed them well and feed them often. What is more, early feeding will help squeeze out nasty weeds. So as you apply a goodly dose of lawn food, according to directions on the packet, do remember to give the lawn a serious watering **BEFORE** and **AFTER** feeding. It has been so dry this Winter that feeding with dry lawn food, or even a liquid one for that matter, could cause burning.

We could be heading for a hot Summer, so my advice is, act like a boy scout and **BE PREPARED**.

Jo McGahey



The recent rains have been welcomed as it will encourage growth instead of a dust bowl.



Gnome news corner -



Eden Gardens has lots of events happening this spring, starting with 'Kids Gnome Hunt' from Tuesday 19 August through to Thursday 30 October. This is a fun gnome hunt following clues in a map that take you around the Eden Gardens displays. A fun way to introduce gardening to children.

There is also the Spring Orchid show on various dates in September and is a free event. Check the Eden Garden's What's On calendar for the events this Spring.

