

Highlights in the Spring edition

This publication is dedicated to all the volunteers of ECG and features a number of photographs of our volunteers on the job, working in the gardens or receiving awards.

Celebrating milestones - ECG celebrates in a special way.

Around the Pathways - what our people and teams have been up to.

Awards - recognition of our volunteers.

Spring comes early - article Jennifer Stackhouse .

Camellias - tip on enjoying this beauty indoors.

Remembrance of a dear friend - Bella, recipient of 'Paws' award.

Gnome corner - little help from my friend.

Easy Care Gardening is pleased to be part of the 'Statement of Principles for the Recognition of Volunteers Rights'



Events for your diary

12 Sep Thur 10.00am - 2.00pm: Plant and Volunteer information stall, outside ECG Garage, Gilroy Lane, Turrumurra.

13 Sept Frid 11.30am - AGM followed by a special anniversary lunch.

15 Sep Sun 10.00am - 4.00pm: Hornsby Shire Council - The Bushland Shire Festival, Volunteer information stall. Venue: Fagan Park, Galston.

17 Oct Thurs 9.30 am - 4.30pm. Coach trip to 'Campbell Rhododendron Gardens' at Blackheath.

19 Oct Sat 9.00am - 4.30pm: Granny Smith Festival, Volunteer information stall. Venue: Rowe Street, Eastwood.

5 Dec Thurs - International Volunteers Day.

6 Dec Frid 5.00pm ECG Volunteers' Christmas function. Venue: Ku-ring-gai Wildflower garden.



Time to celebrate as milestones are made

Easy Care Gardening celebrated 25 Years on the 8th August this year. To mark this milestone there will be a special lunch for the volunteers at 12.30pm on Friday 13 September, following the Annual General Meeting, which starts at 11.30am. We encourage you to attend, and will be presenting certificates to those volunteers who have completed 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years and 25 years. Ideally we would like to present these certificates to those volunteers in person at the AGM. So please come along to celebrate and enjoy a catchup with other volunteers at ECG.

Celebrating another milestone - with a record 40,121 hours of volunteers time recorded by Easy Care Gardening volunteers' for the 2012/2013 financial year, compared to 36,976 in the previous financial year. Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers - you make it possible for Easy Care Gardening to help 1,236 clients in the Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Ryde and Hunters Hill areas to maintain their gardens so they can stay in their homes.

The joy you bring to our community is tremendous, your dedication and love of our wonderful country and its people is very humbling. Management and staff thank you all for your great efforts.

Gardens at Blackheath - we have organised a day trip by coach for volunteers to visit the Rhododendron gardens at Blackheath on Thursday 17 October. The cost will be \$10.00 for the coach trip which includes an afternoon tea; entrance to the gardens is a gold coin. As seats are limited, it will be first in, so call the office ASAP and come along to this wonderful event.



Around the Pathways - Our Volunteers and Teams

Lately Easy Care Gardening has been combining teams to tackle overgrown and/or large gardens. Here are two stories about two different combined teams that have been out and about during the winter months.



Earlier this year the combined Easy Care Gardening teams of John Lloyd and Jenny Nakhla blitzed a garden in the Beecroft area. The client had for some time been confined to a wheelchair and the garden had been invaded by trad, privet, cassia and lantana as far as the eye could see. The two teams worked like bees converting this garden to “easy care” by removing the ‘invasion’ and mulching the garden beds. The two teams (*photo on left*) had a great time tackling the garden and stopped to enjoy a wonderful morning tea that the client’s daughter provided.



A sausage sizzle, billy tea and a shared birthday cake - these were the staples of an Easy Care Gardening combined team gathering to blitz another overgrown garden in the peaceful village of Brooklyn. With three volunteer gardening teams (*photo on left*) joined together and kindly neighbours made cups of coffee, stopped for a chat and the job was soon well underway. Rampant morning glory covering the entire front yard was ripped up to reveal a magnolia tree, already in bud beneath the weeds. The bare bones of the garden slowly appeared, three stepped beds were mulched to deter weeds and a regular lawn mowing program implemented to keep further weeds at bay. The main priority of this first garden visit was to create safe access to the house and clear the pathway around it. (*On left –teams line up for a group photo*)

The skills and good spirit of these combined teams enabled them to make a huge difference, leaving these gardens that can once again be enjoyed safely by their owners.



Story of another type of ‘combination’ is of the Rostens. After a combined 22 years of volunteering with ECG, reluctantly Noel and Rae Rosten called it quits, leaving ECG in June this year. Noel had clocked up 15 years volunteering with ECG and Rae seven years. Team Leader Lee Dickson organised a farewell lunch on their last day at ECG before Noel and Rae left for a holiday in Canada, where the gardens are magnificent. From all at ECG we wish the Rostens the best of luck and many thanks for all their hard work volunteering at ECG. (*Photo on left: On right hand side Noel and Rae with their team*)



Yards big yards small, the ‘Bundling man’ knows them all. Peter Bury commonly know by his team as the ‘bundling man’ laid down his gloves after 10 years with ECG. Peter, a man who worked hard and played an important role within the team as the chief bundler, tying up branches and cuttings, creating the perfect bundles for collection, has retired from ECG. Peter said he got a lot out of gardening and that it “lifted him a lot”, but it was time for him to give it away. To thank Peter for his dedication and celebrate his time with ECG, a lovely lunch for Peter and his wife Kathleen was hosted by the new Team Leader Pam Rosser, along with the rest of the team including the previous Team Leader Eric Smith. (*Photo on left: Peter Bury right hand side front row, Pam Rosser right hand side second row and Eric Smith far left hand side*)

ECG Volunteer awarded OAM

Congratulations to Julie Taylor who has received the ‘Medal for the Order of Australia’ in the general division of the Queen’s 2013 Birthday honours ‘Service to the Community as Volunteer with Horticulture and Service Organisations’. Julie has been a volunteer with the National Herbarium NSW Royal Botanical Gardens for over 21 years specialising in maintaining ‘seaweed’ specimens. Involved in the remounting of historically and scientifically important collections such as the ‘Lucas Collection’ containing approximately 25,000 specimens (which Julie said has mostly been mounted by herself) along with the ‘Hayden Collection’ (dating back to 1855) which contains about 2,000 specimens. Julie has given the Royal Botanical Gardens some 1,000 specimens from her own collection that she has gathered from the NSW coast along with a smaller collection to the Narrabeen Environment Centre. Along with all this Julie has spent time sourcing clothing suitable for the indigenous people in the Halls Creek area of Western Australia. What a wonderful achievement, and on top of this Julie has been a weekly garden volunteer for ECG for the past 14 years. Julie will be receiving her award on the 11th September at Government House and we all wish her the very best.



New Volunteers



Volunteers are not paid. Not because they are worthless but because they are priceless



Wendell White proudly holding his garden award



Jennifer Stackhouse



Peter Whitehead Appreciation Award

Easy Care Gardening sends warmest wishes and congratulations to:

Fran Appleton

This award is for outstanding service to volunteering.

Pei Wu Wang	Michele Jenkins	Wei Geng	Namju Kim	<u>Corporate</u>
Patrick Chang	Katherine Bowdith	Jill Beale	Gareth Pearson	Macquarie Group
Tsz Yan (Eriko) Leung	Gareth Lloyd	John Baxter	Cindy Edwards	United Way - AMP
Judy Henderson	Tiana Dimech	Lisa McLean	Marija Detkovic	National Australia Bank
Mahsa Pourakbarian	Margaret Mackintosh	Fabian Blease	Vanessa Osifo	St George Bank
Karen Jameyson	Simon Taylor	Joy Kennedy	Matthew Tenney	Rodney Lloyd
Mohammed (Behzad)	Lilly Lei	Mark Jones	Anisha Arora	Ernst & Young
Vafaei Nejad	Brett Farrar	Daniel Yeo	Supunnee Chano	United Way - GE
Josephine Lee	Angela Johnstone	Daniel Irrianto	Eva Li	Cockram Construction
Alan Anderson	Insang (Richard) Yu	Richard Camilleri	Jennifer Rogers	Robert Menzies College
Simon Partell	Georgina Mulcahy	Michael Bradley	Anna Dufour	United Way (Fuji) ANZ
Xinyu (Lyric) Zhan	Marcela Aguilar-Faba	Shilpa Cadambi		
Sanath Perera	Alisa Allahverdiyeva	Lisa Tornai		
Tobi Murray	Radhika Balakrishnan	Adrian Batshon		
Emma Jackaman	Cyril Masilamawi	WeiJia Cai		
Neha Parekh	Malcolm Devrell	Yingchen (Chris) Li		
Anthony Hutchinson	Edward Agwara	Jonathan Kohen		
Janet Drabble	Gangatharam Naidu	James Prince		
Suying Yu	Megan McManis			

Spring comes early for 2013 – Jennifer Stackhouse

Spring has sprung early this year with many plants blooming a month earlier than usual. As I write, my garden is full of spring blooms with daffodils nodding their yellow flowers and the big fat pink and blue flowers of hyacinths sending out heady wafts of fragrance. I've even spotted a single cluster of flowers on the crabapple and some deciduous trees are re-leaving. It is all very nice if a bit strange to see, but what does this early spring mean for our plants? The early burst of spring is a wake-up call for gardeners. It may mean some fruiting plants won't fruit as well as they normally do, especially if there is a late cold burst of winter weather that damages flowers or new growth. It may also mean that gardeners missed the opportunity to carry out winter spraying to control fungal diseases and other wintering pests, for example lime sulfur sprays for roses. As well, any pruning that was unfinished may need to be done after flowering. As the garden gets growing we have to move our gardening program forward to match what's happening in the garden. As plants burst into early spring growth they need extra water and fertiliser. If the cold weather stays away, summer flowers and crops can be planted earlier than usual such as tomatoes and cucumbers – but do keep an eye on the weather forecast! The early spring has come about because temperatures overall have been much warmer through winter than normal. Many pests may have survived over winter so expect a resurgence of pest and disease activity in the garden and be ready to protect your plants. If you were planning a spring event to coincide with the peak flowering time of your garden, you may need to prune to encourage a second flush of flowers or add some emergency plantings of flowering annuals to make sure there is colour in the garden.

Working bees: If you or friend enjoy a good walk, then we could use your services. On Saturdays we are looking for volunteers to assist with letter box drops of our ECG brochures. If you are interested please call the office on 9983-1644



Easy Care Gardening Volunteer Garden Awards 2013

Eden Gardens

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



April: Basundahara Dhungel

May: Philip Summerfield

June: Alan Yong

Hargraves Nurseryland

630 Old Northern Road,

Dural. Ph: 9651 1833



April: William Horan

May: Wendell White

June: Phil Manton

Parkers Nursery

45 Tennyson Avenue, Turramurra. Ph: 9487 3888



April: Maree Horan

May: Sybil Pillai

June: Michael Crane

Words of thanks from our Clients

Support our Plant Nursery:

ECG Plant Nursery open the second Thursday of each month 9.30-11.30am at 28 Britannia Street, Pennant Hills.



JB-Hornsby: Many thanks for bringing our sad garden "back to life". **TB-Nth Ryde:** Thank you for your work on my garden, very pleasant and hard working people. **BN-Berowra:** Thank you all for your hard work in our garden, hope you are all blessed with good health. **VC-Hornsby:** Thank you for my gardening job, it has been greatly admired. **J&RN-Chatswood West:** Thank you we are thrilled with the result and appreciative of the effort of all those volunteers. **R&RR-Gordon:** Thank you for the friendly gardeners who visited us and worked hard on our garden. **JP-Mt Colah:** Thank you for the wonderful helpers. **MJ-Eastwood:** Thank you for the good service I have received. **AC-Pymble:** Many many thanks for the fantastic clean up you did on my garden, it makes me feel so happy.

Camellias

Camellias, they've been cultivated here since the early days of European settlement and if you're looking for a hardy, winter flowering plant, Camellias are hard to beat. They'll give you beautiful blooms right through autumn, winter and into spring - those dark green glossy leaves are most attractive. The Japonica is the most recognisable Camellia, flowers come from late autumn, right through to spring. As its name suggests, it comes from Japan and it was the earliest of the cultivated Camellias in Australia. You can grow Camellias pretty much anywhere in Australia. They don't mind a light frost and most of them do need shade, particularly during the midday summer heat and they need protection from hot, drying winds. There'd be thousands of Camellias in gardens that have never had a feed in their lives and yet they're performing beautifully, but if you want to get the very best out of your Camellia, give them a feed with an Azalea and Camellia fertiliser about December, and then just before flowering, a few handfuls of sulphate of potash and Camellia fertiliser.

If you would like to continue to enjoy these beauties after they have been picked (as generally they don't last too long), here is a tip from one of our clients that we can guarantee works. Place a toothpick through the centre of the flower as shown in the photo on the left, you can more or less guarantee they will stay perfect in a vase for five to seven days.

Mayoral Award

Congratulations to Faith Safer who recently received a certificate of appreciation from the Mayor of Ku-ring-gai. As part of Seniors week, the awards are made in acknowledgement of contributions by seniors to the community.

Faith has been a volunteer with Easy Care Gardening for nine years. (Photo on left, Faith Safer holding certificate with the Mayor of Ku-ring-gai Elaine Malicki on her right along with Faith's team)



Remembrance of a dear friend

It is with regret that 'Bella', recipient of the 'Paws' award (Summer 2012) has passed on to another garden. Bella and Mark (her owner) joined ECG in August 2009 and have been members of Karl Arbidan's team. When clients ring for their next garden visit, they often can't remember the team leader's name, but know that it's the one with the dog! (Photo on left - Bella)

We are all very sad to hear of Bella's passing.



Gnome news corner - with a little help from my friend

Andrew Fraser one of our mulch guys (photo on left), with one of his "friends" at the council depot. The Kookaburra hangs around while he is moving mulch, then dives in very quickly to pick up any exposed worms and insects.

Kookaburra's are best known for their unmistakable call, which sounds uncannily like loud, echoing human **laughter** – good-natured, but rather hysterical, merriment in the case of the renowned **Laughing Kookaburra** (*Dacelo novaeguineae*); and maniacal cackling in the case of the slightly smaller **Blue-winged Kookaburra** (*Dacelo leachii*).

Many, many thanks to all the mulch guys who do a great job (even in the rain) to deliver the mulch for the gardening teams.

The mulch team can always use an extra pair of hands, particularly in summer when the mulch season gets into full swing. Please ring the office if you would like to be part of the mulch team.

