



Wentworth Falls Garden Club Inc

Affiliated with The Garden Clubs of Australia Inc

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From the President ...

Those of you who came to the meeting in January were probably, like me, quite disappointed when our guest speaker failed to arrive. These things happen, but then other things fall into place. Our March guest speaker had to reschedule so James from Engall's Nursery kindly agreed to come to give his presentation on citrus in her place; Linda Thomas will now come in May and two people who are wonderful presenters volunteered to speak later in the year. Make sure that you don't go home today without the up-to-date flyer, and also make a note that there will be no meeting in June due to the unavailability of the Hall.

It's a bit of a juggling game, but as Sharon ... a wise woman ... said to me: "If you get given lemons, make lemonade."



Celeste

Growing Beetroot

Beetroot is easy to grow, and as well as boiling whole for salads, beetroot roasts well, cut into wedges. It also makes a tasty salad grated raw with carrot and a little fresh orange juice.

Sow seeds into garden beds at a depth approximately three times the diameter of the seed. It is best planted at soil temperatures between 7°C and 25°C. Space plants 20 - 30 cm apart. Soak seeds in water 24 hours before planting so that you can separate them. Thinning will nearly always be required as seedlings emerge from a seedball of several seeds. If you don't thin them, the plants will not grow to an edible size.

Keep well-watered as dry beetroot develops a woody and inedible core. Make sure the top of the beet's bulb is covered with soil. For tasty and tender beetroot, start harvesting at golfball-size. Harvest in 7-10 weeks.

Beetroot is compatible with onions, silverbeet, lettuce, cabbage, dwarf beans, dill, peas and strawberries. Avoid growing in the same bed as asparagus, carrots, sweetcorn and spinach.



Source:
<http://www.gardenate.com/plant/Beetroot>

Sarah Ryan

Hillandale Nursery, Yetholme

Sarah will speak today about the perennial border: her inspiration, maintenance regime and how it changes through the seasons. The following is a summary from Sarah about Hillandale.

All gardens are a work in progress and Hillandale is no exception.

Andrew and Sarah Ryan acquired the property in March 2000 and have had a lot of fun bringing it back to its former glory, hopefully in keeping with the original gardener's vision. Hillandale is a six-acre garden set within a 170-acre property of pasture and native bushland. Water is a feature of the garden. A small spring-fed creek runs through the middle of the garden and ends in a large picturesque dam. The creek is crossed by little stone bridges and is lined by tree ferns, with many cool shady areas to sit and relax or enjoy a picnic. There are over 50 grand old trees in the garden such as oaks, cedars, maples, redwoods, spruce and liquidambar.

Another feature of the garden are the rhododendrons, some as high as 20m and at least 10m wide. These look their best from October to November. In the garden there is a woodland walk filled with aquilegias (Granny's Bonnets), windflowers, Solomon's seal, campanula and many more shade-loving perennials.

Running along the east side of the garden is a 120m-long perennial border jam-packed with over 300 species of rare and interesting herbaceous plants such as salvias, dahlias, lupins, poppies, rudbeckia, echinacea and asters, just to name a few, plus a whole variety of ornamental grasses. This border is a summer/autumn border so looks its best from late January to early May. The nursery within the garden sells perennials propagated from this border.

There are also three other large shrubberies filled with peonies, viburnums, dogwoods, iris, camellias, geraniums, hydrangeas, hellebores and rhododendrons.

The garden is maintained by Andrew and Sarah Ryan in their spare time as they both work in town and have five children between them. Andrew trains racehorses and Sarah maintains five other gardens in the Bathurst area. They are currently in the process of reconstructing a glasshouse which they bought second-hand. The glass will sit on a stone wall which Andrew is building. Their home is a mud-brick cottage built by the original owners during the 1840s and added to over subsequent years.

A Couple of things to Note

1. The Citrus Man, James Adams, has agreed to be the guest speaker at our next meeting.
2. Our Library has some surplus books. These will be on sale at our March meeting at very reasonable prices for anyone who is interested.

FLANNEL FLOWER

Actinotus helianthi



Actinotus helianthi, commonly known as Flannel Flower, is a shallow-rooted plant that requires good drainage. Flannel Flowers have relatively brittle stems and require protection from strong winds to avoid branch breakage. They are gross feeders and have relatively high fertiliser requirements to help maintain vigour and respond well to tip pruning after the flowering period. Older leaves on lower areas of the stems will naturally yellow then die off while they stay attached to the plant.

Flannel Flowers can be grown in full sun or partial shade and tolerate light frost once established. For best results, plant in a pre-prepared well-drained site of moderately acid soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5. This is achieved by creating a raised garden bed filled with low phosphorus organic compost or planting mix. The addition of crushed sandstone and a native fertiliser is desirable. Some *Actinotus helianthi* varieties, like 'Starbright', make great potted plants and you'll get the most out of them by using any commercially available premium grade potting mix suitable for natives. All species of *Actinotus* are particularly sensitive to root disturbance and this should be avoided during the transplantation process.

When planting, space from 0.5 to 1.0m. If watering is required, avoid wetting the foliage to minimise damage to the brittle stems and the possible introduction of fungal problems. While they can withstand long periods of dry warm months, a tell-tale sign of water stress can be recognised by the leaves closing or clasping the stem prior to wilting. Surprisingly, Flannel Flowers respond well to regular applications of fertiliser. For best results, give an application of a low phosphorus controlled release fertiliser with micronutrients during planting. Supplementary applications of a complete liquid fertiliser at monthly intervals during the growing season will assist with plant health and vigour.

While mulching is not essential for good growth in Flannel Flowers, you can mulch to a depth of 75mm to assist with moisture retention and temperature control in the root zone. Avoid contact with stems to minimise possible fungal problems. Light pruning after flowering creates a bushier plant with increased flowering sites for the following season. Do not prune too far back into the 'woody' stems, as they do not reshoot. This can be followed by tip pruning in late summer if necessary.

Plants in well-structured soils that can develop good root systems are less susceptible to fusarium. Avoid planting out root-bound plants and minimise root disturbance. Flannel Flowers are quite susceptible to botrytis fungus during moist weather and should be monitored and treated with appropriate fungicide, if necessary. Fungal problems can be minimised by avoiding foliage wetting during irrigation and by periodically removing dead leaves from lower areas of the stems to improve air circulation.

Source:

<https://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/Plants/Gardening/Growing-Flannel-Flowers>

Flannel flowers may also be affected by leaf-chewing caterpillars. Monitoring plants for evidence of insect frass should be carried out to avoid major pest infestation. Aphids, scale insects and mealy bug can also become a problem in crowded situations.

Club Tours and Functions

Thursday 11 February.	Two garden rambles. The first ramble is through the Falls Gallery, 161 Falls Road. The second ramble is at Dorothy and Lyle Davis' garden. They have invited members to bring a picnic lunch. If members wish, they can enjoy the garden for longer while they eat their packed lunch.	After meeting
Friday 19 February	Meadows and Dales. We visit two gardens. Cost of \$45 includes morning tea and lunch. Both gardens will have plants for sale. <i>Waiting list.</i>	8.45am departure
Thursday 10 March	Garden ramble to be advised.	After meeting
Saturday 9 April	Collectors' Plant Fair. Cost \$40 includes entry and lunch at Norman Lindsay Gallery on the way home.	7.30am departure

Next Meeting

10 March

Guest speaker

James Adams, Production Manager,
Engall's Nursery: **All things Citrus!**

Hall set-up

Lesley Walters and Les Allen

Morning tea duty

Bev Turner and Margaret Peoples

Bring a plate

Carol Conway and Joanne Burgess

Club Information

All members and visitors are asked to sign in upon arrival.

Members are asked to wear their club name badges to all club meetings, tours and functions. To take part in club functions and tours you must be a bona-fide club member.

General Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, from January to November, at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts Theatre, Adele Ave (cnr Great Western Hwy), Wentworth Falls. Meetings commence at 9.45am and finish around noon. The Library and Plant Stall are open before the meeting and at morning tea. \$5 entry fee.

Joining fee is \$30. Thereafter annual subscription is \$20.

For Club Welfare matters, contact Lea Nelson:
Ph 4784 1101.

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