

Greening & Growing together

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2016

Accessible Gardening

Kerin O'Halloran is no stranger to working in the important area of 'accessibility' and advocating for services.

With seven years' experience as a member of the Access Committee under Ashfield Council, she was inspired to bring similar services to the City of Sydney Council.

Kerin has always been a great believer in communities being empowered to work together and views community gardening as the perfect vehicle. Through such an activity, people who have capacity can support and encourage others in their community to participate.

Kerin began consulting the Glebe community throughout 2010 and a group of local residents started meeting regularly for BBQs, and to produce a gardening newsletter and swap seedlings.



• Kerin helps out in the new Glebe community garden.

This year, Kerin made contact with Phil Pettitt from Community Greening and finally her dream became a reality. Three verge gardens were constructed on Mt Vernon Street in Glebe for local residents to enjoy and Phil has given short fortnightly lessons in

horticulture to ensure that these gardens continue to thrive.

TAFE has also visited the fortnightly gardening group and arranged to start a six-week taster course on Urban Food Growing for community members.



We have set the date for the annual Community Greening gathering for Wednesday 7 December 2016.

The Royal Botanic Garden — celebrating its 200th Birthday this year — will play host, with a tour of

the new Calyx horticultural centre (as well as some delicious lunch provided by Twogood) a highlight of the day!

Arranging your own transport is required. Commuters can be met outside St James train station at 10 am (near the Queen Victoria statue) and be escorted to the Garden (but please let us know if you need to be met).

Alternatively, meet us at the Woolloomooloo gates on Mrs Macquaries Road at 10.30 am. Parking passes can also be made available with prior notice.

Considerable walking will be required within the Garden so please wear suitable footwear and bring water and sun protection. More details will be given when you RSVP.

If you would like to come along and are a current Community Greening volunteer/participant, please RSVP by 7 November 2016:

- **Phil Pettitt** 0447-420-173
philip.pettitt@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au
- **Elizabeth Docking** 0438-670-753
elizabeth.docking@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au



Rural and Remote Sustainability Outreach 2016

The Community Greening team recently embarked on their annual trip to support rural and remote schools and communities.

This year the program was delivered in the far north-western New South Wales communities

of Bourke and Brewarrina. It also took in students from Wanaaring, Weilmoringle, Enngonia and Louth in addition to students from the Dubbo School of Distance Education.

In total, 193 students participated throughout the week in workshops

hosted by the Environment Education Centres based in Wambangalang, Red Hill and the Warrumbungles in partnership with Taronga Western Plains Zoo, the Royal Botanic Garden and NetWaste.

The hands-on workshops focussed on biodiversity, innovative kitchen gardens, worm farms, recycling and sustainable practices that can be implemented at both school and home.

The trip also provided us with the chance to support the community members of Enngonia Community Garden in the construction of two wicking gardens. Wicking gardens are a great way of minimising water use in arid western NSW climates.

The team enjoyed being shown all the vegetables and fruit trees grown in the Enngonia garden. We also appreciated the warm hospitality of the Land Council and meeting the local community pig named Percy roaming the streets and laying in the sunshine — what a life!

The poem below tells the full story.



Wicking Garden working bee at Enngonia Community Garden

Outreach Poem 2016

Our first stop was Bourke and the kids were cool
They had a great Stephanie Alexander kitchen garden
at school
The kids from (Wanaaring) Wannarang
Loved learning to throw the boomerang
Weilmoringle, Enngonia, Louth schools and Dubbo
School of Distance Education
All came along and joined in a great day of participation
We travelled to Enngonia Community Garden
Edugrow gave us the introduction to this garden
Percy the pig was baking in the sun
Filling wicking garden beds was fun
Then we dropped into Brewarrina Public School
The day was rainy and very cool
The boomerang, still managed another fang
Then we had a race without a hurdle
We also planted a lemon myrtle
Back to Dubbo without being late

To see if Palmer street Community Garden could propagate
We know at Bre one of the kids told us they had a
proper gate!
So in summary Brenden and Phil talked culture and
plants
And still got the kids to beat box and dance
We all crossed a long spanned bridge
While Brenden played the didge
Dave and Kristy from Wambangalang
Had solar technology to engage the gang
Sue made them squirm, with her crazy worm
Michelle from redhill, had recycled t-shirts that kill
Ange and Wes yarned about honey, and in the sun it
went runny
Ash and Ryan from the zoo, enthralled the kids with
animals too
The kids loved Ash and Ryan
But they had to make sure the animals were fine!

Let's get behind Pollinator Week

20 – 27 November 2016

Did you know?

- Globally, one out of every three mouthfuls of food comes from a bee-pollinated plant.
- In Australia, nearly two-thirds of agricultural production benefits from honey bee pollination.

Why do pollinators need our support?

Worldwide, pollinators are under threat. This is because as we urbanise our environments:

- we remove their natural habitat
- we create 'flowerless landscapes' when we substitute flowering trees and shrubs with concrete and grass
- our agricultural practices, such as monoculture, remove the variety of floral resources that pollinators need for good health.

The future of our pollinators is looking bleak. By raising the awareness of the importance of pollinators, we may have a chance of improving their future. We can also improve their future by:

- conserving their natural habitat
- providing additional habitat
- planting pollinator-attracting plants

- reducing or ceasing the use of pesticides.

Community gardeners can do their part too!

Why are pollinators important?

All organisms are driven to reproduce and because plants are not mobile, they require animals to aid this process. Through pollination, fertilisation occurs and seeds develop. Almost 90 percent of flowering plants rely on animals for pollination. Pollination is the driving force behind plant reproduction.

Who are our pollinators?

The most effective and well-known pollinators are bees including native bees and honey bees because they actively collect pollen from flowers to feed their offspring. As they do this they transfer thousands of pollen grains between flowers. There are, however, many thousands of other animals that 'incidentally' transfer pollen as they drink nectar from flowers. These include insects such as beetles, flies, butterflies, ants, wasps, moths, as well as small animals such as birds, flying fox and possums.

During Pollinator Week consider planting to attract pollinators year-

round and conserving their natural habitat. Your garden will come to life with insects and birds. Your vegetables and crops will be more successful and the environment will benefit.

Most of this information is taken directly from Halcroft, M. T. and M. Batley (2014). The Bee Hotel ID Guide. Bee Aware of Your Native Bees.



- *Insect Hotel made by The Mate's Shed.*
- *North West Disability Services Richmond*

Would you like to attend a Pollinator Week Event?

Elizabeth has been coordinating an event called *Kurrajong-a-Buzz, Proudly Promoting Pollinator Week*. The free, family-friendly event will be buzzing on Sunday 20 November from 10 am-2 pm in the main shopping precinct of Kurrajong Village.

To get to Kurrajong by public transport, catch a train to Richmond then a Busways Western Sydney bus to Kurrajong Village. Best use Trip Planner to plan your trip.

Don't forget to come and say hello!

Look at this website for other Pollinator events in your area:
www.beesbusiness.com.au/pollweekmain.html



- *Costa, Elizabeth and the Bee lady love bees in our gardens.*

Sudoku Competition to celebrate Pollinator Week

To all lovers of Sudoku, or those willing to have a try, we have developed a Sudoku with a twist. Instead of using numbers from 1-9, we have instead used the letters BUGSALIVE.

Get together with friends and family or have a go yourself. All completed entries will go into a draw for a chance to win a prize. The winner will be announced at our annual Christmas party.

Community Greening Challenge BUGS ALIVE Sudoku

To solve the puzzle you must make sure that every column, row and 3x3 box contains the letters **BUGSALIVE**

U			G		S	I		
		A	E					L
		S	I				V	
	B	E		V				
V	U						E	A
				A		U	G	
	A				L	S		
I					U	V		
		L	S		B			E

Your Name/s: Contact No.

Your garden location:

Send your completed entries by 1 December to:

Phil Pettitt
Community Greening Co-ordinator
Royal Botanic Garden Sydney
Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney 2000

Or give them to Elizabeth, Phil or Brendan.



Digging the Dirt

We love to receive contributions for 'Digging the Dirt', especially from our country community gardeners.

This season we are excited to introduce you to a young man called Thomas Gibson, a regular gardener at Dubbo Community Garden Palmer Street.

Thomas says that he has been attending the community garden for more than three years, once a week on a Wednesday. His favourite activity in the garden is harvesting and his greatest achievement is installing the composting keyhole beds.

'I was inspired to become a gardener after I read a book called "World War II" ', said Thomas.

'This book opened my eyes to the fact that as a society many of us have lost connection with practical skills and community resilience.'

The gardeners at Palmer Street are obviously very special to Thomas as he says that the best thing about working in the community garden is 'gardening with wholesome people, sharing and learning new ideas'.

Thomas loves to grow chillies. They are expensive to buy but are so easy to grow in the Dubbo climate. He loves the fact chillies help liven up a meal while also being a health food.



When asked 'How has the Palmer Street garden changed you?' Thomas had a very positive response:

'The garden has made me a more lively and social person. It has contributed to making me appreciate working and building with my hands.'

'It is good work and good work is good for the heart.'

What a wise young man.

If you would like to find out more about this community garden and see Thomas and his pals in action, take a look at the Facebook page 'Dubbo Community Garden Palmer Street'.

Spring into your garden NOW !

Whether it's your botanic garden, front garden or Community Garden, it's the perfect time to sow or plant the following:

- Vegetables – beetroot, capsicum, carrots, choko, cucumber, dwarf beans, eggplant, Jerusalem artichoke, lettuce, okra, pumpkin, radish, spinach, spring onions, squash, sweet corn, sweet potato, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelon and zucchini.

- Flowers – alyssum, amaranthus, aster, California poppy, celosia, chrysanthemum, cockscomb, dahlia, gerbera, marigold, nasturtium, petunia, portulaca, verbena and zinnia.

Spring is also the time for planting most fruit and flowering trees, shrubs and climbers. Water well and ensure your soil is thoroughly moist before planting. Remember to water after planting as spring has come early!

WEEDS a Problem? Take a look at this...

If you are interested in edible weeds take a look at this story from the ABC. www.abc.net.au/news/health/edible-weeds-and-how-you-can-use-them/7406004?pfmredir=ms&pfm=sm



The Cottage Community Garden

The Cottage Community Garden is a garden for people over 55 living in Messines Place and Somme Way Matraville. It opened in July 2012, after 18 months of planning.

The garden was especially designed to meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities. Each person has an individual garden. The garden beds are built to waist height so people can garden without having to bend down. As well as the individual gardens, many varieties of fruit trees have been planted. A water tank and garden shed have also been installed.

The gardeners organise workshops with Community Greening to learn more about plants, pests and organic gardening.



The benefits of the garden

Overall, the gardeners think the garden is successful, with most people seeing it as highly successful.

Growing plants and produce

The pleasure of watching plants grow, in addition to picking fresh vegetables and herbs, is important to everyone. People enjoy sharing produce with their friends as well as eating food which is fresh and cheap.

A place of peace and tranquillity

The garden has become a place of relaxation and rest. People enjoy the garden. It is calming, good for stress control and satisfying.

A place of companionship

Mixing with like-minded people, talking, as well as sharing ideas



about gardening, has built a sense of camaraderie and companionship.

A place of learning

People have learnt about when and where to plant vegies, herbs and flowers, as well as all aspects of organic gardening. It is a great and enjoyable learning experience. The assistance from Community Greening is invaluable.



Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and Community Greening are on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Follow us.



www.facebook.com/RoyalBotanicGarden/



[@RBGSydney](https://twitter.com/RBGSydney)

Tag your photos #communitygreening



Community Greening is a partnership program of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust and Housing New South Wales. **Youth Community Greening** is made possible with generous financial assistance from the Eden Foundation.

Partnership



Supporters



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