



Greening & Growing together

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2019

Hello Autumn

Welcome cool nights and some much-needed rain, we have all been super busy getting our Master Gardener and School Garden Assistant Courses going. Courses have already started on the Central Coast and Macquarie Fields. Soon courses will run in Riverwood, Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong Campbelltown and Auburn. Let us know if you are interested or know another gardener that might be. The course has been designed specifically as an entry level practical course on Urban Gardening and community participation and is delivered in partnership with TAFE and evaluation by Western Sydney University.

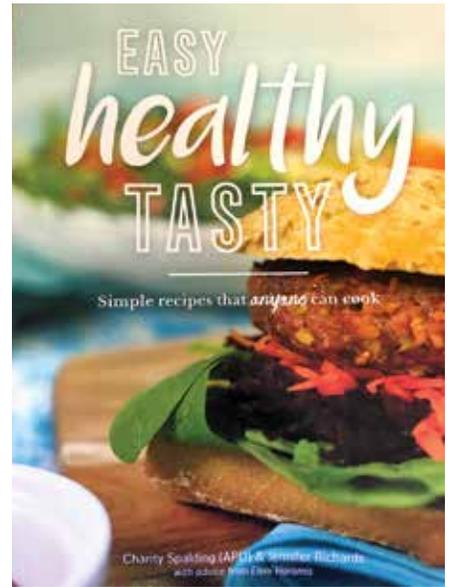
COMPETITION

Would you like to win a copy of Easy, Healthy, Tasty by Jennifer Richards and Charity Spalding? A Cook book valued at \$15 designed for no chop with disability in mind. Simple recipes that anyone can cook especially if you find kitchen task are difficult for you. So how do you enter?

Get in touch and tell us how this cook book will help you!

Cheers,

Phil and the Community Greening Team



Central Coast Master Gardeners complete their course.

Digging the Dirt - Marion from Eastlakes

Eastlakes local, Marion Cartwright, knows firsthand how Community Greening gardens can bring people together.

Marion is one of our amazing Community Greening champions, who was recently awarded the very prestigious 2019 Bayside Council Citizen of the Year for her outstanding contributions to the community. I have known and worked alongside Marion in the garden in Eastlakes ever since she moved to Sydney 15 years ago.

Marion regularly brings the local community together for morning tea in the garden plus helps to organise weddings, funerals, and birthdays - all despite recent health issues. She continues to work primarily by herself in the one-acre public space outside of her complex, with help from Community Greening by the way of donated plants, materials and support.

It's safe to say that she singlehandedly transformed an empty, dusty lot into a thriving community space, giving other members of the complex a sense of belonging, purpose and a safe place to gather.

I recently visited the garden at Eastlakes to catch up with Marion, who just celebrated her

80th birthday last week – another incredible achievement that adds to her heroic efforts of and determination.

How has the community garden, or gardening changed you?

15 years ago I was in a pretty dark place after moving from Alice Springs where I had ended up in a women's refuge home. After moving to Sydney in 2005 to this complex, I started planting a little patch of annual flowers – at the time I hadn't realised what I had started.

This garden has saved my life, I was diagnosed with bipolar and with the help of medication and a good dose of social and therapeutic horticulture – I'm here today, alive and in good mental health. That little patch of flowers at the front of my ground floor unit was how I met the Community Greening coordinator at that time, Steve. .

What are your most memorable achievements in the community garden?

My most memorable achievements would be finally getting an irrigation system last year as part of the grants I applied for – a long awaited addition to the garden so that I didn't have to carry water jugs and negotiate with the hose. The grant also included new raised garden

beds that are engaging more people in the complex and we are now growing more veggies than ever. New garden furniture, outdoor lights and a covered area were also a few upgrades the garden received through the grant.

Of course, being named Citizen of the Year at a recent Australia Day celebration was a great achievement. And also making the acceptance speech in front of over 100 people, my family and fellow community gardeners.

What is the best thing about working in a community garden?

The best thing about the garden is how every second Saturday between 10am and 2 pm the Hillsong church help to run a morning tea and lunch at the garden. The local community come out of their units to share homemade food and cakes in the garden and they tell me how beautiful the gardens is even those who don't speak fluent English. The diverse Eastlakes community is brought together by the love of the garden and homemade food - a language understood by all.

Also, I spent much of last year in poor physical health and the community rallied around me to cook, clean and even assisted me to shower. It's a true sign of how strong and resilient the community around us is and how the community garden is at the centre of such important bonds.

What is your favourite plant to grow and why?

My favourite plants are roses, I look back with fondness at how well I grew them when I lived in Alice Springs on a camel farm 100 km out of town. The rich soil and low humidity did amazing things for the roses but alas I'm now surround by dark rich soil full of worms and now struggle to grow them.



• Phil and Marion at the Eastlakes Community Garden

Redfern Community Shed

The Redfern Community Shed is a carpentry workshop run by volunteers. Some of the volunteers are skilled tradespeople ready to help build knowledge and assist with projects. This is good because most of the people who attend are absolute beginners.



Redfern Peoples shed wicking verge garden beds installed



Finished Insect hotels

Usually a dozen or more people turn up on Thursday mornings. We've learnt to use power tools as well as hand tools and work on eco-minded projects like insect hotels, bird houses and bee hives. And some people use the workshop to work on their own projects. It's affordable – gold coin donation on the day, if you wish – and it's a load of fun. Everyone is welcome.

Where: 255 Wilson Street, North Eveleigh, 2015
Take the stairs or ramp down from Wilson Street to Carriageworks and walk a few metres to your left.

When: Thursday, 9:30am – 2:30pm

Facebook: Look for Redfern Community Shed



Construction Underway of verge garden beds

Autumn Gardening Tips

It's a great time especially for planting easy-to-grow spring bulbs that will help to brighten up an area, to sowing vegetables, or even planting your favourite shrubs. With the onset of cooler weather maybe improve your soil with some manure or start on a new project.

Autumn is also the best time to plant trees and shrubs, as the soil is still warm and there are fewer hot days. This allows the plants roots to establish and by next spring the plants will certainly be growing well.

Fertilize trees and shrubs, lawns, indoor plants and fruit trees such as citrus. It's your last chance before the weather cools down.

Place indoor plants outside in the warm autumn rains (in a shady spot, if possible). Otherwise, wipe individual leaves with a damp cloth soaked in a mix of half milk & half water to remove any dust.

Vegetables and herbs to grow now!

If you live in temperate areas of Sydney, the month of April

is a fabulous time to plant or sow the following: artichokes, beetroot, broccoli, kale, cabbages, cauliflowers, carrots, celery, coriander, endives, garlic, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsnip, peas, potatoes, radish, rocket, silverbeet, English spinach and turnips.

So what are you waiting for – it's time to get gardening!



Eucalyptus for the next generation

The 23rd of March was National Eucalyptus Day and the Youth Community Greening program visited schools to talk about Eucalyptus. In the lead up to this day YCG visited three schools and spoke to the students and staff about the most iconic of all Australian trees. Terry discussed the traditional Aboriginal uses, from building bark canoes to the medicinal uses of some of the kino (sap). Peter talked about how Eucalypts have evolved in more recent evolutionary times to be the dominant tree across the Australian landscape and how these trees are still used in society today.

As well as talking to the students about Eucalypts, each of the schools participated in designing and developing a habitat garden with the Eucalyptus trees being the focal point.

At Buxton PS we created a habitat garden for the koala. Buxton is situated in a Koala corridor 75 km SW of Sydney. The school planted *Eucalyptus punctata* and *tereticornis*, which are two of the preferred food species of koalas that grow naturally in the region. Additional local species of shrubs and grasses were also planted in the space.



• Buxton PS students plant *Eucalyptus punctata* for Koala habitat

At Campbellfield PS in Minto we created a large outdoor learning space bordered by a circle of *Eucalyptus maculata* (Spotted Gum). The space has several different species of native plants to highlight the traditional Aboriginal uses of plants in the area as well as a yarning circle for the students to engage in outdoor learning.

At Beverly Hills Intensive English Centre we enhanced the two entrances into the Centre. These

were highlighted with the beautiful flowering gums from Western Australia (*Corymbia ficifolia*) and other colourfully blooming native plants. This Centre provides intensive teaching and learning to refugee and newly arrived students enabling them to easily transition into mainstream schools for further studies.

Thanks to Eucalyptus Australia for providing funding to deliver this program.

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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



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