

*Friendship through gardening*

## PLANT STALL

At Exeter Market on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>  
December – 9am-1pm

## END OF YEAR CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December – 4-6pm

## FRIENDSHIP GARDENS

None this month

## HELPING HANDS WORKING BEE

None this month

## NEXT CLUB MEETING

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

## RETFORD PARK VISIT

To be re-scheduled as soon as  
possible

Find the latest news on:



## BUNDANOON GARDEN CLUB INC

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## Committee

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## Newsletter

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**Contributions welcome**

## From the President

After more than 100 days of Covid Restrictions, wasn't it great to finally get out and about again with our Garden Club. David organised some cracking gardens for our Friendship Gardens and later that week Peter Rezek kindly had us over to see his beautiful roses. It was a cold Saturday morning for the Friendship Gardens, but that didn't stop many of the members from coming out. Cat and I had the joy of sitting at Ron and Mark's garden, which meant that we could do a few early laps of their magnificent grounds. I love a woodland and a pond, and they had both in spades. Desley and Rob's garden was a smaller affair, but no less impressive. I particularly enjoyed the back part of the garden with its converted chook-house which had the most amazing fuschia hanging in it. The drama of Jan and Graham's block with its stand of Grey Gums. The watercourse that cuts across the block was lovely and tranquil, with its shade-loving plants, and the veggie patch was an inspiration. Finally, we visited John and Veronica's patch. As we meandered through the front yard I found myself envious of Veronica's purple and white lupin. Her weeping ash was also very impressive. Out the back we found a camelia sasanqua that Veronica had saved. Its canopy was like an umbrella and its twisted trunk had a beautiful shape.

It was also very special this month to make and lay a Remembrance Day wreath on behalf of Bundanoon Garden Club.

All of the Committee are very excited to welcome Club members and friends to the Christmas Party, more details in a separate story in this edition of the newsletter.

Can I please ask that everyone "cross everything" and pray for good weather? As I write this, a howling sou-easter is driving down the seemingly unstoppable rain.

**Ted.**

*Ted and Veronica with her lupins*



## Plant Stall – Exeter Markets – Saturday December 4 – 9am-1pm



We are holding a plant stall at Exeter Markets on December 4 to raise funds for club activities – we hope 2022 will be a bumper year of club events!

Plants will be priced at 2 for \$5, \$10 and \$20.

If you have been nurturing plants for the stall, please drop them off at 193, Railway Ave by 3 December or contact us and someone will collect them.

Hope to see you at the market.

### The Exeter Markets Plant Sale - Saturday, December 4

Many club members have been propagating plants to sell this coming Saturday at **Exeter Village Markets 9am – 1pm**. Most of us started back in May, so the plants have plenty of roots and are ready to plant out or pot up. There are hydrangeas, salvias, hellebores, plectranthus, roses, succulents, dogwood and plenty more ready to go. If you'd like to contribute any developed plants or pots, please drop us an email at [gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com) or phone Tessa on 0435 193 353, before Friday 3/12/21 and we can arrange either a drop-off or pick up. Please help us raise money for our club and pick up a bargain at the same time.



## Our Christmas Party - 16<sup>th</sup> December

Your committee has been working hard preparing and planning the Garden Club Christmas Party. The fully catered function is free for all members and will be held on **Thursday 16th December between 4 and 6pm at John and Kaye Hines' lovely gardens at 651 Penrose Road Penrose**. Please feel free to invite your friends. There is a charge of \$25 per head for non-members.



These include:

**R.S.V.P.** – As this is a catered event, you MUST R.S.V.P. to [gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com) before 6th December 2021.

**Driver safety** – The entrance to the property is in a 100km zone and on a slight bend. We will be hiring ROADWORK AHEAD signs to slow traffic down, to help drivers negotiate the entrance. Our Bundanoon Garden Club flag will also be at the entrance of the driveway to help you spot it.

**Parking** – There is plenty of parking, but please be mindful of pedestrians and other drivers.

**Getting to the party** – If you can carpool with friends this will also help reduce the number of cars parking and speed up your entrance.

**For the less nimble** – If you are physically challenged, please call Tessa before the event and we will arrange for you to be dropped closer to the party area. Tessa's number is 0435 193 353.

### Christmas Party

**Thursday 16 December**  
4 - 6 pm

Enjoy drinks, finger food & the company of friends in  
the gardens of John and Kaye Hines' home

**641 Penrose Rd**

**Members: Free**  
Non-members: \$25 (incl. free membership)

For catering we request your

**RSVP by November 24**

E: [gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubbundanoon@gmail.com) or T: 0435193353

There are a few things of which we need all attendees to be aware.



**Welcome table** – We will have committee members greet you at the Welcome Table. You must sign in either with the Services NSW QR Code or fill in the sign-in register. Remember, this is a Double Vax event.

**Name badges** – Please wear your name badge. This will speed up the check-in process and get you into the party quicker. It will also help you meet new members you might not know. New members who don't yet have a badge will be given one at the entrance.

**Enjoy the party** – We will have a bar serviced by RSA staff offering wine, prosecco, beer, a non-alcoholic fruit punch, and soda water. A delicious selection of canapes will also be on offer at our grazing table and circulated by our wait staff.

**Let's save the planet** – We will have recycling bins and general waste bins available. Please drop any litter into the correct bins to help us recycle as much waste as possible.

We hope that you can attend the Christmas Party and we look forward to welcoming you to the gardens.

***Your Committee.***

## From the Editor

What a strange year it has been! But our gardens are certainly looking the better for it. So much that had been planned was cancelled, and the few victories were at the mercy of the weather. I am very thankful for the members' support for what was achieved, and I hope the newsletter has in some small way kept the momentum going forward to a much better 2022. Thank you especially to our Friendship Gardens' hosts, and apologies to those we had to cancel.

As always, I need more items, however brief, for the newsletter, and comments (even criticisms) are encouraging. Offers of Friendship Gardens, or information that I can follow up, would be very welcome.

Gwenneth and I wish you every joy this **Christmas**.

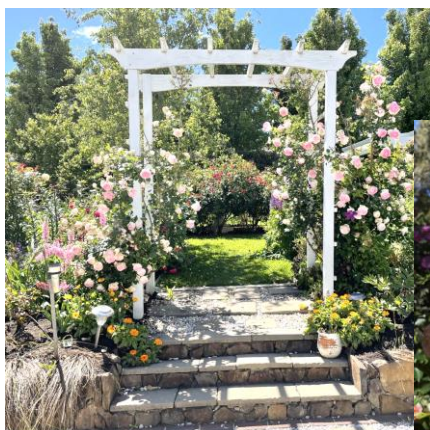
***David.***

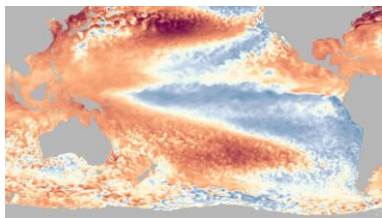


Thanks to ***Pam Tippet.***

## Peter Rezac's Beautiful Roses

A large number of members enjoyed a very sunny morning on 16<sup>th</sup> November in the Rezac garden, viewing Peter's extensive collection of Heritage, David Austin and Modern roses. Although there had been a lot of heavy rain in the preceding week, the roses and perennials held their charm. ***Cat.***





Invisible to us mere mortals on the ground, the atmosphere is full of giant circulations which transport, mix and disperse air and energy around the world.

One of these giant eddies is called the Walker Circulation.

The Walker Circulation strides the Pacific Ocean, rising in the west in the warm waters near Australia, pushing up and over the Pacific and descending near South America before racing back across the Pacific Ocean to form the trade winds.

La Niña is the term used to describe when the Walker Circulation is on steroids.

The western Pacific is even warmer than usual, the trade winds are stronger, and all this moist energetic air is pushed on to Australia.

La Niña is therefore typically associated with wetter than average conditions for northern and eastern Australia, particularly in winter, spring and early summer.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-24/how-will-la-nina-affect-australian-weather-summer/100644804>

So, what can we do to mitigate problems in the veggie patch because of climate events like La Niña?

This summer, the produce garden is seeing cooler temperatures during the day, increased humidity, and higher night temperatures because of the consistent cloud cover.

For those gardeners on clay, the soil is staying damp even during the drier periods. Veggies do not like their roots in constant water. For those gardeners who haven't prepared their gardens for these events, they may find collar rot around citrus and other fungal problems in the kitchen garden. The answer for clay soil in produce gardens is to build raised beds. Not only does this improve drainage, but saves all that bending to ground level.

If you're swamped, it is not the time to start digging — disturbing the soil while it is too wet can harm its structure. Give it a little time to dry out. Try digging channels making use of any slope to run the water away.

A shortcut is to add lots of coarse organic material to the soil. Compost is always the best for this, but in a crisis the rules change and mulches such as pine-bark create an artificial pore structure which lets the air get back into the soil. It has one disadvantage though - it removes some nitrogen from the soils as it breaks down. Waterlogged soils can become acidic. To overcome this, add a handful of lime per square metre on the surface.

Apply blood and bone or some poultry manure - about a handful per square metre will kick the soil back into life.

Powdery mildew is a problem with all gardens in humid weather, particularly when the crops are coming to the end of their production. In humid conditions air flow is key, so it is important to consider how you position your plants, giving things a bit more space than you might do in a normal year so they're not all crowded in together. Other problems can be fruit not ripening such as tomatoes, staying green because of the lack of sunny days.

We are heading into prime veggie season, and thirsty ones like zucchinis, cucumbers, corn, pumpkins, leafy greens and tomatoes could do well. You can still plant and sow just about everything (except broad beans and peas), but don't let the seeds rot or the plants drown!



# Things to do in December

Here are some flower seeds to sow during early summer. Seed sown in December will provide a burst of colour in late summer and autumn after earlier blooms have faded. Six of our favourite flower seeds to sow in early summer:



## **Limnanthes**

With its distinctive white and yellow flowers, the aptly named “poached eggplants” are a lovely hardy annual to grow. It should self-seed freely and naturalise in the garden.

## **Nasturtiums**

Colourful and easy to grow, nasturtiums also work well as companion plants for veg crops including French and runner beans. There are several varieties available. We're growing the common orange, Alaskan mixed with their variegated leaves, a more subtle *Tropaeolum Majus* (Peach Melba) and a rare Black Velvet (*Tropaeolum Nanum*). Just push the seed into the dirt and watch them grow. Great for a garden bed or hanging basket.

## **Coreopsis**

June is the last month of the year for sowing coreopsis outdoors. Try “Incredible Dwarf Mixed”, which produces a froth of attractive, cheery flowers. Coreopsis is one of the best plants for containers too.

## **Night-scented stock**

Night-scented stock can still be sown now, to ensure you have blooms right up until the first frosts. Be sure to deadhead regularly to encourage a further flush of colour.

## **Cosmos – Sensation Mix**

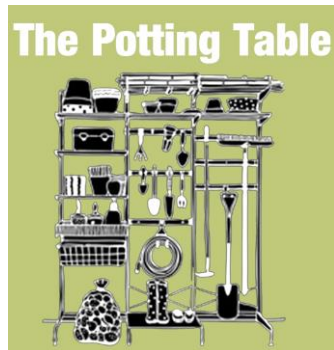
An annual growing to 90cm. Attractive ferny foliage. Beautiful flowers in a mix of colours including rose, red, crimson and white. Good for borders and as a cut flower. I've been growing mine inside in a mini hothouse and they'll be potted out, direct to the beds in December. You can sow them direct, but I've noticed in the past years that they can be eaten by slugs and snails as they come up.

## **Phlox – Beauty Mix**

An annual growing to 25cm. Compact plant with green foliage and solid coloured flowers in a mix of pinks, salmon, violet, crimson, scarlet, white and blue. Good for beds, borders, pots and containers. Well suited to rockeries, hanging baskets and cottage gardens.

## The Potting Table

We're thrilled to introduce a new section for our Newsletter. Welcome to The Potting Table. Every month we'll be introducing you to one of our members and their beloved potting place. It might be a shed, table, greenhouse or a corner of their yard. But wherever it is, it is where the magic happens. Our first guests are Tim and Glynnis Charles. Anyone who visited their garden would have seen this impressive sight. I was so taken by it I rushed to Gubbins to purchase material and set about making my own. Sadly, it a pale reflection compared to theirs.



*Ted.*

## Tim and Glynnis's Shed



The path makes you want to see what's around the end of the Cherry Laurel hedge. Tucked away, unseen from the rest of the garden, is a potting shed and nursery. It's really a shelter more than a shed but it serves the purpose very well. The roof collects rainwater in a 660lt tank which is served by a caravan hand pump and round tub in the bench. The hose is connected to a 3000lt tank and pump next to the workshop further up the garden near the house. The black plastic box set into the bench contains soil, either potting mix or seed mix, just by swapping boxes.

The nursery is enclosed in bird netting and currently contains Mondo Grass, Hellebores, Acers, succulents and many others. There isn't room for everything in the nursery so potted cuttings of Hydrangeas and Salvias stand on the ground adjacent.



*Tim & Glynnis Charles.*

# Seasonal Kitchen



Here's a simple and delicious recipe from **Veronica Rickard** using fresh peas from the garden that should be in season right now. You can swap out linguine for any pasta, but I find that the flatness of linguine works best with this sauce.

## Linguine coi piselli alla panna (Linguine with peas and cream)



This simple Spring dish is by the wonderful Italian food writer, Anna Del Conte

Serves 6

500g linguine

Sea salt

Freshly grated Parmesan for serving

For the sauce:

45g unsalted butter

4 shallots, very finely chopped

1 tsp sugar

1 tsp sea salt

225g fresh garden peas, podded weight, or frozen peas, thawed

1 tbsp flour

6 tbsp dry white vermouth

120 ml of meat stock (or use a cube)

150 ml pouring cream

Freshly ground pepper

Plunge fresh peas in boiling water for 5 minutes, frozen peas do not need blanching.

Heat the water for the linguine with 1 ½ tablespoons salt and when boiling add the linguine and boil until al dente. Keep about a cup of cooking water. Drain and keep warm until the sauce is made.

For the sauce, in a large sauté pan, put the butter and shallots and sprinkle with the sugar and salt. Sauté until soft and then add the peas. Coat them in the butter for 1 minute, sprinkle with the flour and cook for a further minute, stirring the whole time. Stir in the vermouth, boil for 1 minute then add the stock. Cover the pan and simmer gently to cook the peas. They must be tender, not just al dente. Stir in the cream, cook for a couple of minutes, add pepper, taste, and check the seasoning.

Add the drained pasta to the sauce in the sauté pan and stir-fry using 2 forks so that all the pasta strands are well coated with the sauce. You may need to add some of the reserved cooking water to thin the sauce.

Take immediately to the table and serve, passing around freshly grated Parmesan. You can transfer to a large pasta bowl to serve, but the heat of the sauté pan keeps it hotter for longer.

My veggie plot was eaten out by rats or mice in late winter.

I left the broccoli plants in, and bingo!

**Carlie Gould.**



## Preserving past glories

There are many reasons to cherish plants of the past; their history, their diversity, their beauty. The question is, how do we maintain the gardens of the past that display those plants, so all can see them in their glory. The following is a real-life account of what has happened to a garden of such significance and its sad demise. While David Ruston's garden was focused on Roses, it could be Camellias, Peonies, a collection of rare trees or shrubs, or perennials. They need to be maintained

See <https://www.heritageroses.org.au/news/si-c-transit-gloria-mundi-david-rustons-roses/>.

**Peter Rezek** - Coordinator Illawarra/Southern Highlands Heritage Rose Group  
0413 153 650



## From our Treasurer

Hello Everyone

Financials for November.

### ***BGC Opening Balance 21/10/2021***

<b><i>Rediaccess Account</i></b> was	<b>\$ 13,991.96</b>
Income was	\$ 350.00
Expenditure was	\$ 56.10
<b>Balance as at 21/10/21</b>	<b>\$ 14,285.86</b>
Add : Petty Cash	\$ 135.00
Add: Trade Table Float:	\$ 45.00

**TOTAL BALANCE as at**  
**21<sup>st</sup> November 202** **\$ 14,465.86**

Please note, included in the Account Balance is \$1011.00. This amount is due to Redford Park when we visit.

Looking forward to gathering together at the Christmas Party.

*Trish.*

## A cautionary tale!

Last year a young member of my family had a nasty encounter with a short bamboo stake whilst bending down to admire a flower in her new garden. She was rushed to the Melbourne Eye Hospital, and I've now found out that she has permanent damage and will possibly be facing a corneal transplant down the track.

Many years ago, my cousin lost the sight of one eye whilst peering into a dark bush to cut away deadwood.

So I'm very aware of protecting our eyes in the garden - and suggest that those gardeners using bamboo stakes place a small empty pot on the ends, or tear some small squares of white foam and push them onto the ends of stakes.

The creative ones can paint these guards assorted happy colours, or even paint the ends of the bamboo stakes - anything to make us more aware as we bend in to weed or harvest.

***Marianne Ward.***



Flexible Plastic Cane End Caps are available quite cheaply on ebay. I used them all the time in the UK – *Editor.*

**Have you purchased seeds  
online from overseas?  
That's probably illegal!**



Online shopping company eBay has been working with the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) to weed out unidentified seeds and live plants coming into the country in the mail.

They have already stopped 18,000 attempts this year alone, and with the Christmas season on the horizon, biosecurity officers in international mailrooms have ramped up surveillance.

A lot of people jump online to order something for the garden, or to order presents, and do it without thinking about from where the seeds might be coming.

Read in ABC News:

<https://apple.news/AzfZAYLbiQn6t46lvZeaWOA>

## Mozzies are thriving, here's how you can enjoy summer evenings without the itch



There's nothing like the buzz of a pesky mosquito to put a downer on a summer evening barbecue. It's been a wet spring and the Bureau of Meteorology has declared a La Niña for summer, creating the perfect conditions for mozzies to thrive. The combination of stagnant water and warm weather creates ideal conditions for mosquitoes and experts predict there will be a mosquito "explosion" after the wet spring. So what can you do to make your backyard or patio less enticing to mosquitoes and how do you repel them and treat the itch?

Read in ABC News:

[https://apple.news/A0J\\_ZKtIESQWKpVgxHYzXKO](https://apple.news/A0J_ZKtIESQWKpVgxHYzXKO)

## This cottage garden flower is sold widely and loved by many, but there's a push to declare it a weed

It is a pretty flower that is a staple of English cottage gardens, but there is a push to have the foxglove declared an invasive species and banned from sale.



The foxglove, which grows a flower spike up to two metres, has naturalised in some parts of south-eastern Australia and is rapidly spreading throughout Tasmania.

Read in ABC News:

[https://apple.news/AgcvDH\\_ijTt2CpKBVSUKE5Q](https://apple.news/AgcvDH_ijTt2CpKBVSUKE5Q)

## 'Plant for pollinators': Gardeners urged to help battling native Australian bees



We all see black-and-yellow European honey bees buzzing around from time to time. But would you recognise a native Australian bee, if you saw one? To date, 1,700 Australian bee species have been identified and named, with estimates that the true figure is closer to 2,000.

Rather than living in hives, most native bees are ground dwelling. Some, such as blue-banded bees and teddy bear bees, dig shallow burrows in clay soil, while others dig burrows over a metre deep.

Bee expert Dr Ken Walker says protecting native bees is about continuing an essential "love story" necessary to help native flora thrive.

Read in ABC News:

<https://apple.news/Ax23SG7FJQ1uXmr0BwZowWQ>

## Could gardeners be contributing to the demise of Christmas beetles?

For many, Christmas means Mariah Carey songs on repeat, hot weather and flashes of green and yellow insects in our gardens. But in recent years Christmas beetle sightings appear to be dwindling.



Read in ABC News:

[https://apple.news/AO\\_GDb9SXQF-b7F3CgRIjFQ](https://apple.news/AO_GDb9SXQF-b7F3CgRIjFQ)

Personally, I am not a fan of the annual beetle house invasion, and the brown patches caused by the curl grubs in my lawn – **Editor.**



# How to grow pumpkins

Nothing says "Winter" to me more than a delicious pot of spiced pumpkin soup simmering on the stove! If you want to be stirring a pot of soup this winter or enjoying some roasted pumpkin on a Sunday, now is a great time to get those seeds in the ground!



## CHOOSE A VARIETY

Pumpkins come in a wide range of sizes, shapes and colours. Two of the most popular varieties are butternut which has deep orange flesh and a small to medium peanut type shape and Queensland Blue, with its greyish coloured skin. There are plenty of options and often it comes down to what you want to make in the kitchen as to what will be best to grow.

## WHERE TO PLANT

Allow lots of room as pumpkins are a trailing plant that love to take over. Find a sunny position and allow space for the vine to spread! Trellising is also a good idea if you have limited space. Keep in mind that the pumpkins may need support when they are hanging off the ground – if you have several growing at the same time the fence or trellis needs to be strong enough to support their weight!

Pumpkin seeds will not germinate when the soil is cold, so they need to be planted when any chance of frost has past (soil temperature between 20 and 32 degrees Celsius). Late Spring, Early Summer is good timing for an Autumn harvest. When preparing an area to plant, keep in mind that the vine will spread out from one spot. Prepare and make small mounds

at 2m intervals rather than digging up and preparing the whole garden bed.

After you have made some mounds, sow the seed directly into the soil at the rate of a 4-6 seeds per mound. Seedlings will take around a week to emerge.

## WATERING

Once you have planted your seeds, keep them damp or moist, but not too wet. Once the seedlings have emerged and throughout the growing season, regular watering is ideal. Early morning watering is the best time as this allows the plants to dry out during the day, making them less susceptible to disease. It is best not to wet the leaves as this encourages powdery mildew.

## MULCHING

Mulch will help the plants retain moisture in the heat of summer and protect the vine and pumpkins from soil borne disease and fungal problems.

## FERTILISING

Pumpkins benefit from a composted manure based fertiliser incorporated into the soil before planting. If planted in soil that is poor, a top up of fertilise at the 8 week mark will be of benefit.

Regular application of a seaweed concentrate every 10-14 days is also recommended for overall plant health and to help protect against pest and disease pressure.

## POLLINATION

Pumpkins are pollinated by bees, which usually occurs naturally and easily. If you are not getting fruit, you may need to pollinate by hand. This involves taking the male flower (pollen covered stamens in the centre) and wiping on the inside of the female flower (slight swelling at the base).

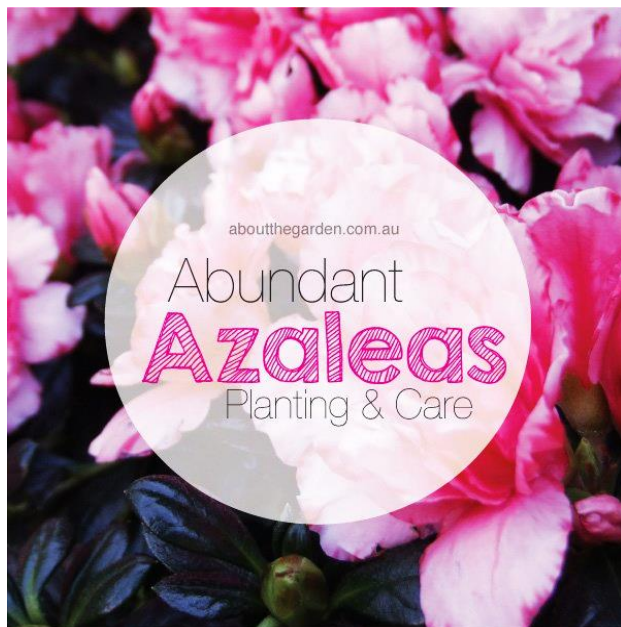
## HARVESTING

Generally, pumpkins are ready for harvesting within 15-20 weeks of planting. When the plant starts to die back and the stalks are dry, you can cut off the pumpkin leaving a small section of stalk attached. Let the skin harden in the sun and then store in a cool spot. Some varieties can store for months.

## MINIMISING PESTS & DISEASE

Seaweed contains natural growth stimulants, which make the plant stronger and less prone to disease. A liquid seaweed is used to help defend plants from diseases like powdery mildew and help increase yield at the same time.

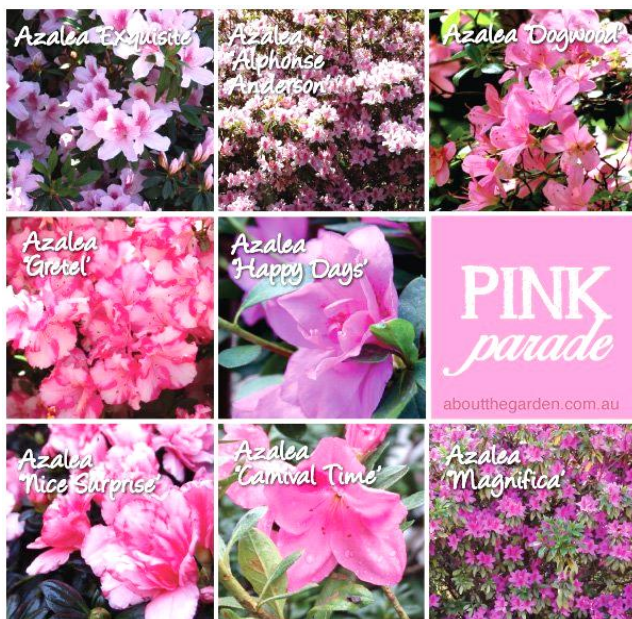




When it comes to flowering shrubs, it's difficult not to be stopped in your tracks by the ravaging beauty of an Azalea in full bloom.

Azaleas are one of the most striking of flowering shrubs for any garden yet have attracted a rather unfair reputation of being "fussy" or difficult to grow. With drought conditions experienced over recent times in many parts of Australia, azaleas have been somewhat overlooked as being able to withstand difficult times. Yet with a small amount of understanding, azaleas can become an amazing, colourful and drought hardy addition to any garden, patio or courtyard space.

Most modern hybrid azaleas relish a partly shaded site in the garden while some older varieties simply relish the full sun for strong flowering. Yet they all have only a few common requests that should be addressed.



<https://www.aboutthegarden.com.au/planting-guide-for-abundant-azaleas/>

This is a free quarterly online magazine well worth reading



[https://issuu.com/aboutthegardenmagazine/docs/about\\_the\\_garden\\_summer\\_2021\\_magazine?fr=sYWE2ODQzMzYzODM](https://issuu.com/aboutthegardenmagazine/docs/about_the_garden_summer_2021_magazine?fr=sYWE2ODQzMzYzODM)

## 'A living air conditioner'

How to use plants to cool your home this summer



After moving into a rental without air conditioning, we sweated through one blistering summer before realising we had to get creative — and learn to use plants to keep our house cool. Turns out strategically growing plants against certain windows and walls can help block heat and act as a kind of living air conditioner. A free one, at that. This cuts down on energy-hungry air-cooling systems — a win for the environment that can also save money on power bills. Plus, choose the right plants and you can grow yourself some food at the same time.

Read in ABC News:

[https://apple.news/AOgw15NzvQ\\_mwE5fA1DeoqA](https://apple.news/AOgw15NzvQ_mwE5fA1DeoqA)



# Gardening for December

## by Richgro

The most important tip in December is to make sure your garden stays well hydrated over this hotter period. Be sure to add or top up mulch and apply a soil wetter to your entire garden and pots.

### KEEP YOUR GARDEN HEALTHY AND WATERWISE

Bare soil is an invitation for weeds to grow. Mulch, mulch and more mulch, don't leave a square centimetre exposed. This will also protect fine delicate roots from extremely hot temperatures. Mulch will help retain moisture in the soil and hence decrease the amount of watering required.



Re-apply Ezi-Wet Water Saving Soil Wetter to the whole garden if you are finding the water beading and running off the soil surface.

### ROSES AND FLOWERING PLANTS

Keep watering roses with deep soaking and apply a soil wetter if the soil appears dry and water repellent. Feed roses and flowers with a light dressing of fertiliser. A complete fertiliser is good, but a specialised one like Richgro's Black Marvel Premium Rose Food will give them the boost they require.



Inspect plants carefully for insects such as two spotted mite thriving in the hot dry weather. Apply some Richgro Lime Sulfur if plants under threat.

December can be a flowering month for many plants and once they have finished flowering, dead head or trim them to encourage new growth. Do this in the afternoon to allow the plant to adjust to their new shape before the full sun hits.

### FRUIT AND VEGETABLES



Feed all established fruit trees including citrus as well as existing vegies. For fruit, a good specialised fertiliser like Richgro Black Marvel Premium Fruit & Citrus Food will have amazing results.

Protect edible crops from high temperatures. Top up mulch on your veggie patches and herb gardens especially if you are heading off for holidays. Choose a sustainable, low environmental impact natural mulch such as Richgro Natural Pinebark or Hard Wood Mulch.

Vegetable gardens will need a little more water (at least once a day) as the temperatures reach consistently over 32+ Celsius. Water in the morning or in the evening.

Carry on planting. It's getting pretty warm but there are a few things you could still add into the patch. You can put in some sweetcorn, capsicum, chilli, beetroot, eggplant, carrots, lettuce, tomatoes, zucchini and cucumber.

### LAWN AND TURF MAINTENANCE



Lift mower blades when mowing the lawn. A longer blade of grass creates a larger shadow and shades the lawns root system reducing evaporation and the temperature of the soil.

Top dress to level out any holes and dips. Apply a soil wetter to improve watering in hotter weather.

If Black beetles come up from holes in lawns, treat with Lawn Beetle and Grub Killa.

## POTTED GARDENS

Protect your pot plants while you are away this summer. A small amount of Richgro Water Storage Crystals applied to each pot will help keep your plants watered and fed for up to 3 weeks so you can enjoy your well deserved break.

Mulch the top of the pots. If you notice that soils are very dry and the water sits on top rather than drain into the soil, apply Ezi-Wet soil wetter – it helps the water in.

## GENERAL GARDEN MAINTENANCE TIPS



- Top up mulch and apply a soil wetter to your entire garden and pots.
  - If going away on holiday bunch all plants in pots together, they won't dry out as quickly and it makes it easier if you have a neighbour or friend watering for you.
- When watering choosing the right time of the day can make all the difference – best to water in the cooler morning, avoid watering at night as this can encourage fungus diseases especially in lawns
- Give the dog somewhere cool to lie. A pile of damp sawdust is great, just hose down every night or morning and as they dig it so it is cool for them to lie in. It will save your garden.

<https://www.richgro.com.au/garden-calendar/gardening-for-december/>

**Next time you bake a Christmas cake for a friend, try baking one in a terracotta flowerpot. Once the cake is devoured, they can reuse the pot to plant up their favourite plant.**



### Ingredients

1.5kg mixed fruit  
1/2 cup of your favourite sherry/brandy/rum  
2 tbsp apricot jam  
1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed  
5 eggs  
250g butter, melted  
1 1/2 cups plain flour  
1/2 cup self-raising flour  
4 x 12cm diameter Italian terracotta pots, lined with baking paper  
Silvered almonds  
Glazed cherries

### Prepare

Soak mixed fruit in alcohol overnight. Add in the remaining ingredients and mix well. Divide mix into 4 separate pots. Top with almonds and cherries. Bake pots on the oven tray for 2 hours at 150°C. Once cooled, wrap with cellophane or tie a ribbon under the rim of the pot.

**TIP:** We recommend using Italian terracotta pots which are less likely to crack when baking. Line pots with baking paper and pre-soak pots in water while mixing the ingredients, so the mix doesn't become too dry when baked.